



**Enclosure 2b**  
**April 23, 2019**

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON  
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
March 26, 2019**

**COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

---

The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education met in a joint meeting of the Board of Education on Tuesday, March 26, 2019, in the Paff Auditorium, URI Providence Campus, Providence, Rhode Island.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

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

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

**[\*Ex-officio, Non-voting Member]**  
**[\*\*Arrived at 5:35 p.m.]**

**Absent:** 0

Chair McConaghy noted for the record that there was a quorum present for the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education.

**2. 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 meeting of March 26, 2019

**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, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

**NAYS:** 0

[Member Field arrived after the approval of the agenda]

### **3. OPEN FORUM**

Chair McConaghy noted for the record that no one had signed up to speak.

### **4. CHAIRMAN REMARKS**

Board Chair Cottam welcomed everyone to the joint meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education and the full Board of Education for the purpose of providing advice and consent on the appointment of Ms. Angélica Infante-Green to serve as the next R.I. Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Chair Cottam noted for the record that in accordance with R.I.G.L. §16-60-60, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, with the advice and consent of the R.I. Board of Education, shall appoint the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and that the Council is the employer of the Commissioner. As such, both the vote to appoint the position and entering into an employment agreement with her are the purview of the Council, not the full Board. However, as Board Chair, she felt that it was important that the full Board be present to hear the discussion between Ms. Infante-Green and the Council.

### **5. REMARKS OF THE COMMISSIONER**

Commissioner Wagner began by expressing how thrilled he is with the nomination of Angélica Infante-Green as the next R.I. Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. He described Angélica as a strong, smart, and effective leader, with a track record of moving outcomes and advancing equity for all kids. He reiterated his stance that leaders change, but that the work continue and he is very confident that Angélica will not only take the work that has been done to date, but will bring her own voice and perspective to that work and extend it and make it even better.

### **6. DISCUSSION ITEM**

- a. Discussion with and regarding the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Search Finalist, Angélica Infante-Green, for the purpose of appointment

Next, Chair McConaghy opened the floor for Angélica Infante-Green to address the Council.

Ms. Infante-Green began by expressing that it has been an honor to be selected as a nominee for the position. She went over a slide-deck, which began with a photograph of her mother, someone she described as a champion for education, a no-nonsense type of person, and her rock. She shared that her commitment is to ensure that every child in Rhode Island has the type of education that gives them a real future, and not just on paper - something that she has, that her mom fought for, and that she herself fights for everyday for all the students that she represents.

She went on to share that she is committed to not changing the fundamentals that the Governor and the Council have laid out, however, there is a need to get more serious about ensuring that every student has a rich, rigorous, and challenging education that leads to something bigger, which is not the case, when looking at the data.

Ms. Infante-Green went over the recent RICAS scores and graduation rates, and shared that although the scores are not the only measure that should be looked at, the single-digit performance numbers in both English Language Arts and mathematics, and the gaps in the major subgroups, are startling. She stressed the urgency for folks to know that this is our point of departure. She shared her excitement with the grade 3 results, attributing the evidence to the work that is already taking place in the early grades.

Next, Ms. Infante-Green shared R.I. SAT data for “College Ready” Benchmarks, underscoring the fact that only one EL student in the entire state met the benchmark.

Ms. Infante-Green also summarized her “take-aways,” highlighting that there has been little growth overall on the PARC exam between 2015 and 2017; an increase in gaps for vulnerable groups, particularly in Providence; some progress in the early grades, underlining the need for Pre-K; and the large and growing gap with Massachusetts, which gets worse as kids get older.

She also stressed that it’s imperative that changes take place now, and that if the current system is not good enough for her kids, it is not good enough for any kid. She gave kudos to Ken and the Council for aligning the standards and shared her excitement for coming to Rhode Island, a State that already has high standards and an assessment that measures those high standards.

She reiterated that the fundamentals won’t change, but the paradigm and how the work gets done, do have to change. She also clarified that when she says “ALL” students, she means that it has to be done in tandem and that no student can be ignored – from the struggling student, to the student who is excelling and can be pushed even harder.

Ms. Infante-Green ended her presentation by stressing the need for everyone (teachers, parents, students, administrators, and the community at large) to roll-up their sleeves and work together with urgency towards rich and rigorous learning, to ensure equity and excellence for every child, because for some of them, this is life or death.

Next, Council members were given the opportunity to ask questions of Ms. Infante Green. They asked her to explain what her vision is for getting Rhode Island’s performance to the same level as Massachusetts, a state that has been investing in its support systems for a very long time; how she defines rigor; and what can the Council do to help her meet her vision.

Ms. Infante-Green shared that her vision is to collaborate with those closest to the work who best know the needs of their communities, and figuring out if that is in alignment with what the data reveals. She believes that All students can meet expectations and she expects every student to be challenged by instruction that is being led by a meaningful curriculum. She also expressed that she envisions that in five years, schools will feel safe and inviting, and places

where students can talk about their learning, and where teachers and administrators will feel supported in driving the work. She asked that Council members support her and the work, as well as hold her accountable, provide her with their counsel and guidance during difficult conversations, which are all necessary in order to move the needle forward.

## 7. ACTION ITEM

- a. Appointment of Angélica Infante-Green as Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and authorization of the Chair of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education to negotiate an employment agreement with the Commissioner, whose appointment is subject to advice and consent of the Board of Education.

On a motion duly made by Karen Davis and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

**VOTED:** That, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education appoints Ms. Angélica Infante Green as Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and authorizes the Chair of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education to negotiate an employment agreement with the Commissioner.

Prior to the vote, Board Chair Cottam expressed that this is a very exciting moment in education in Rhode Island, for our students and their families, our teachers, as we have spent the last four years laying a foundation that we can be proud of, focused on things such as:

- Expanding Pre-K;
- Early literacy;
- Quality curriculum;
- Career pathways for all students;
- Improving school facilities; and
- Professional development for educators

Chair Cottam stressed the need to stay the course and build on the work that Commissioner Wagner started. Although there is lots of work to do, she is confident that with Angélica's passion for her students, coupled with her background and her ability to collaborate with all sectors, Rhode Island will succeed.

Council Chair McConaghy also expressed his support of Ms. Infante-Green as the next Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. He noted that he has been impressed by Ms. Infante-Green's passion, energy, commitment, and grit, to take on the challenges that Rhode Island is facing, and that he is confident that she will take what the Council and Commissioner Wagner had started, to the next level.

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

b. Approval of the Proposed Revisions to the Regulations on Comprehensive Early Childhood Programs

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

**VOTED:** That, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the proposed revisions to the Regulations on Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Programs, for the purpose of Public Review and Comment

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

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines, 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: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis,  
Gara Field, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and  
Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

The Council on Elementary and Secondary portion of the joint meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.