



Enclosure 2a
July 18, 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
June 20, 2023

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Chair DiCenso welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. She declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Mary Barden, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez

Absent: *Charles Curci

(*Ex-officio, non-voting member)

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Marta Martinez, it was,

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the June 20, 2023, meeting

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Mary Barden, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

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 approve the minutes of the May 23, 2023, meeting

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Mary Barden, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

3. COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Infante-Green opened her report by stating that she, along with Governor Dan McKee, visited Young-Woods Elementary school to announce the release of the SurveyWorks results. This year's survey garnered the highest-ever participation rates from administrators, educators, and families, with a total of 123,000 responses received from all over the state. Young-Woods Elementary stood out for its exceptional involvement and the school's commitment to high standards, as indicated by the most favorable ratings among students. She highlighted a significant 12-percentage point increase in students discussing college and careers and also pointed out that, in general, Providence had a higher level of family engagement compared to the rest of the state. Commissioner Infante-Green continued her report stating that she also joined Speaker Shekarchi and Mayor Picozzi at Wyman Elementary School in Warwick to award \$7.5 million in Learning Inside Out Outdoor Classroom grants. She shared that in total, 89 projects across 29 local education agencies will receive grants to create, enhance, and support access to natural resources for all students in the form of outdoor classrooms or schoolyard habitats. An additional \$500,000 will support professional development throughout the state.

The Commissioner proceeded to express her congratulations to Aimee Couto from the East Providence School Department, who has been named the Rhode Island State Teacher of the Year for 2024. Commissioner Infante-Green also acknowledged the achievements of two educators from the Providence School Department. Kimberly Yeaw, from the Providence Career and Technical Academy, was recently honored as the Rhode Island School Librarian of the Year, while Donna Cassanova, who served as the coordinator for the team at Central High School, received recognition for winning the National Energy Education Development Project award.

Commissioner Infante-Green expressed her gratitude to everyone who attended the state of education event at the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. She emphasized that she discussed the positive progress and forward momentum of RIDE as a state. She extended congratulations to all

the students who have successfully completed their education and are embarking on the next phase of their lives after graduation. Lastly, she announced her recent appointment to the Board of Directors of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

4. OPEN FORUM

One individual addressed the Council.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Summer School, PPSD Update

Chair DiCenso handed over the meeting to Scott Sutherland, Chief of Staff of the Providence Public School Department (PPSD), and Tracy Boothman, Director of Summer Learning, who provided an update on the Summer Learning program. Mr. Sutherland began by acknowledging that all PreK-5 students have received ten books and a PPSD backpack for the summer. This initiative ensures that every student has access to high-quality, engaging, and authentic reading materials at home, aiming to keep them on track for success in the upcoming Fall semester. In collaboration with Scholastic Reading, PPSD also organized an event where families had the opportunity to meet Clifford the Big Red Dog and receive additional books. Mr. Sutherland further mentioned that two locations have been selected to accommodate grades K-5, operating from Monday to Friday, between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. PPSD will provide daily meals, including breakfast, lunch, dinner, and two snacks, to the participating students.

Ms. Boothman proceeded with the presentation, focusing on the Middle School program that will take place at Governor Christopher DelSesto Middle School. She highlighted that this program will provide two STEM programs and an E-sports program, offering specific and comprehensive details about each of these initiatives.

During the meeting, Mr. Sutherland shared details about the High School Summer Program, emphasizing that it would allow high school students to make up credits and engage in the Career and Technical Education Program. Council members posed questions related to the various programs, and both Mr. Sutherland and Ms. Boothman addressed the inquiries, providing relevant information to address all concerns. Commissioner Infante-Green expressed her gratitude to everyone involved in making the summer learning initiatives possible and extended another round of appreciation to Ms. Kimberly Yeaw for her exceptional contributions. A photograph was taken, capturing Ms. Yeaw, Chair DiCenso, Commissioner Infante-Green, and Superintendent Montañez together.

b. PAEMST Awards

Chair DiCenso handed over the meeting to Deputy Commissioner Lisa Odom-Villella, who introduced Dr. Phyllis Lynch, the Director of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum, as well as Dr. Nicole Lyons, the Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Dr. Lyons made an announcement regarding four educators from Rhode Island who were chosen as state finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). She pointed out that these four finalists now have the opportunity to win a National PAEMST award, which is the highest recognition for K-12 teachers in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science in the United States.

The awards program is overseen by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Commissioner Infante-Green revealed the names of the individuals who made it to the final round and commemorated the occasion by capturing a picture with the families present. Kerry Johnson, Stephen Levesque, Marissa Hudson, and Amy Biagioni-Chmura were acknowledged for their achievements and presented with citations and crystal awards.

c. 2030 Goals

Chair DiCenso passed the meeting over to Brian Darrow, RIDE's Chief Strategy Officer. Mr. Darrow started off by mentioning that the Governor had pushed RIDE to reach or even exceed the performance levels of Massachusetts by 2030. He pointed out that RIDE is seeking to connect and align key statewide plans in a way that will provide LEAs useful guidance in setting meaningful, ambitious, and achievable LEA-driven improvement targets. He further stated that Rhode Island has achieved notable advancements in determining how it would fare in terms of educational assessment if it were considered a Local Education Agency (LEA) in Massachusetts. Mr. Darrow highlighted that Governor McKee and RIDE have identified essential performance measures to concentrate efforts and rally all involved parties in aiding schools to enhance student achievements by 2030. These measures consist of RICAS ELA, RICAS Math, Student Chronic Absenteeism, and FAFSA completion. RIDE has established initial performance targets for each of these indicators by 2030 on a statewide level. The purpose is to ensure that Rhode Island not only matches but surpasses the performance levels of Massachusetts, and to establish Rhode Island as a frontrunner on a national scale. The process of setting goals for each of these metrics was also discussed.

