



**Enclosure 2a**  
**August 24, 2015**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**June 9, 2015**

**COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education met on Tuesday, June 9, 2015, at the R.I. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 255 Westminster Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Chair Cottam welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

She noted for the record that Council Members Gaines and Martinez would not be joining the meeting.

**Present:** Barbara Cottam, \*Colby Anderson, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez, \*\*Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

**Absent:** Jo Eva Gaines and Daniel McConaghy

**[\*Ex-officio, non-voting member]**

**[\*\*Member Purtill arrived at 5:50 p.m.]**

Prior to calling the meeting to order, Chair Cottam introduced Colby Anderson, a sophomore at East Greenwich High School, who is the newly elected Chair of the Student Advisory Council. The role of the Student Advisory Council, which is made up of an elected representative from each public high school, is to provide advice to the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. Colby Anderson will sit on the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education as an ex-officio, non-voting member.

**1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

On a motion duly made by Colleen Callahan and seconded by Amy Beretta it was

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of June 9, 2015

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**[Member Purtill arrived at 5:37 p.m.]**

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**2a. Minutes of the May 14, 2015, Council Meeting**

On a motion duly made by Karin Forbes and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the May 14, 2015 Council Meeting

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**[Member Martinez recused herself from this vote, as she was not in attendance at the May 14, 2015, Meeting]**

**2b. Minutes of the May 28, 2015, Work Session**

On a motion duly made by Karin Forbes and seconded by Joyce Stevos, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the May 28, 2015, Work Session

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**[Member Beretta recused herself from this vote, as she was not in attendance at the May 28, 2015, Work Session]**

### **3. OPEN FORUM**

In light of the fact that there were many individuals signed up to speak, Chair Cottam went over some ground rules and reminded the audience to limit comments to two minutes or less.

Two individuals spoke in support of the ACLU et al petition proposing amendments to the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education Secondary School Regulations.

Seven individuals spoke in opposition to the RISE Mayoral Academy.

Fifteen individuals spoke in favor of the RISE Mayoral Academy.

Documents provided to the Board of Education by Open Forum speakers are on file at the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Chair Cottam began by reporting that on Thursday, she attended a surprise ceremony at the North Smithfield Elementary School, to honor Tracy Lafreniere, a reading specialist and literacy coach, as the 2016 Rhode Island Teacher of the Year.

She also reported that the members of the Ambassador Design Team, who over the last two weeks have been working hard on final edits to the strategic plan, will be meeting for the final time next Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>. Chair Cottam encouraged Council members to attend the meeting to thank the team for their hard work and to celebrate the completion of a long process of work.

She ended by reporting that as Deputy Commissioner at RIDE, David Abbott now has the responsibility of serving as the Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education until a new Commissioner has been appointed.

### **5. REPORT OF THE ACTING COMMISSIONER**

Acting Commissioner Abbott began his report by sharing that the annual Diplomas Count publication, which Education Week released the previous week, cites R.I. as the primary example in the country of initiatives underway to make the transition from school to work easier for youths with disabilities and their families. The report also recognizes that R.I., like all states, has some work to do around closing the gap between the graduation rate for all students (currently 81%) and the graduation rate for students with disabilities (60%).

He also reported that the state budget was released that afternoon and that he is optimistic that the Board of Education's proposed budget submitted to the Governor will survive any major cuts.

He ended his report by sharing that RIDE had a positive conference call on Monday with the review team from the U.S. Department of Education on the NCLB Flex Application. The USDOE asked us to provide some additional information on a few aspects of our timeline for intervention and we are hopeful that we will get that approved within the next week.

## 6. ACTION ITEMS

Chair Cottam reminded Council members that all of the items up for approval this evening were introduced and discussed in detail at the last Work Session.

### **Encl 6a - Approval of the RISE Mayoral Academy**

Prior to voting, Chair Cottam asked if there was need for discussion. Member Callahan voiced that she is concerned about the stability and governance of the school, the lack of community support, as well as the potential detrimental fiscal impact raised by the sending communities and school departments.

Member Purtill voiced that he too shares Member Callahan's concerns and that the bottom line for him still remains that the Mayoral Academies get disproportionately funded compared to regular public schools. He also expressed that there is a need for a better method of eligibility for approving charter schools going forward between preliminary approval and the final approval process.

Member Beretta thanked the families who came out and who spoke so eloquently about what this means to their children and she hopes that this school is a success.

Acting Commissioner Abbott clarified a couple of the points which he said were incorrectly raised both in the 42 page document submitted to Council Members by counsel to the Woonsocket Teachers Guild as well as during the public comment.

Member Martinez asked if the RISE Prep Academy has a physical address. From the audience, the school's founder, Rosalind Murphy, answered that this is a topic typically discussed during executive session because the lease agreement is contingent upon final approval of the charter, but that RIDE has a document with the actual physical address.

On a motion duly made by Colleen Callahan and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education moves to issue a final Charter to the RISE Prep Mayoral Academy and authorize its operation for a maximum term of five (5) years beginning in the 2015-2016 school year and ending in the 2019-2020 school year, in accordance with all terms and conditions of the final Charter, as presented.

Vote: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 2 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: Colleen Callahan and Lawrence Purtill

**6b1. Approval of Necessity of School Construction for the Cumberland School Department**

On a motion duly made by Karin Forbes and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the Necessity of School Construction Projects for the Cumberland School Department totaling \$4,997,888 pursuant to R.I.G.L. 16-7-41.1, as presented

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez Lawrence Purtill, , and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**6b2. Approval of Necessity of School Construction for the Providence School Department**

On a motion duly made by Joyce Stevos and seconded by Amy Beretta, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the Necessity of School Construction Projects for the Providence School Department totaling \$41,714,235 pursuant to R.I.G.L. 16-7-41.1, as presented

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**6c. Approval of the FY 2017 Capital Budget**

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

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the FY 2017 Capital Budget, as presented

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**6d. Approval of RIDE's Executive Pay Plan and Salary Ranges for Fiscal Year 2016 Wage Benefits**

On a motion duly made by Joyce Stevos and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves RIDE's Executive Pay Plan and Salary Ranges for Fiscal Year 2016, as presented

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**6e. Proposed Regenerated Certification Test and Passing Score for Public Review and Comment**

On a motion duly made by Joyce Stevos and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves, for the Purpose of Public Review and Comment, the proposed regenerated Certification Test and Passing Score, as presented

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes,  
Marta Martinez Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Colleen Callahan, 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:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes,  
Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.