



**Enclosure 2a**  
**August 9, 2016**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**June 28, 2016**

**COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

---

Board Chair Cottam welcomed everyone, stated for the record that Council Chair McConaghy and Council Member Gaines would not be attending the meeting, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

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

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

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

[\*\*Amy Beretta arrived at 5:35 p.m.]

[\*\*\*Lawrence Purtill arrived at 5:34 p.m.]

**1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

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

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of June 28, 2016

Vote: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

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

NAYS: 0

[Lawrence Purtill arrived at 5:34 p.m. and Amy Beretta arrived at 5:35 p.m.]

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**2a. Minutes of the April 26, 2016, Council Work Session**

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 minutes of the April 26, 2016, Council Work Session

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

**2b. Minutes of the May 17, 2016, 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 17, 2016, Council Meeting

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

**2c. Minutes of the June 7, 2016, Council Work Session**

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

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education  
approves the minutes of the June 7, 2016, Council Meeting

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

**3. OPEN FORUM**

Tim Duffy, Executive Director of the Rhode Island Association of School Committees (RIASC), asked the Council to join in supporting RIASC when it introduces legislation next year that would shift some of the burden of the teacher retirement costs to the state.

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

Chair Cottam deferred Chairman's Remarks

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

Commissioner Wagner began his report by thanking his departing Chief of Staff Kim Bright for all her great work and service to RIDE and for her support during his transition period last year. He then introduced Ms. Bright's successor, Christine Lopes Metcalf, as RIDE's new Chief of Staff and welcomed her to the team.

Next, Commissioner Wagner reported on the Superior Court Judge's decision that the Cumberland school district cannot charge students for summer school. RIDE and the Council appealed the judge's decision on two merits; one was the timing of the ruling as it was too late in the school year to affect this summer as local budgets had already been set, and the other concern being the underlying logic of the ruling. The judge denied a motion to reconsider the case; however, he did agree to modify the portion of the decision that had stated that school committees cannot raise revenue. The modification clarified that the decision was limited to the question of whether school committees may raise revenue by charging students tuition and not whether school committees may raise outside funds from other sources for legitimate purposes. The judge also clarified that he did not intend for this particular ruling to be a statewide ruling as it was based only on the case at hand. When communicating with the field, RIDE did advise that now that this ruling is out, districts may expect that someone will challenge whatever practices they have locally and will most likely use this ruling to support their case.

Commissioner Wagner ended his report by sharing that the state assessment scores are targeted to be released in late August, four months earlier than last year.

#### **6. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **a. Legislative Update**

Commissioner Wagner began by giving an overview of the previous legislative session. 194 bills were introduced, including more than 20 new bills pertaining to education, and education aid funding increased by \$40 million to \$1.4 billion.

Commissioner Wagner then highlighted some of the legislative points that he felt were important including:

- Governor Raimondo's building-skills priority, including PrepareRI and P-Tech, were funded;
- The Electric Boat partnership was funded;

- \$80 million was allocated for school construction, including \$9 million for new projects;
- A version of the Empowerment Act was passed with some compromises and changes made to the original amendment. Inter-district enrollment and the innovation-grant funding were removed;

Council Member Beretta asked whether the family choice component was removed. Commissioner Wagner answered that although there was lots of support in favor of the component, especially in the high-mobility communities (Central Falls, Pawtucket, and Providence), ultimately it was removed. RIDE will approach those communities to talk about a possible trilateral district-level partnership agreement.

- \$500,000 was allocated for instructional development, where a number of options are available for exploration, including investing in the state's capacity to support leadership work;
- Governor Raimondo's proposals for computer science education for all and PSAT/SAT assessments were both funded, which now opens up the opportunity to explore what role (if any) SATs would play in school and district accountability. Commissioner Wagner shared that RIDE has been approached on a possible exploration of a hybrid approach between PARCC testing and SAT tests;
- Instead of the proposed \$2.5-million, \$1.5-million was allocated for "density aid," which is aid to communities with a higher percentage of students attending charter schools;
- There was a \$2-million increase for high cost special education services and a \$1.2-million increase for early childhood education expansion; and
- An additional \$1-million beyond what was requested was granted for high-quality career and technical education.

Council Member Callahan inquired about the purpose of the additional CTE funds; which Commissioner Wagner explained that it is categorical funding, and he went on to discuss possible options for the additional funding.

Council Member Forbes asked whether the six-year industry CCRI programs would need additional funds, to which Commissioner Wagner explained that the communities with those programs were chosen due to resource readiness, so additional funds wouldn't be needed for the time being.

