



**Enclosure 2a**  
**March 3, 2020**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**January 28, 2020**

**COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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Chair McConaghy welcomed everyone to the January 28, 2020, meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. He declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

**Present:** Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Jo Eva Gaines, \*Lauren Griffiths, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

**Absent:** 0

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

**1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the January 28, 2020, Meeting

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

**YEAS:** Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

**NAYS:** 0

**ABSTAINS:** 0

**2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES**

**a. Minutes of the December 17, 2019, Meeting**

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

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the minutes of the December 17, 2019, Meeting

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 3

[Members Davis, Field and Gaines had to abstain from the vote, as they did not attend the December 17, 2019, meeting]

### **3. OPEN FORUM**

Sixteen individuals from organizations representing a wide range of constituencies that work with, and advocate for, the rights of students and English Language Learners, spoke in opposition to the Appeals Committee recommendation to the full Council on the matter of L. Doe, S. Doe, and A. Doe, on behalf of their children X. Doe, Y. Doe, and Z. Doe, and on behalf of a class of similarly situated children in the Providence School District.

Written testimony was entered into the record and is available at the Office of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education.

### **4. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER**

Commissioner Infante-Green began her report by thanking the community members who provided public testimony, for their advocacy and for always placing students at the forefront of their efforts.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green welcomed Kelvin Roldán and Ana Riley, to their first official Council meeting as Deputy Commissioners. She noted that they already have hit the ground running in making the necessary changes to improve education for all students.

Commissioner Infante-Green continued by introducing and welcoming key members of the new Providence Turnaround Team:

- Harrison Peters, State Turnaround Superintendent
- Dr. Barbara Mullen, Chief Equity Officer
- Nick Figueroa, Chief of Family and Community Engagement

She also recognized and thanked Dottie Smith, who currently serves as the Interim Superintendent, who will assume a role as Senior Adviser to the Superintendent, once he comes on board.

Commissioner Infante-Green expressed her excitement and gratitude to Mr. Peters for accepting the position. She highlighted that he comes to Rhode Island with over two decades of experience in working in big systems and doing turnaround work and that he is committed to educational equity and opportunity for all students. She went over some of the work that has been accomplished since the State takeover of the Providence School District, less than three months ago, to reimagine education statewide. She also shared that there will be a revamp of the current model to address concerns with facilities in Providence, and there will be more discussion of the school facilities work at a future meeting of the Council.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green shared some key highlights from the Governor's Fiscal Year 2021 Education Budget.

- \$1M to increase the number of mental health professionals in schools, and an additional \$590,000 to provide mental health training to educators;
- Expansion of Pre-K by 750 seats, which is an increase of 50% over the current year;
- Funding for English Learner Categorical increased by \$2.5M, bringing us to \$7.5M total;
- Nine new positions for RIDE, to support key functions across the agency from curriculum to school facilities.

She also shared that earlier in the day, the Senate's Task Force on the Funding Formula released a report that echoed the vision of RIDE shifting from compliance to support. While the report questioned how RIDE can be best positioned to achieve that vision, it also recognized that RIDE must have access to adequate organizational resources in order to make academic progress possible. She stressed that while state intervention in Providence does translate into additional work for RIDE, the budget does not designate specific staff or additional funding, which is by design and is reflective of the fact that this isn't "Providence work," at all, it is just the work (professional development, curriculum, etc.), which will benefit the entire state.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green expressed her gratitude to the RI Foundation for establishing the RI Education Fund; a special fund to accept donations from individuals, corporations and foundations interested in improving PK-12 public education statewide.

Lastly, Commissioner Infante-Green announced that the 2020 administration of SurveyWorks, the annual statewide tool to help us hear directly from students, educators and parents about the climate and culture happening in their schools, is officially open. She noted that engaging communities and using the community's voice to influence policy is one of the key pillars of our vision for reimagined education, and SurveyWorks is a key tool in influencing to make that happen.

