



Enclosure 2b
April 24, 2018

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
March 27, 2018

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Chair McConaghy welcomed everyone to the Work Session of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, noted for the record that Member Gaines would not be joining the meeting, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Present: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, *Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Marta Martinez, **Thalia Philippe, and Lawrence Purtill

Absent: Jo Eva Gaines

*Colleen Callahan arrived at 5:35 p.m.

**Ex-officio, non-voting member

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Marta Martinez, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the March 27, 2018, Work Session

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

[Colleen Callahan arrived at 5:35 p.m.]

2. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Wagner began by reporting on two public events that took place last week – The Third Annual State of Education Address and the Second Annual PrepareRI Summit, which were both received very positive by the field.

Commissioner Wagner also report that the Council recently received two letters of concern from the RI English Learner Advisory Council and the RI Teachers of English Language Learners. The letters, requesting RIDE to rescind its approval of the partnership between Roger Williams University and the Providence School Department, outlined the exact same reasons (being non-traditional, not being tied to the actual job of the teacher, being much more hands-on opposed to theoretical, and much more focused on the day-to-day realities of the teacher) why RIDE approved the program in the first place.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Concept Discussion: Updates to Educator Preparation, Employment, and Professional Learning Regulations

Commissioner Wagner began with some framing remarks, emphasizing that the work in the field has shifted in that it is much more focused on practice, as opposed to compliance, and creating opportunities and pathways for students. With this shift in emphasis for more opportunities for kids, there is a need to shift the capacity in the field, specifically for teachers, and supporting them in their work.

Commissioner Wagner cautioned that as these conversations occur with stakeholders, there will be lots of tension around protecting quality as opposed to attention around relevance, access, flexibility, innovation, as well as costs. RIDE is not proposing any new requirements, but rather providing districts more opportunities to find the right employment match from a wider pool of candidates. For example, under the new proposal, teachers certified to teach in Massachusetts or Connecticut would be considered for employment in Rhode Island. Districts would also have the ability to hire a school nurse teacher versus a certified nurse, or a highly qualified business official, regardless of educator certification, if they so choose.

Similar to what was recently done with career education where teachers went from seven, one-year emergency certifications, to one, seven-year window in which to complete their certification, the other proposed flexibility would allow districts to adopt that same strategy, especially when filling vacancies in shortage areas. For those shortage areas, candidates would have to demonstrate some type of background, experiences and/or content knowledge in order to qualify.

Commissioner Wagner went over some other areas, which will prove to be the most challenging. He began with diversity of workforce and explained that the best ways to look at diversity teacher pipeline is to start paying attention to a school's disproportional suspension rates and use that information to turn kids into enjoying school and thinking about becoming teachers. To tackle the dramatic disconnect between the percentage of teachers of color in Rhode Island versus students of color, there has been some brainstorming of ideas around offering financial incentives, such as loan forgiveness and tax-credits, for teachers of color to want to teach in Rhode Island.

Next, Commissioner Wagner expressed that the area that has caused the most puzzled looks when explained, is cultural competence. He explained that the RIDE team is researching introducing the idea of cultural competence mattering, being conceptualized and being measured to the construct of a shortage area, with a potential benefit of having a serious strategy around teacher diversity.

The last area being introduced is educator professional learning pathways. Similar to endorsements on student diplomas, RIDE is reintroducing the idea of an endorsement based on competencies on a teacher's certification, most likely starting with ELL and reading/dyslexia endorsements. If done correctly, those endorsements could serve as "stackable" credentials, with educator learning opportunities coordinated across service providers and funding source, into an integrated professional learning ecosystem. Since no single district can adequately meet the diverse needs of all of its educators, RIDE would support district offerings through an educator course network, similar to the advanced course network on the students' side.

Council members voiced that they support teacher professional development that is meaningful and impactful, however, they cautioned against adding requirements that could ultimately cost districts money.

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made by Colleen Callahan and seconded by Marta Martinez, it was

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education adjourns.

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

Daniel McConaghy, Barbara Cottam, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

YEAS: 7

NAYS: 0

[Member Beretta departed at 6:35 p.m.]

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.