



MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION  
January 30, 2018

**COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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

**Present:** Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Gara Field, and Marta Martinez

**Absent:** Daniel McConaghy, Jo Eva Gaines, Lawrence Purtill, and Thalia Philippe, student representative, 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 January 30, 2018, Work Session

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Gara Field, and Marta Martinez

NAYS: 0

**2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 19, 2017, MEETING**

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 minutes of the December 19, 2017, Meeting

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Gara Field, and Marta Martinez

NAYS: 0

### **3. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER**

Commissioner Ken Wagner acknowledged the members of the Providence School Department (Superintendent Maher, Chief Transformation Officer Tow-Yik, and Chief Academic Officer Flanagan,), who were going to be presenting later on the agenda.

He then gave a status update on the first round of feedback (primarily on process variables) from the feds on Rhode Island's ESSA Plan. He shared that RIDE had proposed that it would calculate projected cuts based on current assessment data, but was told that target cuts had to be calculated from previous year data. The only substantive comment from the feds was around RIDE's proposed idea to use both the PSAT and SAT as part of high-school accountability. The feds pushed back as they did not like the idea of using the PSAT as a measure by itself, but were not opposed to using both tests to calculate a growth score.

Next, Commissioner Wagner went over a user-friendly flowchart that RIDE created explaining new protections under ESSA around education stability for students in foster-care and group homes. Under a new federal directive, when students move from one group home to another, there is a presumption that they can stay in the school that they were attending prior to being placed in state care, unless it is determined that it is not in the best interest of the child. He shared that many questions have been raised around how the federal law intersects with current RI State law, which is not geared toward school of origin. Many conversations have occurred with DCYF and local school districts to figure out who will be fiscally responsible for the education of the child, so as of now, the presumption is that the school of origin will be responsible. Rhode Island has been recognized by the Journal of Social Change as the first state to successfully interpret ESSA federal law as it applies to state law.

Commissioner Wagner ended by reporting on CTE funding and the many new exciting options available to students. There has been an increase in CTE offerings of over 26% over the last 2 years as well as an increase in program relevance and rigor. This is the result of the work that RIDE has been doing with the CTE Board and business/industry partners, to redefine all of the CTE program standards. The challenges being faced with the increase in CTE offerings is that career education experiences are more expensive (\$5,000-\$10,000 more per student), than a traditional high-school experience. This has caused a clash of policies, so RIDE has been working with superintendents, school committees, CTE program providers, and business and industry leaders, to come up with a solution.

### **4. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **a. Discussion with Chris Maher - Providence Superintendent**

Commissioner Ken Wagner framed the conversation by explaining that in Rhode Island's ESSA Plan there is a requirement to do governance differently, with a different level of engagement between RIDE and local education agencies (LEAs), and RIDE and community

advisory boards. To meet that requirement, tonight's conversation with Providence will be the first of a series, and to ensure that conversations are as inclusive as possible, these may involve the superintendent and his team, may involve the school committee and city council, the mayor's office and the teachers' union, as well as community groups. He expressed that the work will be better anchored if built on relationships, and more sustainable, if the engagement is done together.

Commissioner Wagner turned the conversation over to Superintendent Maher who began his presentation by asserting that Providence has made a number of changes in the district over the last couple of years in building a team, and although there are many wonderful things happening, there is still a long way to go.

Superintendent Maher stated that continuous improvement and equity are two very important lenses for all of the work in Providence. Data has shown many achievement gaps and low proficiency, therefore, the district's five-year strategic plan, which will be rolled-out later this month, includes goals that are measurable and that focus on maximizing learning time (lack of access and practice); growing a strong workforce by creating new pipelines and increasing retention of good teachers; improving customer-service starting with internal staff (flipping to a bottom-up approach); allocating resources strategically and being more efficient with resources, and moving into strategic-based contracting.

Next, Mr. Flanagan went over the key metrics of the strategic plan, which are grounded in teaching and learning as a foundation, starting with a focus on standards and teaching through personalized learning and differentiation – moving away from lectures, to classrooms that are more dynamic. He expressed that there is a need for high-quality curricular materials, which will be put out via RFPs, selected through a vetting process, and chosen by each school, based on its needs. Everything is wrapped in professional learning, which is about job-embedded professional development and ensuring that the learning happens in direct relation to what is happening in the classroom in schools. The district is working to expand dual language programs to support and celebrate all cultures (assets rather than deficits) – and has developed a newcomer program and small learning communities, to support sustainability. The district is also working toward better EL certification and elevating data system for all facets.

Next, Ms. Tow-Yick presented on personalized learning, a process that the district shifted to in order to approach the students in a very different way – teacher becomes the facilitator of learning, students are much more self-directed, and learning is centered on data, and knowing where they need to go, based on teacher support. The district has developed Keys to Learning, which is essentially the district's strategy to becoming much more student-centered with its teaching. Although the district has not forced the new approach on teachers, teachers have embraced it and are hungry for change and want to learn new ways for teaching in order to be the best teachers that they can be.

