

Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, October 2, 2015

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Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. RIDE announces crowd-sourcing feature to build donor support for educator recognition, Teacher of the Year

We all had a great time on Saturday at the Providence WaterFire Salute to Rhode Island educators. Congratulations to all of the award-winning teachers, and thank you for supporting our educator-recognition programs. We want to let you know that you can become a generous benefactor of our Educator Recognition programs. We have established a crowd-sourcing feature so that everyone can join in to help us salute Rhode Island educators. We are seeking to raise \$100,000 through donors and through crowd-sourcing, and we will use the funds to support our Teacher of the Year Program. The donated funds will support:

- the salary of a co-teacher to work alongside the Teacher of the Year;
- classroom resources and professional development for the State Teacher of the Year and for all District Teachers of the Year;
- participation in the State Teachers of the Year national conference; and
- our annual Salute to Rhode Island Educators at WaterFire Providence.

You can donate as little as \$1 – or as much as you’d like! To make your donation, go to:

www.Ride.ri.gov/Givetoteachers

And please help us spread the word among all friends of education.

2. *Reminder:* RIDE will work with teams interested in designing the next American high school

We also want to remind you about the opportunity to form a team and enter the XQ Super School Project, a contest in which teams of students (age 13 or older) plus one adult team leader develop a plan to “design the next American high school.”

As described on the XQ Super School Project website:

Teams will unite and take on this important work of our time: rethinking and building schools that deeply prepare our students for the rigorous challenges of college, jobs, and life.

The XQ Institute, a California-based nonprofit corporation, will select five winning projects and will provide \$10 million in funds (over five years) for *each* winning project.

If you’re thinking about participating in this project, you might want to look at this article on “rethinking high schools” that the Center on Reinventing Public Education has published:

<http://www.crpe.org/thelens/rethinking-high-schools-past-efforts-should-inform-new-models>

You also might want to check out this site, “Education Reimagined,” from the Convergence Center for Policy Resolution:

<http://education-reimagined.org/>

Initial entries in the XQ Super School Challenge are due February 1, 2016. **November 15** is the deadline to share your concept and confirm eligibility. There is an XQ informational “road show” in Cambridge, Mass., on **Wednesday** (October 7) at 10 a.m. You can find more information on the XQ Super School Project website, at:

<http://xqsuperschool.org/challenge>

In addition to the support provided by the XQ Institute, we at RIDE and other Rhode Island partners would love to work with and provide support to anyone interested in forming a team to participate in this design project. Please let us know if you have any questions, if you are interested in attending the XQ Super School road show on Wednesday, or if you have a team that’s ready to launch: info@ride.ri.gov.

Regardless of who wins, the visioning process would be a powerful experience for your entire school community.

We have copied all high-school principals on this invitation.

3. *Reminder:* Registration open for Innovation Powered by Technology conference

Our 4th annual Innovation Powered by Technology Conference is scheduled for Saturday, October 17, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Rhode Island Convention Center, 1 Sabin St., Providence.

Register today to participate with and learn from your colleagues across Rhode Island and beyond. The presentations, keynote

speakers, conferences sessions, vendors and more will provide a rich environment for you to:

- connect with fellow educators and school leaders in systemic planning around the effective use of technology and digital learning;
- collaborate with and be inspired by educators and students across the state;
- immerse yourself in ideas, strategies and resources;
- contribute to the lessons learned; and
- meet face to face with well-respected professionals in your field.

This annual conference will be bigger than ever. We hope to register more than 1,000 students, educators, and community leaders for our conversation about technology in education

Register today, at:

<http://ride.ri.gov/TechnologyConference>

If you have questions about the conference, please contact Sonya Barbosa at techconference@ride.ri.gov.

