



**Enclosure 2a**  
**March 31, 2020**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**March 3, 2020**

**COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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Chair McConaghy welcomed everyone to the March 3, 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, \*Gara Field, Jo Eva Gaines, \*Lauren Griffiths, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

**Absent:** Karen Davis

[\*Arrived at 5:40 p.m.]

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

**1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

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

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the March 3, 2020, Meeting

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

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

**NAYS:** 0

**ABSTAINS:** 0

[Member Field arrived after the acceptance of the agenda]

## 2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

### a. Minutes of the January 28, 2020, Meeting

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Amy Beretta, it was

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

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

[Member Field arrived after the approval of the minutes]

## 3. OPEN FORUM

Chair McConaghy reported that no one had signed-up to speak.

## 4. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Infante-Green began her report with an update on the COVID-19 virus. She shared that RIDE has been working with the Department of Health (DOH) over the last few weeks to ensure that a structure is in place to limit the spread of the virus in the State. Rhode Island has two confirmed cases and outreach to the people who were in direct contact with these individuals is in process to ensure that they understand the required measures that they need to take. RIDE has been providing regular updates to all schools, including independent and parochial schools, to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

Next, Dr. McDonald, from the Department of Health, gave an update on the latest report of the CDC, confirming that there are three cases in Rhode Island, one of which is a Massachusetts resident, and all of whom went on the same trip to Italy. He expressed that most people have had some type of Coronavirus infection in their lifetime, just not this new strand. The national strategy is to try some public health measures to keep this virus outside of our state and the

country long enough to avoid communicate transmission. He explained that there isn't a vaccine yet for the virus and that it may take a year or two, as it needs to go through the FDA approval process. He expressed that DOH's sole objective is to protect the health and safety of its citizens, and the agency has been in constant contact over the last few days with the national CDC and other health departments throughout the country.

Council members asked whether guidance will be provided to districts regarding international trips over spring break as well as exchange students.

Dr. McDonald responded that as of today, there isn't any formal guidance on travel, however, folks need to look at the risk factors when planning a trip and he recommended that schools work with parents to make the best decision for them. He voiced that DOH will support whatever decision school districts make and are there to help in any way possible. Commissioner Infante-Green also noted that there has been a triangulated effort between RIDE, DOH and school districts, to ensure that everyone is on the same page and receiving the same message.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green gave a recap of the Providence Superintendent's first weeks on the job. She shared that on his first day, Superintendent Harrison visited four schools, the bus yard, the enrollment office, and has been joining her at coffee hours with teachers across the district, to gather their feedback on how to redesign the district going forward.

Commissioner Infante-Green also reported on the Community Design Teams (CDTs), a diverse group of 45 Providence residents, including parents, students, teachers, advocates, and community leaders, who have volunteered countless hours to the development of a Turaround Plan for Providence schools. She invited Council members to join the CDTs on Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, for a Community Day event, where the general public will come together and give feedback on school improvement strategies that the three Design Teams have been developing over an 11-week period, which will ultimately be incorporated into the Plan.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green reported that as routine for this time of year, the new charter school seats call for action and application, were recently released. Given that many of last year's applicants took RIDE's constructive and supportive feedback, RIDE anticipates an even more robust applicant pool this year. The new Request for Proposal has two new priorities: Serving students who are educationally disadvantaged; and who attend low performing schools. Proposals are due by June and Council discussion and approval will occur in the fall/winter.

Commissioner Infante-Green invited Council Members to the March 10<sup>th</sup> celebration to announce the winners of the XQ-RI Challenge, a first-of-its-kind State level partnership with XQ to support 20 high school teams through a community-driven redesign process. Regardless of who wins, all 20 teams will receive ongoing coaching to support their redesign.

Commissioner Infante-Green ended her report by sharing that last Saturday she went to two well-attended events – A civic engagement hosted by the Alliance of RI Southeast Asians for Education (ARISE) to discuss having a campaign on how to pre-register students, as well as the NEA-RI Read Across America event.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Long-Term Education Plan – Chart a Course, Stay the Course: Rhode Island’s Path to a World Class Public Education System

Neil Steinberg, President and CEO of the Rhode Island Foundation, began the presentation by noting that this is not a RI Foundation Plan, but rather a Plan prepared by a very diverse group, and a Plan for Rhode Island. Mr. Steinberg emphasized that the Foundation convened a very diverse group of stakeholders, albeit, not the most diverse group in Rhode Island, however, it was about equity and outcomes for *all* students, and that is who is in charge. He stressed that at the end, everyone on the Committee signed the endorsement of the Plan, sending a powerful message, and although not legally binding, he views it as a moral obligation. The Committee was charged with two ground rules – look long-term and leave your stripes at the door, as the Plan was designed to be inspirational and aspirational. He believes that this is the moment in time for public education in the State as there is bond money for schools, legislation that hopefully moves, new leadership, and now a long-term plan.

