



Enclosure 2a
December 3, 2019

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
November 19, 2019

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Board Chair Cottam welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. She noted for the record that Council Chair McConaghy and Member Gaines would not be joining the meeting, 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,
*Lauren Griffiths, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

Absent: Daniel McConaghy
Jo Eva Gaines

[*Ex-officio, non-voting member]

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Marta Martinez, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the November 19, 2019, Meeting

Vote: 7 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, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the October 22, 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 October 22, 2019, Meeting

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 2

[Member Callahan and Field abstained from the vote as they did not attend the October 22, 2019 meeting of the Council]

3. OPEN FORUM

Seven individuals spoke in support of the University High School charter proposal.

A letter of support was submitted by the Barr Foundation and entered into the record.

4. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Infante-Green began her report by giving an update on the new Dyslexia legislative mandate – The Right to Read Act, which outlines expectations for LEAs (Local Education Agencies), RIDE and educator preparation programs regarding supports for literacy development, with a focus on addressing students who have dyslexia. She reported that RIDE received funding to add a literacy specialist who would bring a focus to RIDE’s work with struggling readers, students who have dyslexia, and other reading disabilities. This year, the General Assembly also included \$125K in the RIDE budget to support activities related to the bill. RIDE has recruited a group of passionate literacy educators, including three K-12 educators and two postsecondary education professors, to assist in developing awareness documents, guidance and other supports to schools and districts. RIDE will develop a series of awareness modules that can be accessed by all educators, and will offer a state-wide training opportunity

to go deeper in learning the teaching of structured literacy. In addition, RIDE is working to identify Professional Learning approved by the International Dyslexia Association for future offerings and will be posting new website resources spotlighting best practices in supporting students who have dyslexia and other language-based differences.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green gave a brief update on Providence. She shared that RIDE is waiting for the results of the financial audit that she requested, which will guide further decisions. She has also looked at what talent needs to change at the central office to better support schools and everyone across the system, and has met with students, teachers and principals every week since the state takeover, to get a deep understanding of existing barriers and how to remove them. She announced that on day one of state intervention, RIDE released the nomination form for the Community Design Teams, a formalized, community-led structure through which Providence parents, students, educators, and community leaders will help develop the Turnaround Plan directly. Nominations for the Community Design Teams are being accepted until November 22nd and to date, RIDE has received 125 applications. Commissioner Infante-Green encouraged Council Members to share the opportunity with their contacts as well.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. 2019 School Accountability Release

Scott Gausland, RIDE's Director of Data, Analysis, and Research, went over the School Report Card Release Timeline, what changed in 2018 – RI's Accountability System has updated indicators to meet ESSA requirements and represent our values; now uses Star Ratings, which are clear and user-friendly, and what is new for 2019 – RI's Accountability System has two new measures at the high school level – Commissioner's Seal, which measures high school graduate proficiency in mathematics and English language arts; and Postsecondary Success, which measures high school graduate credential attainment. Together, these are the "Diploma Plus measures." RIDE has offered to meet with school and district leaders to discuss their data and how to use the data to support student outcomes. Mr. Gausland also went over the components of RI's Accountability System – Performance Measures, Start Ratings, School Improvement, and Report Cards, and how to interpret the School Star Ratings.

Council Members asked whether districts have a better understanding of the coding when reporting chronic absenteeism, which didn't seem to be the case last year.

Next, Rachel Peterson, Education Specialist, went over the 2019 School Start Rating Performance Levels, highlighting that this year a new column was added for the Diploma Plus Measures – Commissioner's Seal and Postsecondary Success. She also went over the number of schools and percentage of schools by grade span; the 2019 star ratings versus the 2018 star ratings; and the reason for star ratings. Ms. Peterson highlighted that in 2019, 28 schools decreased in star rating, 44 schools increased, and 232 schools stayed the same. She also went over how ESSA requires identification of RI's lowest performing schools, which are schools at the bottom five-percent for both achievement and growth; graduation rate is less than 67%; or the school has the lowest score for all applicable non-graduation indicators, and one or two points for graduation, if applicable. In addition, ESSA requires identification of RI schools with low-performing subgroups. This year, RI has 22 schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), with many of them being Providence schools.

Council Members praised the new data reporting system, stating that it is comprehensive, yet easy to navigate; discussed the need to recognize the schools that made significant improvement, and the need for those schools to share their best practices with other districts. They also discussed the topic of curriculum and the critical need to provide the proper resources in order for implementation to be successful.

Next, Pascale Thompson, RIDE's School Improvement Coordinator, walked Council Members through the School Improvement System under ESSA. She expressed that once a school is identified as in need of improvement, the School Improvement Team provides heavy technical assistance. The process entails that schools and districts conduct a needs assessment, select evidence-based interventions, based-off of that needs assessment, and apply with a school improvement plan for school improvement funding (1003 school improvement funding). She stressed that a critical component to this work is the involvement of Community Advisory Boards (CABs), which are essentially a group of community members who have a stake in the school, but who do not have a financial relationship with the district. With the support of RIDE's School Improvement Team, CAB members work alongside school improvement teams to build a comprehensive school improvement plan and ensure that the plan is being implemented to fidelity. In the spring, CAB members will report-out at a Council meeting.

