



Enclosure 2a
October 22, 2019

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
October 1, 2019

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Board of Education Chair, Barbara Cottam, welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. She noted for the record that Council Chair McConaghy and Council Members Davis and Field 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, Jo Eva Gaines, *Lauren Griffiths, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

Absent: Karen Davis
Gara Field
Daniel McConaghy

[*Ex-officio, non-voting member]

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

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 agenda for the October 1, 2019, Meeting

Chair Cottam asked for a motion to amend the agenda to table Discussion Item 6b

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

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the motion to amend the agenda to table Discussion Item 6b

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

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 as amended

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

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the September 17, 2019, Meeting

On a motion duly made by Lawrence Purtill and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the minutes of the September 17, 2019, Meeting

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

YEAS: Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 1

[Member Beretta abstained from the vote as she did not attend the September 17, 2019 meeting of the Council]

3. OPEN FORUM

Chair Cottam noted for the record that no one had signed-up to speak during the Open Forum.

4. PRESENTATION OF AWARD CERTIFICATES

Award Certificates were presented to the Rhode Island finalists for the 2019 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, the highest recognition that a kindergarten through 12th-grade mathematics or science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States.

The two finalists were:

- Robert Mayne - Chariho High School - Mathematics Teaching
- Jane Ramos - Vincent J. Gallagher Middle School, Smithfield - Science Teaching

5. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Infante-Green began her report by thanking the Council Members who were able to join her this past Saturday, to honor nearly 100 of the state's leading educators at "A Salute to RI Educators" WaterFire event. She highlighted that for the first time, this year a teacher who works with multilingual learners and a parent, were recognized. She praised the students at the high school culinary programs who provided the food, the musical performances, living statues, photo-booth, face painting, hair braiding, and manicures done by cosmetology students.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green announced that over the last couple of weeks, RIDE received word that it was the winner of a couple of grants. The first is the Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant for \$20M dollars, over five years. She shared that 95% of the money will go out through sub-grants, and some of the requirements for selected grantees/districts will be to create literacy plans and to use funds for high-quality curriculum. The second is a \$2.5M Education Innovation and Research Grant from the United States Department of Education, to expand work-based learning opportunities in computer science. This grant is supported by the state's Congressional delegation to expand services for more than 1,000 students, and includes a research partnership that will help guide future improvements to Computer Science for Rhode Island. This is a five-year project that will create or enhance computer science pathways in up to 20 Rhode Island schools, where student experiences will culminate in an Advanced Placement Computer Science Principles course in grade 11. These grants are targeted to priority communities, but all districts will be invited to participate.

Commissioner Infante-Green ended her report by sharing that earlier in the day she issued a statement in response to a report released by the Council of the Great City Schools about multilingual learners in the Providence School System. She expressed her gratitude to the

Council of Great City Schools for visiting Providence and helping to reinforce the sense of urgency in bringing transformational change to the district. She stressed that she has dedicated her career to this important work and to serving multilingual and differently abled students. She stressed that she knows without question, that statewide dramatic improvement will not occur, unless and until we prioritize these students. RIDE has already begun to address several of the concerns flagged in the report, such as revising our evaluation handbooks. The report underscores some areas of improvement in recent years, including certification changes adopted in 2018 that provide reciprocity and increase teacher candidate training, to ensure ongoing learning of teachers. She shared that some of the recommendations can be applied statewide and that RIDE is looking to expand those programs that work.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Review of the 2018 Providence Performance Data

Commissioner Infante-Green went over the 2018 Providence performance data and highlighted that Providence students represent 17% of Rhode Island's public school population and that nearly a third of those students are multilingual learners; 84% of those students are identified as economically disadvantaged; and that Hispanic and Latino students make up 66% of the Providence student population. When looking at the statewide data, four out of ten Hispanic students are from Providence, which underscores the fact that having bilingual programs is an important move that has to be made moving forward.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green went over the state of Providence school buildings, noting that there are currently 23 elementary schools and only seven middle schools, which is something that needs to be addressed moving forward. She also highlighted that 28 of the 40 school buildings are considered poor, very poor, or in need of replacement, and noted that the average Providence school was built in 1952, and the oldest facility was built in 1895.

Commissioner Infante-Green went over the district's 2018 RICAS English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics proficiency rates for grades 3-8 by race/ethnicity subgroups. In ELA, only 14% of Providence students can read at or above grade level and of those, 29% are white; 27% are Asian; 14% are multi-race; 12% are Hispanic; and 11% are black. In mathematics, only 10% of students perform at or above grade level and of those, 29% are white; 23% are Asian; 9% are Hispanic; 8% are black, and 8% are multi-race. She stressed that the system is failing all students, but some subgroups more than others.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green went over the Grade 11, 2018 SAT ELA proficiency rates, underscoring the fact that only 28% of students are at or above the proficiency level and of those, 60% are white; 41% are Asian; 31% are black; 31% are multi-race; and 23% are Hispanic. She went over the SAT mathematics results, noting that they seem to be more in concert with the RICAS results. She also highlighted that there is a correlation between a student's level of proficiency and where they attend school, noting that even the schools that perform better, the level of proficiency for multilingual learners and differently abled students is dismal and even more devastating at the middle school level. She pointed out that even Classical High School needs to do better, considering that they handpick their students, and emphasized the need to redefine what excellence means in Rhode Island going forward.