Next, Mr. Steinberg went over the 10-year vision – Rhode Island’s world-class public education system prepares *all* students to succeed in life and contribute productively to the community, and the cores values that must be put into place in order to equitably and urgently deliver on that vision. He also went over the four priorities – High Standards; Clear Governance; Educator Support; and Investment Priorities. He noted that the RI Foundation has committed \$1M to the initiative, above and beyond the \$57M in grants announced last year. Though not much, the funds are available to groups, districts, and to anyone who will advance the strategies outlined in the Plan. The Plan will also inform as the basis for RIDE’s Strategic Plan and the RI Foundation

will take the responsibility of keeping the Committee together to serve in an advisory role to RIDE. He is also asking stakeholders, including the Council, the General Assembly, the business community, and others, to endorse the Plan, which he sees it as a moral obligation. In addition to the \$1M, the Foundation has also established a Fund for RI Public Education, where individuals and foundations can give money, which with the Commissioner's guidance, will be used not only for Providence, but for the entire State.

b. Proposed Revisions to the School Health Regulations, for the Purpose of Public Review and Comment

David Sienko, RIDE's Director of Student, Community and Academic Supports, and Rosemary Reilly-Chammat, RIDE's Health Specialist, gave an overview of the proposed revisions to the Regulations for School Health Programs. The proposed revisions are being promulgated for public review and comment pursuant to the authority conferred under R.I. General Laws governing school health, and under the powers and duties of the RI Department of Education (RIDE) and the RI Department of Health (DOH), respectively. Some of the changes include professional qualifications and practices; health education; medication administration (requirements for medical marijuana and CBD oil administration); and reporting of child abuse. In addition, the proposed revisions will ensure that the regulations are aligned with the Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island, and the new Office of Regulatory Reform Code of Regulations requirements, including use of consistent language/terms, and removal of superfluous language. The next step is for DOH to conduct a public hearing, including a public comment period. Once that process is completed, DOH and RIDE will review the feedback, and if there are no major changes, the proposed regulations will be presented to the Council for final approval and adoption.

c. PerkinsV State Plan

Stephen Osborn, RIDE's Chief of Innovation, and Spencer Sherman, RIDE's Director of the Office of College and Careers, began by giving an overview of Perkins law. Perkins is the primary federal law overseeing Career and Technical Education (CTE), which provides about \$6M/year in funding for CTE programs in Rhode Island. Perkins was reauthorized in 2018, strengthening CTE for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (Perkins V). Rhode Island is currently operating under the Perkins IV plan, which was written in 2006, and over the last few months has been developing a new 5-year plan with input from different stakeholders representing schools, industry, postsecondary education, and government. The Plan, which is posted for public review and comment from February 4 through March 6, will be submitted to the Governor for review and approval, and will be submitted to the feds by April 15, 2020, before it takes effect on July 1, 2020.

Council Members inquired as to when RIDE plans to revise the Career and Technical Education Regulations as there is language in those regulations around students being able to attend any CTE program in the State, that they would like to see addressed.

Mr. Osborn replied that the Council made a decision in 2012 that students should have the ability to determine which programs are the best fit for them. He expressed that there are many sides to the stories being told and that it warrants a future conversation with the Council.

Next, Mr. Sherman went over the key themes in the new Plan:

- Align to industry demand
- Focus on results
- Unify federal and state policies
- Promote Equity
- Empower schools and LEAs to make decisions
- Connect to middle schools

d. Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island – Overview of Proposed Revisions

Lisa Foehr, RIDE's Chief of Teaching and Learning, went over some of the areas that will be addressed in the next phase of revisions to the regulations that are designed to impact the teacher pipeline. At the March 31<sup>st</sup> Council meeting, there will be an introduction to some adjustments designed to provide flexibility, and which RIDE believes will have an immediate impact on the teacher pipeline. In round two, following a review of the current certification system, there will be additional adjustments designed to align instructional and world class talent goals.

e. Cross-Systems Collaboration to Support School Culture and Behavioral Health

In the interest of time and to afford ample time to discuss such an important topic, Council Members suggested moving the presentation to a future meeting. Chair McConaghy agreed and asked that the matter be placed as the first item on the March 31<sup>st</sup> meeting agenda.

f. Academy for Career Exploration Charter Renewal

Commissioner Infante-Green noted that on February 20, 2020, the Academy for Career Exploration (ACE) Board of Trustees voted unanimously to relinquish their charter on June 30, 2020. The decision ultimately came down to acknowledgment that the school wasn't making the

progress necessary to address the conditions that RIDE identified during the renewal process last December. The school has notified all of its students (146) and families and has been working with RIDE staff and the Providence School District (PPSD) to ensure that all students are placed in the best school setting (different charter school or at PPSD) for the upcoming school year. ACE teachers (16) are part of the Providence Teachers Union and will be placed in the teacher pool and have an opportunity to be part of PPSD's teacher placement process in September.

Council Members commended RIDE staff for their effort in communicating the concerns early on and very clearly defining parameters, making the best of a bad situation.

**6. ACTION ITEMS:**

- a. Approval of the Proposed Revisions to the School Health Regulations, for the Purpose of Public Review and Comment

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 approve the proposed revisions to the School Health Regulations, for the purpose of public review and comment

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

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

YEAS: 8

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

- b. Approval of the Academy for Career Exploratin Charter Renewal Amendment Request

On a motion duly made by Marta Martinez and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines, it was

**VOTED:** That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education move to approve the Academy for Career Exploration’s charter amendment, permitting the school to end its charter term on June 30, 2020

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

**7. ADJOURNMENT:**

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

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

YEAS: 8

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.