



Enclosure 2a
December 7, 2021

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
November 2, 2021

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Board Chair Cottam welcomed everyone to the November 2, 2021, meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. Virtual access was provided to members of the general public. Chair Cottam declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: *Milly Asherov, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines

Absent: Michael Almeida, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill

[*Ex-officio, non-voting member]

Chair Cottam noted for the record that the update on Providence was being moved to the last item on the agenda after the update on the Statewide RICAS, SAT, and DLM results.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

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

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the November 2, 2021, meeting

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the October 5, 2021, 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 5, 2021, meeting

Vote: 4 members voted in the affirmative, 2 members abstained and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis,

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: Jo Eva Gaines and Patricia DiCenso did not attend the October 5, 2021, meeting

3. COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Infante-Green began by sharing that earlier in the day she joined Governor McKee, House Education Chair and LEAP Task Force member Joe McNamara, Woonsocket Superintendent Patrick McGee, and other school leaders, to announce the launching of the LEAP District Support Program, an initiative that will help students and communities that were hit the hardest by the pandemic. The 2-year program is designed to support and align post-pandemic recovery efforts to the recommendations of the LEAP Task Force with \$20M in matching funds.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green expressed that this is a time to be bold and strategic and she thanked the entire education community for the tremendous efforts throughout the pandemic to keep students engaged and learning all year round. Gathering the data from the recent release of the 2021 results of RICAS, SAT, and Dynamic Learning Maps (DLMs), and determining a new baseline for schools across the State, was deeply necessary, and RIDE is grateful to everyone who made it possible. She noted that the uncertainty, stress, and other external factors related to COVID affected students' learning, and we can either do the easy thing, which would be to go back to what we were doing before the pandemic, or look forward, tackle the challenges head-on, and come together to build an education system that is even better than before. RIDE, along with the LEAP Task Force, spent last year planning ways to address the effects that his disruption had on students and we are looking forward to building new and better community-led systems of education.

Commissioner Infante-Green went on to report that the District Support Program announcement follows the launch of the Facility Equity Initiative pilot program that was announced a few weeks ago. RIDE is now accepting applications for the program that will fund school improvements for the State's underserved students. In the first year, the pilot program will provide \$10M to serve the five school districts with the highest state fund reimbursement rates. She expressed that she is excited to share that there are more announcements of different programs and initiatives scheduled in the coming months, in line with the recommendation of the LEAP Task Force.

Commissioner Infante-Green further reported that another focus of the LEAP Task Force and RIDE, is to ensure equity in education and better serve those who were particularly hurt by the pandemic. While we know that all students were impacted, we know that those already facing challenges and barriers to success, were more severely impacted – Black and Latino students,

multilingual learners, differently abled students, and those students living in poverty. Last month, RIDE kicked-off this year's Educators of Color meeting, attended by around 30 people, and Diversity Talks student speakers were keynotes for the kick-off event. The group reviewed their mission and RIDE Strategic Plan priorities, and RIDE shared updates about work that will take place this coming year, such as a mentoring program for educators of color, anti-bias training and recruitment, as well as hiring guidance; all topics that evolved from recommendations of the committee last year. RIDE will continue to engage the Educators of Color Committee to support the design and implementation of the mentoring program, anti-bias training modules, and other initiatives across the agency.

In closing, Commissioner Infante-Green emphasized that she looks forward to continuing to work with the Council to ensure that students, teachers, and school leaders have the support and resources necessary to address the effects of COVID.

4. OPEN FORUM

Three individuals addressed the Council, and two written statements were shared with the Council in advance of the meeting.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

b. CTE Industry-Specific Program Standards – Request for Council Endorsement

Deputy Commissioner Ana Riley, noted that starting in 2016, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Board of Trustees began developing and approving CTE Program Standards, which RIDE has adopted. RIDE uses these standards to define the level of rigor and quality that CTE programs must meet to prepare students for the needs of business and industry. She shared that the CTE Board of Trustees created these standards through collaborations between representatives from industry and education, organized around specific career clusters. These standards outline the skills and credentials required for students to succeed in specific career fields. Each standard includes a nationally recognized career cluster, the name of the program/career field, a culminating industry-recognized credential, applicable work-based learning requirements, an academic course of study, and the required courses. These are the credentials that RIDE uses under the accountability system and that are part of the Diplomas Plus metric. Following the amendments to R.I.G.L. 16-45.6.1 of 2021, RIDE is seeking a formal endorsement of these standards by the Council. These standards are already in use and have been previously approved by a vote of the CTE Boards and adopted by RIDE.

c. Update on District Support Program

Deputy Commissioner Roldán introduced Kristen Danusis, Director of RIDE's Office of School and District Improvement, who has been in charge of operationalizing the work connected to the work that RIDE is doing with the Accountability Act. He also acknowledged the good work of Scott Gausland and Jennifer Carney, who have been intricately connected to this work.

