

**Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo**  
**Friday, December 2, 2016**

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### Tuesday (December 6):

[Special Education Census - Due](#);

[Special Education Census Reporting - Due](#)

### Thursday (December 8):

[Special Education Census Duplicate Resolution - Due](#);

[Special Education Census Reporting Duplicate Resolution - Due](#)

### Friday (December 9):

[Textbook](#)-verification forms due

### December 23:

[Reviewing Student Exit Data for Calculation of Cohort Graduation Rates - Due](#)

## Notes from Commissioner Wagner

### 1. Council to review charter public school applications

This year RIDE received applications for two new charter public schools and for the expansion of six existing charter public schools. The period for public comment on these applications ran through December 1 on all but one of the proposals. To prepare my recommendations to the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, I have been reviewing the comments from the public as we have been receiving the comments at RIDE. Thank you for sharing your voice throughout this process.

The Council will meet this coming **Tuesday** (December 6) at the RIDE office building (255 Westminster Street or 80 Washington Street, Providence), starting at 5:30 p.m., in the Paff Auditorium (1<sup>st</sup> floor). The charter recommendations, including the fiscal, programmatic, and educational impact analysis, will be posted by 5:30 p.m. today along with the meeting agenda.

Sign-up for public comment will be available once the Council agenda is publicly posted this afternoon. Sign up will continue over the weekend and until the beginning of the meeting on Tuesday, December 6. *No sign-ups will be accepted during the meeting.*

Sign up for public comment can be done by either:

- a) contacting Angela Teixeira (by phone or leaving a voicemail at 401.222.8435, or by email at [Angela.Teixeira@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Angela.Teixeira@ride.ri.gov)); or,
- b) signing up in-person at the Paff auditorium starting at 4:00pm on December 6 until the meeting begins.

Public comment will be heard in the order sign-ups are received and will be set at two (2) minutes per speaker.

## **2. Tools and resources to support immigrant and refugee students and families**

In response to questions brought to RIDE regarding students and families expressing concerns about safety and permanence, we would like to share some resources that districts and schools may consult and distribute as needed.

Emerson Collective has published [FAQs, tools, and resources](#) to guide immigrant students and families, including a [Know Your Rights Card](#) and some contact information for hotlines and legal counsel.

Additionally, the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) [December Nexus Newsletter](#) includes the following message:

Obama Administration Highlights Commitment to Protecting Immigrants and Refugees. This month, the administration has continued to highlight its commitment to protecting immigrants and providing safety to vulnerable people fleeing violence,

persecution, and instability. President Obama [reiterated the importance of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals policy](#) in a recent press conference. The President travelled to Greece and spoke alongside Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras of Greece to [reiterate his commitment to global leadership in addressing the refugee crisis](#). Further, Attorney General Loretta Lynch [released a video about recent increases in hate crimes](#), particularly against Muslim Americans.

No child should be afraid when in school.

### **3. NEARI announces 2017 Education Support Professional of the Year**

Congratulations to Tom Pirnie, behavior management assistant at the RYSE School in Chariho, on being named the 2017 National Education Association Rhode Island (NEARI) Education Support Professional of the Year. Pirnie will be considered along with the other state education support professionals of the year for the 2017 NEA Education Support Professional of the Year, to be announced in March 2017.

Read more [here](#).

### **From the Governor's Office**

### **4. Rhode Island receives over \$6 million in U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services award of Year 3 Preschool Grants**

Governor Raimondo released the following statement about this announcement:

“We are pleased the U.S. Department of Education has announced Rhode Island will receive full funding - \$6,043,131 - for year three of our Preschool Development Grant. In announcing the funding today for 18 states, the U.S. Department of Education noted Rhode Island was one of only six states that met or exceeded targets for the number of young children served. We recognize that in order to continue to strengthen our economy, we need to have great schools - and that starts with having high-quality prekindergarten programs that are accessible to all children. That's why we included \$1.2 million in our current budget to expand access to pre-kindergarten programs - adding 12 sites this fall to the Rhode Island Pre-kindergarten Program. Thanks to Rhode Island's Congressional Delegation, who are always working tirelessly to bring federal funds home to Rhode Island, we will continue to invest in early learning for all Rhode Island children.”

The national report and 18 state progress reports on the PDG program can be found [here](#).

**From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE)**

***Career-Technical Education:***

5. Career and Technical Education Trust soliciting applications for funding up to **\$50,000**

The Career and Technical Education Trust is soliciting applications to provide funding to schools for up to \$50,000 in order to meet the employer developed standards adopted by the Career and Technical Education Board of Trustees. Schools may apply to:

- Develop new or expand career and technical programming aligned to standards adopted by the Career and Technical Education Board of Trustees; and/or
- Expand existing career and technical programs to prepare students for several career fields within an industry aligned to the Governor's Workforce Board Industry Partnerships.

