

Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Thursday, December 22, 2016

We are sending this week's Field Memo ahead of schedule, as schools are closed on Friday.

We wish each of you safe and happy holidays, and will send the next Field Memo to you on January 6.

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

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Action Item Calendar

Tomorrow (December 23):

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

Next Friday (December 30):

[Early Childhood Special Education Data - Due](#)

January 12:

[Reporting Student Contacts - Due](#)

Notes from Commissioner Wagner

1. Holiday greetings from RIDE

It has been a pleasure working with you on important issues this past year. I look forward to the opportunities before us in the coming year as we continue to transform our schools from mere physical buildings into deep and engaged learning communities through the power of teaching, learning, and love. We wish you a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy new year. We will send the next Field Memo on January 6.

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

Public Comment:

2. Proposed Amendment to the Regulations Governing the Education of English Learners in Rhode Island, hearings scheduled

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapters 16-21-34 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, and in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act Chapter 42-35 of the General Laws, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education hereby gives notice of its intent to amend the Regulations of the Rhode Island Board of Education Governing the Education of English Learners (ELs).

The Council is seeking public comment on the amended regulations intended to govern the education of English Learners in RI, including the identification, service, assessment and exit of ELs, as well as communication with families and responsibilities of districts and schools. The changing philosophy and practice of our state and national leaders in this field encourage us to move toward a more inclusive approach to programming for ELs, who represent a highly mobile, fast-growing population. These regulations add all-day supports for ELs in every class and make clear that EL instruction is part of core instruction and district planning, not a separate consideration.

The proposed changes would:

- Update terms and phrases to reflect most recent publications from USED, RIDE and WIDA (Ex.: ESL to ENL, ELL to EL, GLE and GSE to state adopted standards, Board of Regents to Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, etc.),
- Add cultural competency to the list of key outcomes for EL students (along with success in general education, meeting of graduation requirements, post-secondary preparedness, and economic and social success),
- Change definitions of high and low incidence school districts to reflect population density rather than total number of EL students and adds monitored ELs to the total count used for reporting,
- Update and reorganizes Rhode Island's menu of program models to align with federal guidance documents, emerging evidence-based practices and WIDA consortium definitions,
- Add transcript review and family interview to the student placement criteria,
- Encourage ELs' access to grade-level curriculum and integration into general education classrooms by replacing minimum time-in-service for ELs at Developing, Expanding, and Bridging levels with program criteria while maintaining a 1 period minimum for ELs at the Entering and Emerging Levels,
- Release the burden of specificity of EL topics for professional development, and
- Increase district flexibility to engage the families of ELs, actively supporting their participation in district family engagement opportunities.

The proposed amended regulations are available for public inspection in person at the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 255 Westminster Street, Providence, RI; can be requested by email at ELRegs@ride.ri.gov; or can be requested by calling Angela Teixeira, at 401-222-8435.

In drafting this rule, consideration was given to: (1) alternative approaches: (2) overlap or duplication with other statutory and regulatory provisions: and (3) significant economic impact on small business. No alternative approach, duplication, or overlap was identified based upon available information.

Public hearings on the proposed amended regulations will be held on:

- **Thursday, January 5, 2017 – 5:30 p.m.**
Tiverton Public Library (Community Room), 34 Roosevelt Ave.,
Tiverton, RI 02878
- **Wednesday, January 11, 2017 – 5:30 p.m.**
Warwick Public Library (Large Meeting Room), 600 Sandy Lane,
Warwick, RI 02889
- **Wednesday, January 25, 2017 – 5:00 p.m.**
Providence Career and Technical Academy (Library), 41 Fricker
Street, Providence, RI 02903

All interested parties are invited to participated in the public hearing and submit written comments concerning the proposed amended regulations from **December 26, 2016 – January 30, 2017**.

The hearing location is accessible to persons with disabilities and interpreter services for the hearing impaired will be provided if requested 48 hours prior to the hearing. Requests for this service can be made in writing or by calling Karen Lovett at 401-222-8333 or RI Relay 1-800-745-5555.

Requests for language interpretation can be made by email to ELRegs@ride.ri.gov. Si se necesita un intérprete, envíe un correo electrónico ELRegs@ride.ri.gov.

Written comments may be submitted to Jillian Belanger at the RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 255 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903, or at ELRegs@ride.ri.gov or by faxing 401-222-6030.

Communications:

3. *Reminder: RIDE to transition listserv service in new year*

Since 1996, OSHEAN (Ocean State Higher Education Economic Development and Administrative Network) has operated LISTSERV.ri.net which hosted discussion and distribution lists for various non-profit groups and associations, including many managed by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE).

As of **December 31st, 2016**, OSHEAN will decommission the legacy RINET Listserv server, and therefore bulk email service through LISTSERV.ri.net will end.

At the end of December, RIDE will transfer its active listservs – including this one – and their subscribers from OSHEAN’s servers to our new service, iContact. *Please add iContact.com to your district and school email whitelists.*

Thank you for your support during this transition.