Director Danusis gave an overview of the LEAP District Support Program, which is to provide those districts that were hit the hardest by the pandemic with very targeted and comprehensive supports. Those supports are being provided by both RIDE and other external partners, but are really focused on supporting district needs, specifically those that are aligned to the LEAP priorities and the goals outlined in RIDE's Strategic Plan. Another goal is to create an infrastructure for district improvement, which means working side-by-side with folks in each of the districts to put in a model that looks at continuous improvement based on their data, priorities and needs, and then creating pilot programs so that RIDE can look at whether these initiatives are getting the intended district outcomes. In addition to building district capacity, RIDE's team is also participating in all the professional development, trainings, and workshops, to build internal capacity, and replicate this model and process after the program is over. She noted that districts really appreciate that all the work is being aligned across RIDE, to strategically support them.

Next, Director Danusis went over how districts were selected; the nine districts that were identified as eligible (Central Falls, East Providence, Johnston, Newport, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick, and Woonsocket); the benefits of participation for districts (between \$1.4M to \$4M per district); the commitments throughout the program; the type of work districts will be asked to invest in – equity, expanded learning, instruction, student well-being, student engagement, talent, and school improvement; timeline; and next steps in the program.

d. RICAS, SAT and DLM Results

Lisa Foehr, RIDE's Chief of Teaching and Learning, kicked-off the presentation by noting that RIDE is grounding all the work around the Our Kids campaign and ensuring that everything being done is getting linked back to RIDE's Strategic Plan and the priorities of the LEAP Task Force. Ms. Foehr stressed that the RICAS assessments are administered in grades 3-8 in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, that the SAT is administered at the high school level, and the DLM assessments are administered to students with significant cognitive disabilities in ELA and mathematics in grades 3-8 and grade 11. Students must meet strict criteria to participate in the DLM alternate assessments.

Next, Ms. Foehr went over the impact that COVID had last year on schooling and on student outcomes, despite the exemplary efforts that educators made to manage the learning disruptions. She noted that unlike most states, Rhode Island worked hard to administer the full assessments to all students, because it felt that this baseline information would be critical in terms of moving forward. Ms. Foehr highlighted that the percentage of proficient students both in ELA and mathematics was higher for students who were mostly in-person, compared to those students who were mostly virtual.

Next, Dr. Phyllis Lynch, RIDE's Director of Instruction, Assessment and Curriculum, went over the major takeaways in this year's state assessments. She shared that student performance declined across the state in both ELA and mathematics, with the deepest decline in mathematics. Student participation also declined by 10% for RICAS and 9% for SAT, compared to 2019, and there were significant differences in the severity of the learning lost by students in urban districts versus those in suburban districts.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green went over the statewide participation rates, highlighting that middle school participation rates were lower than elementary, decreasing from 6th to 8th grade. In ELA, participation by subgroup was disproportionately lower for differently abled, economically disadvantaged, and homeless students than other students who participated, as well as for American Indian or Alaskan Native students.

Commissioner Infante-Green went on to share the statewide performance levels on ELA and mathematics, highlighting that in ELA, the percentage of students not meeting or partially meeting expectations increased, while the percentage of students meeting and exceeding expectations in 2021, decreased. One third of students met or exceeded expectations in ELA. Like ELA, middle school participation rates in mathematics are lower than elementary, with participation decreasing from 6th to 8th grade.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green went over the SAT participation rates. The federal requirement for participation across all tests and content areas is 90%, and with this year's 9% decrease due to the challenges of COVID, in a typical year, Rhode Island would not meet the requirements for participation. She emphasized that because Rhode Island's participation was lower, there wasn't much of a drop in ELA and mathematics performance.

Lastly, Ms. Foehr went over the participation data for DLM in ELA and mathematics, emphasizing that there are similar trends in participation compared to the rest of the student population, but a bit of an increase in the achievement level for this subgroup. She also highlighted some of the actions that RIDE is taking to accelerate what's possible for students going forward, grounded in the RIDE 2020-2025 Strategic Plan and LEAP Task Force recommendations.

e. Providence Update

Acting Superintendent Montañez began by expressing that he too is disappointed by the RICAS scores, but not at all surprised. He shared that as an elementary principal last year, he remembers firsthand how much the COVID impacted his students and their families. Students really struggled with virtual learning, especially at his school, which is a dual language school. Every single Providence student faced personal challenges related to the pandemic and learning disruption at some point throughout the year, which led to what is now a new baseline to improve student achievement. He stressed that the pandemic disproportionately impacted Providence, as the city saw one of the highest rates of transmission in the State and was one of the only districts that opened in a hybrid model instead of full-in person learning. While already in a crisis – attempting to repair the cracks of a broken system – the pandemic created more cracks in the foundation, but the district has already made significant strides to address major issues identified in the Johns Hopkins report.