## 5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### a. School Improvement Process

Pascale Thompson, RIDE's Director of School Improvement and Team Lead, framed the conversation by explaining that this evening's presentation on the school improvement monitoring process, is the next phase of previous presentations on the supports and services that RIDE provides for districts and schools that are underperforming, especially to those in the bottom five percent.

Next, Krystafer Redden, School Improvement Team Member, gave a high-level presentation on the monitoring work that is underway. Mr. Redden explained that in addition to the RIDE team, which includes staff across the agency, there is an outside Project Manager, Erin Burchill, from SchoolWorks, an external vendor who oversees and supports the team during site visits. Mr. Redden went on to share that RIDE's Office of School Improvement and SchoolWorks have worked together over the last six months to construct an implementation site visit process that both adds to and encapsulates the agency's movement towards both service and support, under ESSA. The implementation site visits (22 schools in cohort 1) will occur on a cycle of four per week (1.5 days), and while RIDE has chosen to work with the Providence School District as part of the SchoolWorks pilot, all schools that are identified in need of comprehensive support and improvement, will receive an implementation site visit. The process of codifying processes and reporting out via templates will also serve as a good training ground for the Community Advisory Boards (CABS), who will be reporting to the Council on their progress at the end of the school year.

Council Members asked whether there will be training not only RIDE staff but for the schools that are being visited so that they understand the protocols and what they need to do to prepare.

Commissioner Infante-Green answered that RIDE staff are individuals who are experts in their craft, do not necessarily need training, but rather an understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Redden explained that as far as the schools, every school building leader and their team will have an orientation so that they understand the protocols and rules in advance of the site visit, including which documents they will need to provide to the monitoring team.

b. Accountability System – Growth Metric

Stephen Osborn, RIDE's Chief of Innovation, framed the conversation by sharing that over the last couple of months, RIDE has done lots of outreach and meeting directly with schools to review their star ratings. He stated that today's presentation would focus on the RI Growth Model (RIGM), a topic that comes up regularly as one of the most misunderstood areas. Scott Gausland and Rachel Peterson, went over what is the RIGM; how growth is calculated; the usefulness of the RIGM; and how growth is included in accountability.

**6. ACTION ITEMS:**

- a. Approval of Appeals Committee Recommendation on the matter of L. Doe, S. Doe, and A. Doe, on behalf of their children X. Doe, Y. Doe, and Z. Doe, and on behalf of a class of similarly situated children in the Providence School District

Member Martinez noted for the record that she was abstaining from discussion and vote on the matter.

Amy Beretta, Appeals Committee Chair, expressed that this was a very tough case to hear as the Appeals Committee has a very strict standard of review as their decision is based on whether the Commissioner's decision was patently arbitrary, discriminatory or unfair. The Committee agreed that the regulations are the problem.

Commissioner Infante-Green noted that this has been a very challenging case for her and although she cannot change what happened in the past, she can change what is done moving forward by changing the ELL Regulations for everyone in the entire state. She shared that RIDE is in the process of developing a draft blueprint and a draft theory of action, with input from stakeholders, which will guide the revision of the regulations.

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

**VOTED:** That in the matter of L. Doe, S. Doe, and A. Doe, on behalf of their children X. Doe, Y. Doe, and Z. Doe, and on behalf of a class of similarly situated children in the Providence School District, the Commissioner's Decision be modified as the Council directs the Commissioner to begin the process of revising the current Regulations Governing the Education of English Language Learners, including, but not limited to, addressing the Consultation Model.

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

Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Jo Eva Gaines, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

**YEAS:** 8

**NAYS:** 0

**ABSTAINS:** 1 (Marta Martinez)

Next, Chair McConaghy asked for a motion to affirm the Commissioner's Decision, as modified.

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

**VOTED:** That in the matter of L. Doe, S. Doe, and A. Doe, on behalf of their children X. Doe, Y. Doe, and Z. Doe, and on behalf of a class of similarly situated children in the Providence School District, the Commissioner's Decision is affirmed, as modified.

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

**YEAS:** Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Jo Eva Gaines, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 1 (Marta Martinez)

**7. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.**

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Lawrence Purtill, 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:

Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

YEAS: 9

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0