4. AFT conference focuses on educator evaluations

On Wednesday, Board of Education Chair Barbara Cottam and I joined Board Member Colleen Callahan and Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals President Frank Flynn for a national American Federation of Teachers (AFT) conference in Washington. The conference, focused on educator evaluations, emphasized the i3 evaluation, and celebrated the

accomplishments of the Rhode Island AFT educators in developing the i3 system and putting it into action in AFT-represented school districts. West Warwick Superintendent Karen Tarasevich and the president of the West Warwick Teachers' Alliance, Sean Doyle, participated in a panel that AFT president Randi Weingarten led. Thanks to our AFT partners for the work you are doing and for inviting us to join you at this conference. See Board Member Callahan's photos from the conference here:

<https://twitter.com/Riftcol/status/649237962077663232/photo/1>.

5. Two Rhode Island teachers are finalists in grant contest; voting for contest winner is open through October

Two Rhode Island teachers are finalists in the Farmers Insurance Thank America's Teachers grant contest. Charles Myers, of the Woonsocket Area Career and Technical Center, is a finalist for a \$100,000 grant for his proposal: "21st-Century Solutions: Working Together for a Better Tomorrow." Elizabeth Reilly, a history teacher at North Kingstown High School, is a finalist for a \$2,500 grant for her proposal: "Well-Behaved Women Rarely Make HISTORY." Grant winners are selected by vote, and you can vote in each category, through the end of the month, at:

<https://www.thankamericasteachers.com/>.

Good luck, Charles and Elizabeth!

From RIDE

Assessments:

6. RIDE expects to release 2015 PARCC results on or about the week of November 16

We expect to publicly release the Rhode Island results of the Spring 2015 administration of the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments on or about the week of November 16, with the exact time and date still to be determined. On or about **November 9**, you will be able to access your district and school aggregated reports and well as confidential student-level data files, through the district exchange. All PARCC results data will be embargoed until the public release. As the release date approaches, we will continue to update you with more information.

7. *Reminder:* Pearson announces changes in testing technology for PARCC

Pearson has started to publish technical documentation for the next iteration of the PARCC assessment. Please review the latest [technology bulletins](#) to become familiar with technical changes since last year. Pearson will also be sending technology bulletins directly to the technology coordinators within each LEA. If your technology coordinator is not receiving these bulletins, please submit a support ticket with Pearson. For more detailed information regarding the technology, the [Pearson technology setup page](#) has information for each aspect of the testing technology.

There are two major changes that may affect LEAs, the first being that the Google Chrome web browser is not supported. Chromebooks are unaffected by this. This was the most-used browser in the state for PARCC testing last year. The second major change is that Pearson has released a [PARCC TestNav desktop](#)

[application](#). This application eliminates the dependency on Java and allows for a more secure testing environment. This application also allows you to migrate from the Chrome browser to the desktop application for Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux.

Data Collection:

8. *Reminder: Dual, concurrent enrollment data must be entered as soon as possible*

Using the Dual and Concurrent Enrollment in Postsecondary Institutions collection, LEAs report to RIDE through the Enrollment Census collection information regarding students who are concurrently or dually enrolled in your LEA as well as at a postsecondary institution.

It is important that the students who are dual or concurrently enrolled be entered into your enrollment data as soon as possible. State reporting and tuition reimbursement is dependent on this information.

If you have any questions about the dual/concurrent enrollment data collection, please submit a helpdesk ticket, at:

<https://support.ride.ri.gov>.

9. *Reminder: LEAs asked to submit 2015-16 TCS and Enrollment data*

Please submit your 2015-16 Teacher-Course-Student (TCS) data as soon as possible. The TCS collection is a daily collection; therefore, we continually update the data in our systems, so the data does not need to be perfect or complete on the initial upload. The TCS data are important, as these data form the foundation for many

data verifications and technology systems, including the Instructional Support System.

We still have some districts and charter public schools that have not submitted their enrollment data. The October 1 enrollment snapshot and report signoff are due on the **October 23**.

LEAs that have not submitted enrollment files hinder those other LEAs' ability to resolve duplicates and produce an accurate enrollment snapshot for this collection.

If you have any questions about the TCS data, please submit a help desk ticket, at:

<https://support.ride.ri.gov>.