Council Members once again expressed their concerns with schools that exited the system due to the five-percent designation, but who were not ready and could benefit from the level of support that RIDE provides. Ms. Thompson replied that although necessary, it is impossible with a team of three on RIDE's School Improvement team, for the agency to continue to provide direct support to one star schools. Council Members also suggested scheduling separate meetings to discuss these issues and asked that RIDE provide them with the number of students who are in the 22 schools currently identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI).

Mr. Osborn ended the presentation by sharing data on the 253 student subgroups that have been identified for Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) in 117 schools, which would be identified for CSI if they were their own school. He also presented data on the 369 student subgroups identified for Targeted Support and Intervention (TSI) in 158 schools, which would be identified as one-star schools if they were their own school. He noted that if schools fall into these two buckets for four consecutive years, they will become either a CSI or a TSI school.

b. Fast Track Principal Regulations - Overview

Lisa Foehr, Chief of RIDE's Division of Teaching and Learning, began by giving some context to the conversation and reminded Council Members that during the last legislative session, a bill was passed to provide a fast track to principal certification. Tonight's conversation is the beginning of multiple conversations around how RIDE will draft, and ultimately adopt, regulations to support the implementation of the legislation. The intent of the legislation was to provide a new pathway to building administrator certification for experienced educators; build on existing pathways; designed to increase the pipeline of principals and encourage "grow your own" approach, for educators who are already employed in districts. There are 515 educators across the state who are currently in a role for which they are using their building administrator certification, and another 384 individuals who hold the certificate and are working in RI, but are not using the certificate in a principal role. The legislation outlined several details that would push RIDE in the direction of incorporating those into regulations and then figuring out how those details fall into our current system and structure. These details sets up two categories: Eligibility - 10 years of experience; evaluation ratings; demonstrated leadership; and Master's degree - Legislative Requirements that have to be in place for someone to earn their principal certification - complete three course areas: finance, law, program evaluation; complete year-long internship where employed; have already lead a district or school initiative; and pass the assessment requirements. At this juncture, RIDE has to work through a proposed regulatory process to implement the legislation and be able to fit it into the current structure for licensure

and certification in RI. Ms. Foehr clarified that reciprocity still stands in RI and that passage of this legislation does eliminate nor negate any of the work that the Council approved in regulation. It is only a completely new and different pathway to principal certification, with outlined eligibility requirements that RIDE has to be held to and in turn hold candidates to.

c. New Charter School Proposal – University High School

Commissioner Infante-Green framed the discussion by noting that the RIDE Charter Team has completed an, almost year long, review and evaluation process for charter new seat proposals. She stressed that this was the largest applicant pool in over five years and of the five applicants, four have decided to withdraw. RIDE is open to any applicant taking the feedback from the team and reapplying in future cycles.

After introducing Germain Curtis, RIDE's new Charter Team Member, Mr. Osborn provided the Council a brief overview of charter public school landscape in Rhode Island. He shared that public charter schools are tuition-free schools, which in Rhode Island cannot be operated or managed by a for-profit entity, are open to all students, operated by independent boards and under a contract with the authorizer who holds them accountable, and are intended to be vanguards, laboratories, and an expression of the on-going and vital state interest in the improvement of education.

Next, Mr. Curtis went over the lottery and enrollment process, weights and preferences, and RIDE's oversight of charters, which includes directly monitoring lotteries and addressing parent concerns and compliance issues.

Next, Paula Barnes, RIDE's Charter School Coordinator, went over the funding and facilities aspect of charter schools and highlighted that like other schools of choice, such as state schools, charters are funded at the sending district's tuition rate. RIDE publicly posts these rates annually, and the local per pupil payment rates are reduced by the greater of either seven-percent, or the difference in defined expenditures between traditional districts and Charter districts. Charters either lease or purchase their facilities and are only eligible for 30% of housing aid, compared to 80% for traditional districts, reimbursement for projects approved with the School Building Authority.

Next, Mr. Osborn went over data on the family demand for school options, noting the steady increase (10,317 unique students applying for charter schools last year), and where the demand is coming from (49% coming from Providence, followed by Pawtucket at 18% and Central Falls

at 9%). Mr. Osborn stressed that this year RIDE prioritized proposals that focused on increasing the number of high-quality education options for students in communities that have a combination of CSI schools, and communities with educationally disadvantaged students – economically disadvantaged, differently-abled, and multilingual learners.

Lastly, Ms. Barney went over the recommendation for the University High School’s proposal for a new charter, which will serve Providence students and intent to serve 100% multilingual learners using a weighted lottery. The program centers on a year-round school model utilizing a mastery-based curriculum, grounded in restorative practices and language acquisition, with an opportunity to earn credit-bearing certificates as well as an associate’s degree through dual enrollment courses. She noted that there were some concerns with the proposal and that similar to the Charette Charter School that was approved last year, this school will have some specific conditions that have to be met before final approval is granted – Detailing the systems and structures for supporting differently-abled students and multilingual learners and demonstrating how their systems are aligned to the state standards and graduates are meeting graduation requirements, despite the non-traditional model, and delineate the role of Roger Williams folks on the Board and address potential conflicts of interest. The school will be housed at the Roger Williams College Providence Campus.

6. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Martinez, 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:

Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Gara Field, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

YEAS: 7

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0