



**Enclosure 2b**  
**September 21, 2015**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**August 24, 2015**

**COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education met on Tuesday, August 24, 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 5:35 p.m.

He noted for the record that Board Chair Cottam would not be joining the meeting.

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

**Absent:** Barbara Cottam

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

**1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

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

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of August 24, 2015

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

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

**NAYS:** 0

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**2a. Minutes of the June 9, 2015, Council Meeting**

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 the minutes of the June 9, 2015 Council Meeting

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

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtil, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**[Member Gaines recused herself from this vote, as she was not in attendance at the June 9, 2015, Meeting]**

**2b. Minutes of the June 22, 2015, Meeting**

On a motion duly made by Colleen Callahan and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the June 22, 2015, Council Meeting

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

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Member Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**[Member Purtil recused himself from this vote, as he was not in attendance at the June 22, 2015, Work Session]**

**3b. Minutes of the July 13, 2015, Meeting**

On a motion duly made by Joyce Stevos and seconded by Marta Martinez, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the July 13, 2015, Council Meeting

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

YEAS: Daniel McConaghy, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karin Forbes, Marta Martinez, Member Purtill and Joyce Stevos

NAYS: 0

**[Member Gaines recused herself from this vote, as she was not in attendance at the July 13, 2015, Meeting]**

### **3. PRESENTATION OF AWARD CERTIFICATES**

Award Certificates were presented to two distinguished educators, two of the five Rhode Island Finalists for the 2014 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, the highest recognition that a kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade mathematics and science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States.

The two finalists were Cynthia Ripley, Science educator at the Gallagher Middle School Smithfield and Debra Turchetti-Ramm, Science educator at the Sarah Dyer Barnes Elementary School, Johnston.

### **4. OPEN FORUM**

Chair McConaghy reported that no one had signed up to speak at Open Forum.

### **5. REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL**

Chair McConaghy deferred Chairman's remarks.

### **6. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER**

Commissioner Wagner began his report by sharing that he is excited about the energy around the state as schools and families get ready for the beginning of a new school year.

Next, he highlighted some upcoming RIDE-sponsored activities and events and encouraged Council members to attend. The Annual Educator Recognition WaterFire, which will be held on Saturday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, is designed to send a very strong message statewide about our appreciation and recognition of educators and all of the work that they do. At this event, RIDE will kick-off a crowd-sourcing fund-raising effort where people can give small amounts of money to help sustain this event as well as other activities that help support educators through the course of the year.

He also reported that on October 8<sup>th</sup> RIDE will be hosting a screening and discussion of the documentary *Most Likely to Succeed*, which was produced by a local Rhode Islander to create a conversation around what we want and hope for from our schools in terms of nurturing the entire student experience. The film has been screened internationally at the Sundance Film Festival as well as in Newport last year. The film has an inclusive message, which will be a healthy way to kick off the school year by talking about our hopes and aspirations for the future of education.

He went on to report that he recently attended a PARCC Governing Board meeting in Washington to look at the performance levels for the high-school assessments. He reiterated the need to be transparent about the upcoming results as they are what they are, but at the same time to be very thoughtful and very cautious about how we use the results for any purposes going forward. There are no immediate plans to use the results to identify new schools or districts for accountability purposes nor are there any plans to use the results for graduation purposes and/or evaluation purposes. The other assessment work that has not received the same level of attention but is equally important is our alternate assessment. The federal government requires states to have the same set of learning standards for all of our students, including those from a variety of backgrounds and learning needs. The challenge is how you have the same set of standards for those students while making those standards appropriately accessible in a way that they can meaningfully demonstrate student progress. The thing to keep in mind as you talk about proficiency or non-proficiency or meeting or not meeting the standards is how we manage that set of information with a set of families who have gotten accustomed to not necessarily getting the most positive feedback or information about assessments from their schools.

Next, Commissioner Wagner reported that RIDE has been in close communication with the Department of Health on the HPV vaccine and is reporting back to local school districts on the different exemptions that are available to families.

Commissioner Wagner ended his report by sharing that Dr. Georgia Fortunato, Superintendent in Lincoln, is this year's Rhode Island Superintendent of the Year and that he looks forward to working with her in the coming year on some very important issues.

## **7. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **a. Bylaws of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education**

Chair McConaghy introduced the topic and stated that two years ago, when state law established the Board of Education, replacing the Board of Regents, the Board of Education adopted a set of bylaws to govern conduct of its meetings. Subsequently, state law established two Education Councils, which are components of the Board of Education. As a Council, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education never officially adopted its own set of bylaws,

relying instead on the Board of Education bylaws. The proposed bylaws presented this evening are modeled on the already-approved Board of Education bylaws and mirror those of the Council on Postsecondary Education. Roberts Rules of Order shall govern on all parliamentary matters not covered by the bylaws of the State of Rhode Island and these bylaws.