All applicants must agree to adhere to the 2012 Regulations of the Board of Regents Governing Career and Technical Education in Rhode Island and to the Rhode Island Career and Technical Education Career Preparation Program Standards.

All proposals shall:

- Require that existing/planned program(s) partner with private industry, leverage partnerships with postsecondary institutions, adult education, and training programs that address critical areas of workforce need to support the Rhode Island economy.
- Meet the standards adopted by the CTE Board of Trustees for Construction, Health Careers, Hospitality, Information Technology & Manufacturing, and foster partnerships between K-12, postsecondary institutions and private industry partners; and

- Demonstrate a student recruitment strategy that commences at the middle school level.

To ensure that available funding has the greatest impact, grants awarded will support one-time expenses related to teacher training, infrastructure expenses tied to creating or expanding a program that prepares students to meet the employer developed standards.

All Rhode Island LEAs are eligible to apply. This is a rolling application submission process.

The Governor's Workforce Board [Rhode Island Industry partners](#) include priority-industry sectors with corresponding CTE Board and Trust Standards are:

- Construction Technology;
- Health Careers;
- Hospitality;
- Information Technology; and
- Manufacturing.

For more information, click [here](#). If you have any questions about this grant opportunity, please contact Steve Osborn, Chief of the Division of Accelerating School Performance, at [Stephen.Osborn@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Stephen.Osborn@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8485.

***Educators:***

## **6. RIDE seeks participants for the Open Educational Resources (OER) community of practice**

RI is one of 19 #GoOpen states committed to using and making openly licensed educational materials and resources available to transform teaching and learning. The Open Educational Resources (OER) conversation is gaining momentum both nationally and locally here in RI. Why? Many see the use of OER as an opportunity to increasing equity, saving money, keep content relevant and of high quality, and empower educators and students by giving them the ability to adapt and customize learning materials.

Our state level commitments involve creating a statewide strategy that makes resources available through repositories; publishing to the Learning Registry; participating in a national and RI community of practice; and communicating broadly about all of the above.

RIDE has been working internally to lay some foundation to the work and we are getting ready to gather those interested in helping design and implement the statewide strategy. We want to make sure you are part of the conversation and your voice is heard. There will be several introductory webinars held this month to calibrate our understanding. The first face to face meeting will be held shortly after the first of the year (date and location TBD). We are anticipating that there will be occasional face to face meetings, with the majority of the work occurring collaboratively through online meetings and shared documents. This will lessen the burden of travel and allow for flexible

contribution when the timing works best in everyone's busy schedules.

Please email Holly Walsh at [Holly.Walsh@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Holly.Walsh@ride.ri.gov) by Friday, December 9th if you or others in your school community are interested in receiving meeting information and/or getting involved in the community of practice. We will add you to the list and make sure you don't miss a thing!

## **7. RIDE shares emergency certified report**

National teacher shortages remain in many certificate areas and vary significantly in size by geographic regions. RI's teacher shortage remains low in comparison to other regions to two percent of all educators working with an emergency certificate. To find out more about these educators, the districts, and certificate areas where they are working, please review RIDE's Emergency Certificate Report (November 2016). Consider ways that this brief report and the data within it may support how you collaborate with educator preparation programs, plan for recruiting top talent, and find innovative ways to retain educators for RI classrooms.

The report is available at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/certification-reports>

### ***Assessments:***

## 8. Dates, locations set for SAT School Day workshops

The dates and locations for the spring 2017 SAT School Day workshops have been set and details are below. Topics covered at these workshops will include: logistics and student registration; key dates/deadlines; scheduling and make-up testing; policies, expectations, and Test Center Supervisor responsibilities; accommodation and application processes. Additionally, tips for success and other resources will be shared.

*Note:* These workshops are designed for key staff directly involved in the administration of the SAT School Day *only*, so high schools and districts should send only test coordinators who will serve as the SAT School Day Test Center Supervisor and/or the SSD Coordinator. As a reminder, test administrators/teachers are supposed to be trained locally by district- or school-level test coordinators.

Workshops will take place during the third full week of December at New England Tech and the Northern Rhode Island Collaborative. Doors will open 30 minutes before the start of each session.

Below are the locations, dates, and times as well as registration links for each workshop. *NOTE:* All four sessions will cover the same content, so there is no need to come to more than one session.

- ***New England Tech*** (Room S330), One New England Tech Boulevard, East Greenwich:
  - Tuesday, December 20, ***Morning*** (9-11 a.m.)  
To register, click [here](#).

