



Enclosure 2b
December 9, 2015

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
October 20, 2015

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education met on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, at the R.I. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 255 Westminster Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Chair McConaghy welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Present: Daniel McConaghy, *Colby Anderson, Amy Beretta, Barbara Cottam, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, **Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

[*Ex-officio, non-voting member - arrived at 5:33 p.m.

[Arrived at 5:33 p.m.]**

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of October 20, 2015, with the proviso that there may be a need to change the order of the agenda regarding Action Item 7a

Vote: 8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

[Lawrence Purtill arrived at 5:33 p.m.]

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

2a. Minutes of the September 10, 2015, Council Work Session

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the September 10, 2015 Council Work Session

Vote: 4 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

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

NAYS: 0

[Chair McConaghy and Members Callahan, Gaines and Martinez recused themselves from this vote, as they did not attend the September 10, 2015, Work Session]

[Lawrence Purtill arrived at 5:33 p.m.]

2b. Minutes of the September 21, 2015, Meeting

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

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the August 11, 2015, Council Work Session

Vote: 8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

[Member Purtill arrived at 5:33 p.m.]

3. PRESENTATION OF AWARD CERTIFICATES

Award Certificates were presented to two distinguished educators (Barbara Pellegrino, mathematics educator at the Harrold F. Scott Elementary School in Warwick, and Nicolle Greene, mathematics educator at the E.G. Robertson Elementary School in Warwick). Both educators were two of five Rhode Island finalists for the 2014 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, the highest recognition that a kindergarten through 12th-grade mathematics and science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States.

4. OPEN FORUM

Tracy Ramos, Director – Parents Across R.I., spoke of the Council’s and RIDE’s need to set up a process by which parents have a voice in the development of state policy, the need for revisions to the standards for elementary school children, and the need to broaden the graduation requirements.

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

5. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Chair Cottam reported that the previous week the Council on Postsecondary Education approved their Strategic Plan and that the following week the full Board of Education will be voting on R.I.’s Strategic Plan for the next five-years.

6. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Wagner began his report by congratulating Kendra Borden, an English teacher at the Samuel Slater Junior High School in Pawtucket, as R.I.’s winner of the 2015 Milken Educator Award. The award carries an unrestricted cash award of \$25,000. Ms. Borden is a R.I. College graduate.

He also reported that the October 8th showing of the Most Likely to Succeed documentary film on the concept of project based learning, was a success. He encourages individuals in attendance at the event to consider joining and providing advice to the statewide advisory group that will be working on a similar project called the XQ Super School Project contest, in which teams will come up with a plan to design their own high school.

7. ACTION ITEMS

As noted at the onset of the meeting, Chair McConaghy asked that action item 7b be addressed first.

b. Approval of Amendment to the September 2014 Memorandum of Agreement for the Pawtucket School Department

Andrea Castaneda reminded the Council that as introduced at the previous work session, this is largely a technical adjustment and that it doesn't in any way change the scope of the eligible projects already approved for Pawtucket in September 2014. The amendment is a redistribution of funds to now include work at St. Leo's school, which was recently acquired by the city of Pawtucket for staging purposes while work is being done at some of the other schools.

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the amendment to the September 8, 2014 project approval of \$46,040,801 to reallocate the funding, as presented.

Vote: 9 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

7c. Approval of the Renewed Employment Agreement by and between the Board of Trustees for the R.I. School for the Deaf and Nancy Maguire Heath

Commissioner Wagner shared that he recently visited the School for the Deaf and was very impressed with the school's culture. As he talked with staff around the school, he was equally impressed by the tremendous longevity of people who have committed their lives to working at the school and their deep competence and passion around the work.

Chair Cottam echoed Commissioner Wagner's praises and shared that she, along with Council Member Martinez, also recently visited the R.I. School for the Deaf and one of the things that struck her was that teachers and students spoke both sign language and verbally at the same time, which is very inclusive and a recognition of some of the things happening at the school.

Commissioner Wagner stated that at a very deep level, the school views itself as a bilingual school (American Sign Language and English) and with that frame and because of its unique learning environment, the school might be the place to start a pilot program where other students could be given the option of selecting such a school for a unique learning opportunity.

Member Martinez, who accompanied Board Chair Cottam on the visit, also praised Director Heath for her leadership, dedication, knowledge, and passion.

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 Renewed Employment Agreement By and Between the Board of Trustees for the R.I. School for the Deaf and Nancy Maguire Heath, Director of the R.I. School for the Deaf, for a two-year period commencing July 1, 2015 and terminating on June 30, 2017, with the option to renew such employment agreement for one additional year, through June 30, 2018, as presented.

Vote: 9 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

Member Forbes pointed out that the Board of Regents Personnel Manual, which was part of encl7b packet of materials that the Council reviewed on the topic, dates back to 2002 and suggested that it be revised sometime in the near future.

7a. Approval of the FY 16 School Building Authority Capital Fund Project Priorities

Chair McConaghy welcomed Governor Raimondo who joined the meeting to offer a few comments and to urge the Council to approve the School Building Authority Capital Fund, which will provide upfront funding for high priority school construction projects.

Governor Raimondo stated that this initiative is the first step in the important issue of putting more money into rebuilding our schools. She praised the General Assembly for allocating \$20M to this effort as well as supporting her requests for universal all-day Kindergarten, tripling the number of PK programs, and funding for dual and concurrent enrollment courses for high school students.

She also offered kudos to RIDE staff for the great work in moving quickly in setting up the process for prioritizing the projects.

Andrea Castaneda praised all of the school districts for the fast turnaround in submitting their applications and acknowledged the district Superintendents who were in attendance (Bristol Warren, Central Falls, Pawtucket and Providence) for their effort and commitment to their facilities issues.

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

- VOTED:** That: the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves allocation of \$19,347,079 of the FY 16 School Building Authority Capital Fund, as presented.
- Vote: 9 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:
- YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos
- NAYS: 0

8. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Karin Forbes, it was

- VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education adjourns.
- Vote: 9 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:
- YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Joyce Stevos
- NAYS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.