Member Purtill expressed his desire to extend the 20-minute time-limit allotted for Open Forum to 30 minutes, to which Chair McConaghy answered that he didn't see an issue of having latitude in that.

Member Stevos raised that since the new proposed bylaws are eliminating the need for a vice-chair, that the word "vice-chair" should also be removed from Article IV (Committees) Section 1.

Student representative, Colby Anderson asked whether, as a non-voting member, he was allowed to request that an item be added to an agenda.

Deputy Commissioner Abbott replied that there is so much discretion left to the Chair on the preparation of the agenda that it's fine if he makes the request to the Chair.

**b. Regenerated Early Childhood Content Knowledge Certification Test and Passing Score Feedback from Public Review and Comment**

Mary Ann Snider, Chief of Teaching and Learning, reminded Council members that on a regular basis RIDE brings to them regenerated tests to review as part of educator certification. The test before them this evening is in the area of early childhood, which is a new test that the Education Testing Service developed in line with early childhood practices that have been updated. RIDE adopted the study score, which means that before the test is widely given, a group of educators is brought together to look at the test and make recommendations. The recommended cut-score generated two comments during the required thirty-day public review and comment period.

Member Callahan asked where this cut-score falls in comparison with those of other states and if there is an opportunity to revisit it at some point.

Ms. Snider responded that there is no way to compare it with other states as it is a new test and that once RIDE gathers enough information from R.I. candidates and there is enough information, RIDE will come back to the Council with perhaps an additional recommendation.

**c. Nomination of Members of the Appeals Committee of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education**

For the benefit of the members who are new to the Council, Chair McConaghy gave an overview of the process and procedures of the Appeals Committee. He then nominated Member Forbes as the Chair of the Appeals Committee and Members Gaines and Stevos as members of the Committee. He also nominated Member Beretta as an alternate member.

**8. ACTION ITEMS**

Chair McConaghy 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 8a - Approval of the Bylaws of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education**

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Joyce Stevos, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the Bylaws of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, as presented but amended so that Article IV, Section I reads that the Chair shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

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

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

**NAYS:** 0

**8b. Approval of the Regenerated Early Childhood Content Knowledge Certification Test and Passing Score**

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 proposed regenerated Early Childhood Content Knowledge Certification Test and Passing Score, as presented.

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

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

**NAYS:** 0

**8c. Approval of the 2020 Vision for Education: Rhode Island’s Strategic Plan for PK-12 & Adult Education, 2015-2020**

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 2020 Vision for Education: Rhode Island’s Strategic Plan for PK-12 & Adult Education, 2015-2020, as presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

Commissioner Wagner thanked Council Members for their support throughout the process and stated that the first step is to bring the plan to the full Board at its next meeting. He went on to explain that as we engage with people in conversations this year we are getting a lot of feedback on graduation requirements, and we are going to think through what a framework for a conversation will look like. Right now we have local diplomas, and what we’re really talking about is the idea of a R.I. endorsement to the local diploma and so far the idea of a state endorsement has been tied to a state test. It doesn’t have to be a state test; it just has to be a comparable measure of what we are trying to accomplish with a state test. Local criteria and state endorsement could potentially be broader than a state assessment. Then there are other content endorsements such as study of the arts, CTE, dual language, or a seal of biliteracy. This is the flavor of the conversation that we want to build and want to discuss with school committees, principals, and teachers and we need to get out there, particularly as we approach the release of the assessment scores. We don’t want to be reactive.

**9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 6:07 p.m. Chair McConaghy entertained a motion to enter into executive session for:

- a. Update on Litigation – City of Woonsocket, Town of North Smithfield, Town of Burrillville, and North Smithfield School Committee vs. Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, Dr. Ken Wagner, in his official Capacity as Commissioner of Education, Paulette Hamilton, in her official capacity as Town Administrator of the Town of North Smithfield, and purported Chairperson of RISE Prep Mayoral Academy (PC 2015-2763) pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5 (a)(2).

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

**VOTED:** THAT The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education convenes in executive session pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a) (2) for the reason set forth above.

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

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

**NAYS:** 0

All non-Council members in the audience were excused with the exception of:

- Paul Sullivan – Counsel to the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education
- Ken Wagner – Commissioner
- David Abbott – Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel
- Angela Teixeira – Liaison to the R.I. Board of Education
- Kevin Gallagher – Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor

The Council reconvened in open session at 6:27 p.m.

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

**VOTED:** THAT the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education seals the minutes of the executive session held on August 24, 2015.

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

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

**NAYS:** 0



**10. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

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

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

NAYS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.