



Enclosure 2a
May 12, 2020

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
April 21, 2020

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Chair McConaghy welcomed everyone to the April 21, 2020, virtual 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 Colleen Callahan and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the April 21, 2020, virtual Meeting

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

[Chair Cottam joined the meeting after the approval of the agenda]

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the April 7, 2020, Meeting

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

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the minutes of the April 7, 2020, Meeting

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

[Chair Cottam joined the meeting after the approval of the minutes]

3. OPEN FORUM

Chair McConaghy announced that no one had signed up to speak.

4. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Infante-Green began by giving an update on Distance Learning, which has set RI apart from many states. She praised the entire education community who has risen to the challenge in many remarkable ways. She also shared that RIDE recently issued a Distance Learning guidance document to districts, that focused on two priorities: ensuring that learning continues and prioritizing genuine connections with students and families. The document provides best practices to help LEAs make decisions about instruction, grading, attendance, and supports for differently-abled students and multilingual learners. RIDE staff is also ensuring that all students have the devices and internet access they need to access learning online and she is grateful to the RI Foundation for a \$100,000 technology grant and the challenge for the community to match it. Knowing that Distance Learning is a learning curve for everyone, RIDE partnered with the Highlander Institute and launched the RI Distance Learning Helpline that was previously only available to teachers, but is now open to parents and guardians who have questions on how best to support students during their distance learning experience.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green reported on the April Reading Challenge. More than 10,600 students have participated and have logged more than \$550,000 minutes. She acknowledged Books Are Wings, Reach Out and Read RI, and the RI Center for the Book for helping deliver more than 4,000 book packets to families in 14 school districts. She also thanked the RI Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals for giving a donation so that 6,800 books to communities most in needs, and Barnes and Noble for giving a prize package of books worth more than \$2,000 to schools with the most reading minutes.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green shared that on March 10th, a celebration was held at the State House to announce and honor all 20 XQ plus RI teams:

- Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts and Ponaganset High School were named XQ Schools and each will receive a \$500,000 implementation grant;
- 360 High School in Providence and Woonsocket High School will each receive "Accelerator" grants of \$120,000 to advance their bold ideas for whole-school transformation; and
- The remaining 16 teams from the planning phase will each receive a \$20,000 Momentum Award to continue to pilot ideas they expressed as part of their redesign.

RIDE intends to provide coaching support to all 20 teams and is eager to see what the next two years of implementation and piloting will offer RI students.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green shared that last month the Providence Community Design Teams (CDTs) presented its draft recommendations to the broader Providence community. Called the Community Design Day, RIDE hosted a science-fair style event at Asa Messer Elementary School, where roughly 200 residents came to listen, speak, and engage with members of the design team to provide feedback on their recommendations. Since then, the CDTs have submitted their final recommendations to RIDE and PPSD.

Commissioner Infante-Green ended her report by sharing that RIDE, together with our partners in the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, the University of Rhode Island, and the Annenberg Institute at Brown University, have been awarded a 3.24 million dollar federal grant to improve equity outcomes for students across the State. The project will link new data that helps us understand the 360 degree view of our students, including sharing data across state agencies that allows for a broader look at the challenges disadvantaged students face both inside and outside the classroom.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Proposed Revisions to the Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in RI –
1st read of redline version

Ana Riley, Deputy Commissioner for Teaching and Learning and Lisa Foehr, Chief of Teaching and Learning, gave an overview of the proposed changes and noted that RIDE is proposing changes in two phases – adjustments to provide flexibility, while maintaining quality and allowing for the immediate impact on increasing the number of educators, and in phase two, additional adjustments designed to align instructional and world class talent goals. They went over the proposed certification areas and the summary of proposed certification areas; expansion of inter-state flexibility agreement, including the list of states eligible for RI certification, highlighting that candidates from states that are not eligible must demonstrate meeting RI testing requirements in the applicable areas or provide evidence of three years of effective teaching experience; fast-track principals – expert residency certificate – opportunity to offer a pathway for experienced teachers seeking a principal certificate; special education certificates; all grades special education deaf and hard of hearing certificates; all grades ESL Pre-K 12 certificate; fast-track principal – full certificate requirements; and other certification section edits.

The proposed changes will go through the normal regulatory process, with the caveat that the public hearings will be held virtually.

- b. Proposed Certification Test Changes – Request for Approval

Ms. Foehr went over the three tests (Superintendent Licensure Exam, Middle Grade Science, and Reading Specialist/Consultant) that Educational Testing Services (ETS) has regenerated. She explained that as of this coming September, the old tests will no longer be offered, and that by regulation, the Council has to approve the new tests and recommended cut-scores. She noted that multiple validation studies were done on each of the tests and that representatives from Rhode Island were part of the studies. She stressed that although the scores are different, it does not necessarily mean that they are higher or that the tests are more difficult than the previous ones.

- c. 2019 Charter School Annual Performance Review and 2020 Renewal Review

Stephen Osborn, Chief of Innovation, began by explaining that there isn't any new information for the schools that were up for renewal last fall. The information being presented is as of

the fall 2019 accountability scores and the performance of the four schools that are up for renewal this coming fall. He reminded Council members that three years ago we had our first batch of three year renewals and being presented are three of the four schools that are up for renewal this year – Beacon, Highlander Elementary and Middle/High School, and Sheila “Skip” Nowell Leadership Academy. A big part of the performance framework is school accountability and charter school visits, which were scheduled to start on March 16, but given the current situation, RIDE staff will be working with the schools over the next couple of months to figure out a way to best replicate the process and make an informed recommendation.

d. Presentation on Cross Systems Collaboration to Support School Culture and Behavioral Health

David Sienko, Director of Student, Community and Academic Supports, began by thanking RIDE’s School-Health Team - Dr. Rosemary Reilly-Chamatt, Samantha Brinz, and Kristen Petrarca - for their hard work around social emotional learning and behavioral health.

Dr. Reilly-Chamatt went over the data that demonstrate that mental health concerns are common and which underscores the need to identify and address behavioral health concerns early, particularly given the link between behavioral health conditions and suicide, especially among youth. The data also speaks to the fragmented behavioral health care system as well as the need to build capacity across a continuum of services for mental health. She spoke about the current opportunities for funding, underscoring the role that the Council, state and federal government, and RIDE, have played in securing funds to support behavioral health.

Next, Ms. Petrarca went over the SAMSHA Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness And Resiliency in Education) grant opportunity to expand RIDE’s capacity to increase mental health literacy; provide training to school personnel; and connect schools to needed services.

Ms. Brinz went over the School Climate Transformation Network, which has the goal of increasing equitable outcomes and create and maintain safe schools campuses. There are nine districts and schools (three elementary schools, four middle schools, and two high schools) in the network.

Next, Dr. Reilly-Chamatt shared that RIDE is part of CoIIN (Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network), through the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland. There is no funding associated with it, however, RIDE is one of 10 SEAs (State

Education Agencies) that were selected competitively to participate, and one of five states that is focusing on the development of comprehensive school mental health systems. The other five states are focused on school-based health centers. She also went over the accomplishments in year one of the project.

Ms. Petrarca went over what the next stage of the programs and grants will look like, once schools are back in session.

Dr. Reilly-Chamatt ended the presentation by sharing that the health team is in the throes of supporting schools around COVID-19 and this really underscores why mental health supports are more important now than ever to support those students most at need. To that end, RIDE has been disseminating information to districts on policies supporting telehealth, which enables full access to behavioral health services. The team has also been compiling resources to support school mental health, as well as creating tools to support transition back to school. Those resources went live on the RIDE website that afternoon.

7. 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: 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

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.