Commissioner Wagner proceeded to review several relevant legislative bills pertaining to education policy and RIDE:

- S2735: Biliteracy Seal; Commissioner Wagner expressed his satisfaction with the progress being made that parallels the idea of pathway designations.
- S2168: Requires that school superintendents review disciplinary data to evaluate suspension practices.
- S2554: Requires the Board of Education to set a goal around achievement gaps in third grade reading and mathematics.
- S2669: Free Play Rhode Island Initiative, establishes a 20-minute recess requirement for elementary schools.
- S2867: Gives statutory authorization for new service providers aimed at providing educational services to older students with a low number of credits to get back on track in obtaining a high-school diploma.
- S3075: Requires local written support granted by the city/town council of a sending district, for any new network concept charter school (multiple schools within a single charter), and requires the Council to place substantial weight on the fiscal impact on the sending districts when considering a proposed charter or expansion of a charter school. Existing charters are grandfathered in.
- H8308: Authorizes RIDE to conduct a comprehensive study on a unified approach to statewide education, by July 1, 2017.
- There was also legislation approved requiring RIDE, with no additional capacity, to have more central policy language around support for schools with dyslexic students and students with specific reading disabilities.

Commissioner Wagner thanked Andy Andrade, Legislative Liaison, and commended him on his work during the legislative session.

## 7. ACTION ITEMS

### a. Approval of the Fiscal Year 2018 Capital Budget Request

Prior to the vote, Commissioner Wagner clarified some questions that Council Member Beretta had asked at the June 7<sup>th</sup> Work Session regarding the installation of solar panels at the MET School in Newport.

He shared that it would take approximately 35 years before the state would see a profit on the installation of the \$1.9M solar panels. He reminded the Council that the building was approved by the Board of Education as a NetZero concept building, but that the solar panels had not been previously approved.

Council Member Beretta reiterated a question posed by Council Member Gaines at the June 7<sup>th</sup> Work Session on whether applying for grants to fund the installation of the solar panels had been explored.

Mark Dunham, RIDE's Finance Director, replied that he had not looked into it, but, if the Council was not comfortable voting on the solar panels at this time, it was listed as a separate line item and could be removed and deferred to a later date.

In answer to Council Member Gaines' question on whether the wing of the John Gallagher building is state property, the answer is yes.

Council Member Beretta also asked for clarification on whether or not delaying the installation of the solar panels would increase the cost of other work being done simultaneously. Mr. Dunham answered that it would not as it is a separate project from the other ADA work being done.

Council Member Beretta than moved to amend action item 7a by removing the installation of the solar panels at the MET East Bay Campus.

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves to amend action item 7a by removing the installation of the solar panels at the MET East Bay Campus from the FY 2018 Capital Budget Request.

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

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

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the FY 2018 Capital Budget Request, as amendment.

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

**b. Proposed draft revisions to the Board of Education Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island**

Council Member Callahan reiterated a concern raised at the June 7<sup>th</sup> Work Session on the need to add language to the regulations giving RIDE the authority to monitor the process in which districts hire substitute teachers to ensure that they have at least a bachelor's degree.

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

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves that RIDE amend the proposed draft revisions to the Board of Education Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island, to reflect that RIDE reserves the right to monitor the process in which districts hire substitute teachers.

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

And further,

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

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves that Board of Education Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island, for the purpose of public review and comment, as amended.

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

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves to amend action item 7a by removing the installation of the solar panels at the MET East Bay Campus from the FY 2018 Capital Budget Request.

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

**c. Proposed changes to Certification Tests and Passing Scores**

On a motion duly made by Karin Forbes and seconded by Amy Beretta, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves, for the purpose of public review and comment, the proposed changes to the certification tests and passing scores, 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

Council Member Beretta requested that the Council be provided with a comprehensive report on all of the certification tests that the Council has adopted within the last two or three years, including pass/fail rate, and what the feedback has been.

**d. Approval of RIDE's Fiscal Year 2017 Executive Pay Plan**

Commissioner Wagner cleared up some questions that Council members had posed at the June 7<sup>th</sup> Work Session regarding how ranges and increases in salary are determined for non-union staff members.



He explained that RIDE conducted a benchmarking study in 2004; a comprehensive review of comparable titles and duties in the private sector, and over the years has upped the ranges according to the state's cost-of-living increases. RIDE is working on completing a new benchmarking study in time for fiscal year 2018. He also clarified that new employees are typically hired at the mid-point of their range, or lower, and annual raises are followed by whatever the associated state-negotiated contract is.

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves RIDE's Executive Pay Plan for Fiscal Year 2017, 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 Colleen Callahan and seconded by Karin Forbes, 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 6:33 p.m.