- Tuesday December 20, **Afternoon** (Noon-2 p.m.)  
To register, click [here](#).
- **Northern Rhode Island Collaborative** (Room 104), 640 George Washington Hwy, Lincoln:
  - Wednesday, December 21, **Morning** (9-11 a.m.)  
To register, click [here](#).
  - Wednesday, December 21, **Afternoon** (Noon-2 p.m.)  
To register, click [here](#).

If you have any questions about these workshops, please contact Dr. Kevon Tucker-Seeley (222-8494, [kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov](mailto:kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov)).

## 9. PSAT/NMSQT® “Score Week” support

LEAs and schools will be able to access PSAT/NMSQT scores on **Monday (December 5)** via the [K-12 Score Reporting Portal](#). Students will be able to access scores on **December 12** through their [College Board accounts](#).

For high school staff who are interested in additional support accessing, using, and understanding PSAT/NMSQT results, the College Board will host both live and recorded webinars during “Score Week” (**December 5-10**). These and other resources are available by visiting the [Score Week website](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Kevon Tucker-Seeley (222-8494, [kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov](mailto:kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov)).

## **Data Collection:**

### **10. Dates changed for reviewing Student Exit Data for Calculation of Cohort Graduation Rates**

We moved the dates out a week for: [Reviewing Student Exit Data for Calculation of Cohort Graduation Rates](#). The module will open on December 8<sup>th</sup> and close on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Extensions *will not* be given so please make sure to complete it on time.

### **11. ISS Pre-K Module Data updates clarification**

We have listened to all of your feedback and are in the process of updating the documentation to help clarify the coding of preschoolers in the enrollment and TCS files. We should have this documentation out within the next week.

### **12. Teacher Attendance Collection reminder**

Only 9 districts have submitted their teacher attendance records. This data will be used for federal reporting, so if you haven't submitted data for this collection, please do so soon.

### **13. Data Collection Calendar review**

The [Data Collection Calendar](#) contains all of the open and due dates for data collections, and report submissions. These may change as the school year progresses in response to updates by external entities. Please review the calendar on a regular basis in order to remain compliant with data submissions.

### **14. Data Collection Webinar time change**

Beginning **Tuesday (December 6)**, the data collection webinar will be at *11am on Tuesdays*. You will need to register for the new webinar time.

### **15. *Reminder: Several data collections are open, due in the next few months***

The following are upcoming data-collection deadlines:

- December 2: [Special Education Census Reporting - Opens](#)
- December 6: [Special Education Census - Due](#)
- December 6: [Special Education Census Reporting - Due](#)
- December 8: [Special Education Census Duplicate Resolution - Due](#)
- December 8: [Special Education Census Reporting Duplicate Resolution - Due](#)

- December 8: [Reviewing Student Exit Data for Calculation of Cohort Graduation Rates - Opens](#)
- December 23: [Reviewing Student Exit Data for Calculation of Cohort Graduation Rates - 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 feature.

If you have any questions about data collections or the webinar, please [submit a help-desk ticket](#).

## **16. SurveyWorks point person, site coordinator identification needed**

As part of this year's annual SurveyWorks, as in previous years schools will be asked to identify a point person or site coordinator. An email will go out to all principals next week with additional information about the role of the site coordinator as well as upcoming training opportunities and available tools.

Please contact Peg Votta at [Margaret.votta@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Margaret.votta@ride.ri.gov) or 401-222-8412 if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

## ***Meetings:***

### **17. Council on Elementary and Secondary Education to meet on Tuesday (December 6)**

The next Council on Elementary and Secondary Education meeting will take place on **Tuesday** (December 6), at 5:30 p.m., at the Providence Campus of the University of Rhode Island (Paff Auditorium, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor), 80 Washington Street, Providence. RIDE will post the agenda and supporting documents **today** (December 2) by 5:30pm.

### **From the U.S. Department of Education (USED)**

### **18. USED releases final regulations to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

After considering and incorporating extensive feedback from stakeholders across the education system and the public, USED announced final regulations to implement the accountability, data reporting, and state plan provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), with a focus on supporting states in using their flexibility to provide a high-quality, well-rounded education, and ensure equity remains at the core of implementation.

The final regulations will replace the rigid and prescriptive systems that defined No Child Left Behind with new flexibility for states and districts; a more holistic approach to measuring a quality education

that will help prepare all students for success in college and careers; and strong protections to ensure that academic progress and equity for all students matters. They also reinforce ESSA's strong commitment to transparency and emphasize meaningful engagement and an active role for parents, educators, students, civil rights and community groups, and other stakeholders in implementing the new law.

Read the full press release [here](#) to learn about the particular ways that the regulations will help districts and states implement ESSA.

#### **19. USED releases report on expanding college opportunity, letter on ensuring positive environment for all students**

USED recently released a report, "[Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education](#)," building on the Obama Administration's efforts to expand college opportunity for all. The report presents key data on the continuing educational inequalities and opportunity gaps for students of color and low-income students. It also underscores promising practices that colleges are taking to advance success for students of every background.