10. *Reminder: Several data collections are open or due by the end of the month*

The following are some data-collection deadlines for October:

- October 1: [At-Home Instructed Students – Opens](#)
- October 1: [June Graduating Class Fall Membership - Opens](#)
- October 1: [Non-Certified Staff Report - Opens](#)
- October 23: [October 1 Snapshot - Enrollment Census - Due](#)
- October 23: [Submission and Snapshot 10/1 Reports - Enrollment Census - Due](#)

Information about upcoming data collections can be found on the [data collection calendar](#). Weekly collection [webinars](#) provide details regarding upcoming collections, along with a question-and-answer period.

From other organizations

11. RIASCD conference scheduled for October 24

Please see this message from the Rhode Island ASCD:

The Rhode Island ASCD will hold its annual Pre-Service and Beginning Teacher Conference on **October 24** (new date) at Johnston High School, 345 Cherry Hill Rd. The conference will run from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will feature a keynote presentation by the Rhode Island Teacher of the Year, Tracy LaFreniere, and workshops presented by local practitioners. Registration is available at www.riascd.org.

12. Free financial-literacy professional development offered on October 29

Please see this message from the Rhode Island Jump\$tart Coalition:

A free, one-day financial-literacy professional-development program, open to all kindergarten through grade 12 educators, will be held at Rhode Island College on Thursday, **October 29**, from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. This program will provide valuable opportunities for Rhode Island educators, representing all grade levels, to share their ideas on how to incorporate the [National Standards Financial Literacy](#) (adopted in [Rhode Island in November 2014](#)) into their classrooms. The event is being organized by the [Rhode Island Jump\\$tart Coalition](#) and the [Rhode Island Council for Economic Education](#), and it is sponsored by Fidelity Investments. Please encourage teachers to register now, on Eventbrite <http://bit.ly/1JdLKtQ>, to reserve their place. Substitute reimbursement monies, up to \$75 per attending

teacher, are available to districts upon request to the Rhode Island Jump\$tart Coalition. Questions may be directed to Dr. Margaret Brooks, Rhode Island Jump\$tart president, at rhodeislandjumpstart@gmail.com.

13. Presentation on Title IX and gender equity scheduled for November 6

Please see this message from the New England Equity Assistance Center, at Brown University:

We would like to invite a district representative to attend an upcoming presentation for school district Title IX coordinators. The event, sponsored by the New England Equity Assistance Center at Brown University, a federally funded program that provides free technical assistance upon request to school districts, will provide participants with an overview of recent guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education and highlight ways Title IX coordinators can help schools and districts comply with Title IX and ensure gender equity in schools.

We hope a district representative can join us on **November 6**, as we explore the integral role of the Title IX coordinator. Seating for the event is limited, so please register as soon as possible. There is no fee for this event, which will take place at the East Providence City Hall, 145 Taunton Ave., from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. RSVP by October 15 to [Oaxaca Schroder@brown.edu](mailto:Oaxaca_Schroder@brown.edu).

If you have any questions, please contact: Oaxaca Schroder or Anthony Cruthird at 867-8935.

14. Two-day workshop scheduled on Innovation by Design

Please see this message from DownCity Design:

Preparing students for success in the 21st century means offering opportunities to develop essential habits of mind such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative problem-solving. [DownCity Design](#) offers a two-day *Innovative Educator Workshop* that will provide teachers with concrete tools and curricula that they can use in their classrooms to implement an innovative, standards-aligned approach to problem-solving. Participating educators will be introduced to [Innovation by Design](#)'s new Design Thinking toolkit, [The Change Agent](#), now available as a *free online resource*. Through hands-on practice and personal project development, our work together will help prepare teachers to guide their students through the design process, from identifying a challenge they want to tackle through creating a solution that works.

Workshop Details:

Dates: Friday, **October 16**, 4 – 8 p.m. (dinner included), and Saturday, **October 17**, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (lunch included),

Location: DownCity Design, 425 West Fountain Street, Providence

Fee: Free for Rhode Island teachers

Registration: To register, email Program Director Melita Morales, at melita@downcitydesign.org

Space is limited, so reserve your spot today!

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/FieldMemos.aspx>