Next, Erlin Rogel, PPDS's Chief of Staff, went over the district's RICAS results. He emphasized that this year's results came as no surprise. In general, PPDS's scores did not decline as much as peer, low-performing urban core districts, as there are some pockets of improvement, especially in ELA. The district saw the most significant decline in student proficiency in the third grade in

both ELA and mathematics, but an increase in the percentage of students meeting and exceeding expectations in ELA in fourth and seventh grades. Seven of PPSD’s high schools also saw some increases in ELA scores, which are being attributed to the fidelity of the new curriculum as it is meant to be implemented, an emphasis on teacher attendance, an emphasis on having students in chairs, and emphasizing the importance of student learning.

Acting Superintendent Montañez spotlighted the Anthony Carnevale Elementary School, which made big gains with increased ELA RICAS results by 9.3% (from 11.6% to 20.9%), attributing it to excellent teacher attendance, open lines of communication with families, the development of a support plan to rollout the new curriculum, and professional development for educators.

Chair Cottam suggested having the Anthony Carnevale Elementary School come to a future Council meeting to share best practices.

The Acting Superintendent concluded the presentation by highlighting upcoming PPSD initiatives to improve student outcomes – finalize the district’s ESSER III plan to accelerate student learning; expand the number of mental health support providers in every school; deliver over 10,000 hours of Multilingual Learner focused coaching and support to over 500 teachers; enhance professional development days to support teachers and staff; develop a dynamic data-dashboard that will provide real-time data to school leaders and teachers to help drive and improve instruction; provide principals with coaching and supports to become instructional leaders in their schools; and continue to re-align the district’s Capital Plan with the TAP so new construction is focused on improving instruction.

6. ACTION ITEMS:

- a. Endorsement of the CTE Industry-Specific Program Standards

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

VOTED:	That	the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education endorses the Career and Technical Education Industry-Specific Program Standards
	Vote:	6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:
	YEAS:	Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	0

b. Approval of the FY 2023 Capital Budget Request

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

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves and transmits the FY 2023 Capital Budget Request to the RI State Budget Office, and further approves its transmission to the RI Board of Education, for final approval

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

c. Approval of the FY 2022 Revised and FY 2023 Budget Submittals

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

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves and transmits the FY 2023 Current Service Level and FY 2022 Revised Budgets to the RI State Budget Office, and further approves their transmission to the RI Board of Education, for final approval

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

At this time, Chair Cottam announced that considering that it was getting late, and the fact that the Council had read the materials that were shared with them in advance, she would like to make a motion that the Council approve the terms and conditions of the employment agreement of the New Director of the William M. Davies, Jr., Career and Technical High School, without going into Executive Session. The Council would still go into Executive Session to discuss the evaluation of Commissioner Infante-Green's contract renewal.

On a motion duly made by Chair Cottam and seconded by Amy Beretta, it was

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education foregoes going into Executive Session to discuss the terms and conditions of the employment contract of the New Director of the William M. Davies, Jr., Career and Technical High School

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

8a - Approval of the Employment Agreement By and Between the Board of Trustees of the William M. Davies, Jr., Career and Technical High School and the Recommended Director, pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42-46-5(a)(1)

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 approves the terms and conditions of employment By and Between the Board of Trustees of the William M. Davies, Jr., Career and Technical High School and the newly appointed Director, Mary Watkins, for a three-year (3) period commencing November 29, 2021, and terminating on November 28, 2024.

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Cottam entertained a motion to enter Executive Session for discussion of:

8a. Contract renewal evaluation of Commissioner Infante-Green, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a)(1)

Chair Cottam noted for the record that Commissioner Infante-Green had been notified of her right to have the discussion in item 8a held in open session and that she has indicated no objection to the Council proceeding in executive session.

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 convenes in executive session pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a)(1) for the reason set forth above.

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, and Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: 0

All non-Council members in the audience were excused at this time.

The Council reconvened in open session at 7:58 p.m.

Chair Cottam reported that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

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 seal the minutes of the executive session held on November 2, 2021

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, and Jo Eva Gaines,

NAYS: 0

8. ADDITIONAL ACTION ITEMS

- b. Approval of the reappointment of Angélica Infante-Green, 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 reappointment is subject to the advice and consent of the RI Board of Education

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

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education approves the reappointment of Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary, and authorization of the Chair of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education to negotiate an employment agreement with the Commissioner, whose reappointment is subject to the advice and consent of the RI Board of Education

Vote: 5 members voted in the affirmative, 0 members abstained, and 1 member voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, and Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: Colleen Callahan

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Karen Davis, it was

VOTED: That the meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education Adjourns

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, and Jo Eva Gaines

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.