In conjunction with the report, the Secretary issued a [Dear Colleague Letter](#) calling on institutions to do all they can to eliminate harassment and discrimination to ensure a positive environment for all students.

Moreover, the White House Domestic Policy Council and Department hosted a [Summit on Advancing Postsecondary Diversity and Inclusion](#), bringing together students, college and university presidents,

researchers, civic organizations, and members of the business community to celebrate their efforts and share best practices to further expand college opportunity for all Americans.

**20. USED provides grants to K-12 and postsecondary educators to study and travel abroad**

The Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program provides short-term seminars abroad for U.S. educators in the social sciences and humanities to improve their understanding and knowledge of the peoples and cultures of other countries. Each seminar features educational lectures and activities specifically designed for the group, including visits to local schools and organizations, meetings with teachers and students, and visits to cultural sites. Participants draw on their experiences during the program to create new, cross-cultural curricula for their classrooms and school systems back in the U.S.

In 2017, summer programs will be offered in Bulgaria, Chile, and Thailand. A total of 48 awards are available (sixteen per program). The program covers airfare, room and board, and program costs. Teacher participants are responsible for a cost-share of \$600.

For more information on this program, go [here](#).

To apply, go [here](#).

**21. 2015 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) released**

The [2015 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study](#) (TIMSS) shows that U.S. fourth- and eighth-grade students have improved in math since 1995, while eighth-grade students have improved in science over the same time period. However, U.S. high school seniors in both advanced math and physics showed no measurable change.

A report of highlights can be found [here](#).

### **From other federal agencies**

#### **22. U.S. Census Bureau shares Statistics in Schools program**

The U.S. Census Bureau's [Statistics in Schools](#) program can help provide activities and resources that bring depth to history/social studies, sociology, geography, and math. Check out the [top 10 benefits](#) the program has to offer.

One of the greatest benefits of Statistics in Schools is that the activities were created by teachers, for teachers — so you can trust that they're easy to incorporate into any lesson plan. See [the full list](#) of teachers and experts involved in the creation of Statistics in Schools activities, and watch this brief [video](#) to see how some of these teachers use the program in their own classrooms.

**23. National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards applications sought**

The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, in partnership with other federal agencies, is seeking applications from after-school and out-of-school programs for the [2017 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards](#). Twelve applicants will receive \$10,000. The deadline for applications is **February 8, 2017**.

**From other organizations**

**24. Computer Science Education Week celebration announced**

Dr. Kathi Fisler, Computer Science professor at Worcester Polytechnic Institute will present Problem Solving, Program Design, and Peer Review: Lessons for Teaching Programming at Rhode Island College, Alger 110 on December 8th from 4:30 to 6:00 pm. This event organized by the [Computer Science Teachers Association of Rhode Island](#) (CSTA-RI) and hosted by the Rhode Island STEAM Center is part of Computer Science Education Week, an annual celebration of teachers, students, and community members "to promote awareness and heighten participation in computer science." All are welcome.

**25. USA Today's education editor coming to Rhode Island, public invited**

Rocky Hill School is excited to welcome Greg Toppo to campus on **Thursday (December 8)**, 6:30 p.m., to discuss his book on gaming and

education. Toppo is the national education and demographics reporter for *USA Today*. He taught in both public and private schools for eight years before moving into journalism.

The school would love for as many teachers and others interested in education to be able to hear his talk. This talk is free and open to the public. RSVP is recommended to reserve a seat.

For more information about the event, or to RSVP, click [here](#).

## **26. RI Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment (RI-CART) is enrolling**

The Rhode Island Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment (RI-CART) brings together Rhode Island families and individuals affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and related neurodevelopmental disorders with researchers, clinicians and educators – to improve life for people on the autism spectrum. RI-CART is on the leading edge of autism research and community building. When you register, you'll receive:

- The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) – the “gold standard” autism assessment – at no cost\*
- A one-on-one call with a parent resource specialist from The Autism Project
- Our resource guide that helps individuals and families of children with ASD navigate the medical, educational, and transitional supports available throughout the state

- Regular updates from RI-CART on upcoming studies and programs in which you can participate, as well as information on findings, resources, and interventions from leading autism groups nationwide.

To join, please visit the [RI-CART website](#).

Please feel free to share our [website](#), [newsletter](#), or [contact information](#) with families of children with autism and related disorders who may be interested in participating. Educators, if you would like brochures to hand out, please contact RI-CART at [RICART@Lifespan.org](mailto:RICART@Lifespan.org)

***RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:***

[www.ride.ri.gov/Field-Memos](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Field-Memos)