b. High School Assessment Release - TABLED

c. Fiscal Year 2020 Revised and Fiscal Year 2021 Current Service Level Budget

Prior to turning the presentation over to Brian Darrow, RIDE's Chief of Staff, and Mark Dunham, RIDE's Finance Director, Commissioner Infante-Green gave a brief highlight of the statewide 2018 grades 3-8 RICAS results. She noted that in English Language Arts (ELA), only 34% of students scored at or above the proficiency level, and only 27% in mathematics, which means that 66% of students statewide did not meet expectations in ELA and out of those students, 81% of low-income students, 94% of multilingual learners, and 95% of differently abled students, did not meet expectations. In mathematics, 73% of students statewide did not meet expectations and out of those students, 86% of low-income students, 94% of multilingual learners, and 96% of differently abled students, did not meet expectations. She stressed that although this is a budget conversation, we cannot have that conversation without attaching data, and that there is a need to refocus our energy and all of our supports on where the need is.

Commissioner Infante-Green went on to share that only three districts had proficiency rates higher than 10% in both ELA and mathematics for both multilingual learners and differently-abled students, and zero districts had proficiency rates higher than 20% in both ELA and mathematics for both multilingual learners and differently-abled students. Over 40% of all schools were identified in 2018 as needing targeted support and intervention for multilingual learners and differently-abled students. She went over the key statewide priorities in RIDE's Fiscal Year 2021 - implementing high-quality curriculum; supporting school systems in closing statewide equity gaps; expanding pathways and opportunities; and creating strong instructional school cultures, which to achieve, will require shifting RIDE as an agency from compliance to support and refocusing the work. Commissioner Infante-Green also stressed the need to request additional FTEs whenever new legislative mandates are introduced.

Mr. Darrow began his presentation by outlining what is included in RIDE's priority budget for Fiscal Year 2021, which is geared toward alignment with the key statewide priority areas – implementing high-quality curriculum (2 new FTEs); supporting school systems to close equity gaps (9 new FTEs); expanding pathways and opportunities (4 new FTEs); creating a strong instructional school culture (2 new FTEs); and including maintaining key RIDE operations.

Council Member Beretta asked what the reaction has been from districts about having to purchase new curricula or developing their own. Lisa Foehr, RIDE's Chief of Teaching and Learning, replied that there hasn't been much resistance, however, districts are concerned about the financial investment given the timelines in the legislation - 2023 for ELA and mathematics for all grades, which feels really fast for districts. As far as locally developed curricula, RIDE suggests that districts use a third party entity to have their curricula reviewed.

Next, Mr. Darrow went over the additional funding to maintain current service levels – WIDA ACCESS Assessment Costs (\$115K) and support new initiatives – Dyslexia Program (\$125K). He presented more in-depth detail on the new FTE requests for expanding pathways and opportunities (early learning, college and career, and advanced course network); and strong instructional school culture – School Building Authority. These additional FTEs are essential to scale and grow the programs and to maintain the level of quality that RIDE has for its programs.

Next, Mr. Darrow shifted from RIDE's operating budget to the State Education Aid: Categorical Aid Funding (from general revenue) – Supporting School Systems to Close Equity Gaps; Expanding Pathways and Opportunities; Improving School Culture; and Maintaining Current Service Levels. These are dollars outside of the main funding formula that go primarily directly to districts. He flagged that this funding is aligned to the statewide priority to help close the equity gaps, especially for our multilingual learners (increase of \$4.5M) and high-cost differently-abled education (increase of \$4.5M).

Next, Director Dunham gave a budget overview for the four State Schools:

- Central Falls School District – requesting an additional \$500K to restore some of the critical services and roles (assistant middle school principal, two special educators, and math and science services), necessary to effectively operate the system as the district acquired an additional 300 students over the course of last year. RIDE is also requesting an increase of \$1M in stabilization funds to help support the equivalent of local fund contributions for increasing enrollment not yet in the funding formula, as well as \$1.4M above the formula increase, representing a 5.6% increase. RIDE recently met with the Mayor of Central Falls to strategically evaluate what the long-term fiscal relationship will look like between RIDE, Central Falls and the State, going forward.

- Rhode Island School for the Deaf – requesting an increase of \$500K in the Fiscal Year 2020 revised budget to cover speech language; negotiated staff increases; and projected, unmet turnover target. In the Fiscal Year 2021 budget, the school is requesting an increase of \$413K, which is an increase of 5.7% over the Fiscal Year 2019 revised budget.
- William M. Davies Career and Technical High School – requesting an increase of \$291K
- Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center – requesting an increase of \$139K

Council Member Callahan praised the strategic alignment of what RIDE is asking for and voiced that it is equally important to think about advocacy and what members of this Board can do so that there is a plan in terms of advocating over at the General Assembly and show support for the budget.

7. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

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

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education adjourns.

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

Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Barbara Cottam, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Lawrence Purtill

YEAS: 6

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0