Data Collection:

4. *Reminder: 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 opened on December 8 and closes on **Friday, December 23**.

Extensions *will not* be given so please make sure to complete it on time.

5. *Reminder: ISS Pre-K Module Data Updates Clarification*

We have listened to all of your feedback and have updated the documentation to help clarify the coding of preschoolers in the enrollment and TCS files. The new documentation is located [here](#).

6. *Reminder: Teacher Attendance Collection*

Only 16 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. For questions regarding the Teacher Attendance collection contact Greg Martin at Gregory.martin@ride.ri.gov or 222-8495.

7. *Reminder: Data Collection Calendar*

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.

8. *Reminder: Data Collection Webinar*

The weekly data collection webinar now takes place at 11am on Tuesdays. You will need to [register](#) for the webinar.

9. *Reminder:* Several data collections are open, due in the next month

The following are upcoming data-collection deadlines:

- **Tomorrow (December 23):** [Reviewing Student Exit Data for Calculation of Cohort Graduation Rates - Due](#)
- **Next Friday (December 30):** [Early Childhood Special Education data - Due](#)
- **January 12:** [Reporting Student Contacts - 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 at <https://support.ride.ri.gov>.

Legal:

10. Decision issued on a tenured teacher

RIDE has issued this Commissioner's Decision on a tenured teacher:

“The South Kingstown School Committee established “good and just cause” for its termination of a tenured special education teacher, in that the evidence showed that during the 2013-2014 school year she failed to perform her job responsibilities as a case manager and inappropriately accessed the education records of two students in whom she had no legitimate educational interest.”

To read the full decision, please click [here](#).

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

11. Districts realize the personalized learning vision, see its future

USED shared a blog post about districts’ successes with personalized learning across the nation. Here are a few highlights from the entry:

District superintendents across the country have taken on a range of bold approaches to improving students’ experiences in public education. Across these innovations, districts have embraced the notion that empowering students and their teachers is an effective way to improve student outcomes. ...

Superintendents identified three areas fundamental to scaling success in personalized learning: creating the right infrastructure, providing meaningful professional development and ensuring sustainability of the changes. ...

“There are a lot of unknowns,” said Katrina Stevens, Deputy Director of the Office of Educational Technology at the U.S. Department of Education. “But one thing that’s clear to me: This work is going to move forward because of the passion and dedication of local leaders.”

To read the full article, click [here](#).

From other state agencies

12. Rhode Island State Police remind schools of deadline, procedures for 5th graders to enter National Missing Children’s Day Poster Contest

Below is the timeline for Rhode Island entries for the 2017 National Missing Children’s Day Poster Contest:

Friday, February 17, 2017: Deadline for submission of Rhode Island Poster entries (please mail ahead of time to be in receipt by the proposed date). The State Police suggest that schools may choose to offer students the option to complete the project over winter break (credit as the teachers see fit) if it conflicts with timing for school curriculum or assignments.

Mail all entries for consideration in the contest to:
Rhode Island Fusion Center

ATTN: Detective Jonathan Elliott
311 Danielson Pike
North Scituate, RI 02857

Please Include in all submissions:

Name of School

Contest Coordinator (School POC)

Name of Student

Any other specific details to identify the winner (teacher, class #, etc.)

Please inform of submission (total #) via an e-mail to State Coordinator: Detective Jonathan Elliott, Rhode Island State Police, at jonathan.elliott@risp.gov

Friday, February 24, 2017:

Poster Contest officials convene to determine State Winner, and National Application Submission Consent completed and mailed.

Coordination will be made for R.I. State Police to visit the school and present the state winner with a small recognition.

Thursday, March 16, 2017: Deadline for State Winners to be received by OJJDP

April 2017: National Winners announced and travel arrangements made for attendance to the National Missing Children's Day Ceremony.

For further information about this contest, click [here](#).

To summarize: 2017 National Missing Children's Day Poster Contest Guideline - with specific rules:

- Applicants *must* be in the *fifth grade*.
- Artwork *should reflect the theme "Bring Our Missing Children Home."* This phrase *must* appear somewhere on the poster. The theme may be depicted in the students' artwork through one illustration or a combination of illustrations (e.g., signs and symbols, people, abstract, industry, wildlife)
- The theme must be depicted visually and can be created using media such as acrylics, watercolor, pencils, charcoal, magic markers, spray paint, crayons, and pastels. Digitally produced images, collages, cut-outs, and stamping *will not* be eligible for consideration.
- The finished poster *must* measure 8½ x 14 inches.
- The poster must be submitted with a *completed* application, which includes a description of the poster and a brief biography of the artist, either written legibly or typed.

For further information about this initiative, contact:

Detective Jonathan Elliott, #88
Rhode Island State Fusion Center
Main: 444-1117

Desk: 444-1372

Fax: 458-1173

Jonathan.Elliott@risp.gov

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

www.ride.ri.gov/Field-Memos