Ms. Tow-Yik presented on the district's social-emotional learning efforts to support and address student-learning needs in a way that is best for them. The district adopted the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education's recently endorsed Collaborative for Academic and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL) Standards for all students, and tied it to the academic learning curricular choices aligned to those standards.

Superintendent Maher ended the discussion by sharing some of the programs (Advanced Academics, Advanced Course Network, Gateway Program, an PTech) that the district has put in place to address student disengagement. He believes that a lot of the disengagement is due to the disconnect between what students are being taught in school, to their future. He also shared the district's priorities and successes going forward, and his vision for the district, which will fundamentally change instruction in the classrooms across the district and produce sustainable outcomes.

#### **b. Rules and Regulations – Update on New Administrative Procedures Act**

Commissioner Wagner introduced Jessica Roche, RIDE's Chief Legal Counsel, who gave a brief overview of the changes to Rhode Island's Administrative Procedures Act. She explained that the state passed a new law requiring that all rules and regulations be recoded and placed in a common format for easy public access. RIDE is in the process of bulk reformatting all of its regulations, some of which will require substantive changes, public input, and Council approval.

#### **c. Board of Education Regulations for Dual Enrollment – Proposed Revisions for the Purpose of Public Review and Comment**

Commissioner Wagner explained that at its February meeting, the Board of Education will vote to authorize the proposed revisions to the Dual Enrollment Regulations, to go out for public review and comment. Changes to the regulations are mainly logistical, with a substantive change around who pays for full-time dual-enrollment.

Next, Stephen Osborn, Chief of RIDE's Innovation Division, gave a brief overview of the proposed changes, focusing on the program going over budget due to the dramatic number of students enrolled. In the program's first two years of operation, Rhode Island has increased the number of credits earned by high school students by more than 150%, and the program is anticipated to grow by an additional 30% year over year.

Proposed changes to the regulations:

- Students must enroll at the Community College of Rhode Island (for more affordability) - The Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner will establish procedures related to a waiver process for students who wish to enroll at Rhode Island College or at the University of Rhode Island;

- Part-time dual enrollment students will not be allowed to take physical education classes;
- For students who are fully enrolled in CCRI's Running Start Program, the sending school district will need to pay 50% of the cost of tuition;
- If the program is fully funded, the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) will allocate funding for institutions based upon a memorandum of agreement with the institutions;
- If program growth outpaces funding, the OPC Commissioner will use his/her discretion to allocate available funding to the institutions;
- Program access (concurrent and dual enrollment) shall be available to all students, not just limited to high-needs students as was stipulated in the current version of the regulations;
- OPC, RIDE, URI, RIC, and CCRI will enter into an annual agreement to determine business practices for data-sharing;
- Formally requiring the date to finalize the course catalogue from March 1<sup>st</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to meet scheduling timelines for high schools.
- URI, RIC and CCRI are being encouraged to seek and obtain accreditation by the National Alliance on Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), potentially costing between \$30,000 and \$50,000; and
- Every three years, RIDE and OPC may request a self-study on institutions' practices based on NACEP standards.

#### **d. Dual and Concurrent Enrollment – List of Course Offerings**

Commissioner Wagner shared the list of course offerings, which should have been approved by the Board of Education last November, as districts need to plan their schedules in early January for the subsequent year. Given that the November deadline was not met, major changes will not be made to the catalogue of offerings, with the exception of two courses at CCRI in technology mathematics, which are no longer being offered. RIDE is working with OPC to ensure that any student, who may have registered for those two courses, will be given a comparable alternative.

#### **e. RI Standards for Educational Leaders – Request for Council Endorsement**

Commissioner Wagner introduced Joy Souza, a public school principal, who is working at RIDE for one year as a Leadership Fellow. He then explained that similar to the process around the Arts and the Social Emotional Standards endorsed by the Council last year, RIDE staff have been working with the field on developing Rhode Island State Standards for Educational Leaders (RISEL), based on a national framework. RIDE tries to take advantage of best practices nationally and then with lots of field involvement modifies it to ensure that it fits into a Rhode Island context, without having to reinvent the wheel.

Next, Lisa Foehr, RIDE's Director of the Office of Educator Excellence and Certification Services, added some additional context and shared that in 2016, RIDE started a Leadership Advisory Group. The outgrowth of the group was that there was a need to refresh the current State Leadership Standards, set in 2008. A smaller committee was established and included principals, teachers, and other leaders, who worked with the subcommittee for over 6 months to develop the RISEL. The RISEL closely mirror the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), developed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. Council Members are being asked to endorse the RISEL at their March 6, 2018, meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Gara Field, it was

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

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Gara Field, and Marta Martinez

NAYS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.