During his presentation, Mr. Darrow concluded by discussing the future actions that RIDE plans to take. These actions involve urging Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to incorporate initial 2030 goals into their strategic plans at the LEA and school levels. RIDE intends to review these preliminary goals once the 2023 performance data is released, and they also aim to encourage stakeholders to utilize these 2030 goals to align with the Learn365RI initiatives. After Mr. Darrow's presentation, council members posed questions, which were

duly acknowledged and addressed by Commissioner Infante-Green, Deputy Commissioner Dr. Roldán, and Mr. Darrow, who provided valuable feedback.

d. School Redesign

Chair DiCenso turned the meeting to Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kelvin Roldán, who set the stage for the discussion. Dr. Roldán started by mentioning that schools that remain identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) for more than four years will undergo a more intensive intervention, which includes a redesign. He clarified that the Council would receive an explanation of the redesign models that all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must follow. He specifically highlighted that Providence Public Schools is the first LEA to undergo the redesign process.

Subsequently, Dr. Roldán passed the floor to Associate Director, for Improvement and Planning Drew Milligan.

Mr. Milligan initiated his presentation by giving a concise summary of the interventions and assistance provided under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). These supports encompass supplementary funding, support for improvement planning, the establishment of community advisory boards (CABs), and direct assistance from RIDE. He emphasized that this intervention is happening for the first time in an LEA. He proceeded to outline the five available redesign models that LEAs can select from, which consist of Empowerment, Restart, Small Schools of Choice, LEA Proposed Redesign Model, or Closure. Mr. Milligan proceeded to provide a thorough explanation of each redesign model. He highlighted that the support for redesign includes ongoing grant funding, collaboration between community-based organizations (CBOs), school staff, and LEA staff to form Redesign Teams, as well as direct support from RIDE's Office of School and District Improvement. Furthermore, he emphasized that all Redesign Plans must receive approval from the Council for Elementary and Secondary Education. He further clarified that the Office of School and District Improvement (OSDI) is responsible for designing the recommendation process for approval and providing support to LEAs and schools undergoing the redesign process. Mr. Milligan mentioned that the Office of School and District Improvement (OSDI) has engaged the services of an experienced third-party vendor to develop and implement a review process for Redesign Plans and provide recommendations to the Council. Following this, he passed the floor to Superintendent Javier Montañez of Providence Public Schools (PPSD). Superintendent Montañez framed the discussion and introduced Joan Jackson, Pascale Thompson, and Christopher Sanacore to address the meeting.

Mr. Sanacore commenced the presentation by explaining that both himself, Ms. Jackson, and Ms. Thompson, would provide an overview of the Redesign process and share the Redesign School Profiles. Ms. Jackson then proceeded to list the schools in Providence that would undergo the Redesign process and the options they had selected. The schools mentioned were Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School, Hope High School, Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex, Mt. Pleasant High School, and Governor Christopher DelSesto

Middle School. All these schools had chosen the Redesign Option of LEA Proposed Redesign.

Additionally, Mr. Sanacore mentioned that Gilbert Stuart Middle School had opted for Closure as their redesign option, which is addressed in the PPSD facilities plan. Mr. Sanacore discussed the timeline and key milestones for the redesign process. He highlighted that the Redesign teams consisted of various stakeholders, including CAB members, families, community members, teachers, administrators, and district staff. These teams conducted working sessions dedicated to redesign and successfully submitted five redesign applications. Ms. Thompson then elaborated on the parameters and choices made during the development of the redesign plans. The options considered for the type of school included CTE/Career Pathway, Early College Preparatory Model, Small School, and specialization/theme focused. As a result, the Hope Visual and Performing Arts, Juanita Sanchez Life Sciences Institute, Mount Pleasant Early College and Career Academy, Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School of Healthcare and Finance Careers, and DelSesto STEAM Academy were submitted as part of the redesign plans.

The team clarified that the presentation provided a broad overview of the Redesign Plans, and that the Council would have the opportunity to review the detailed plans before giving their approval at the upcoming Council meeting.

e. Virtual Learning Plans Update

Chair DiCenso turned the meeting over to RIDE's Deputy Commissioner Lisa Odom-Villella to present an update on virtual instructional days. Deputy Commissioner Odom-Villella provided a brief update and noted that in 2017, the Governor signed a bill into law requiring RIDE to establish a policy that allows districts to submit detailed plans if their district/schools intend to conduct instruction through virtual education when schools have been closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies. She added that in January 2022, the Council granted limited delegated authority to the Commissioner to approve LEA plans for virtual instructional days. The delegated authority expired with the end of the public health emergency on May 11, 2023. With the end of the public health emergency, the approval for virtual instructional day plans reverts to the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. Deputy Commissioner Odom-Villella presented an option for LEAs to seek approval monthly from the Council at regular meetings before utilizing their virtual plans. An alternative option was for the Council to vote to delegate authority back to the Commissioner every two years to maintain the current approval process and allow LEAs to have a more flexible timeline for approval process. It was decided that a vote would take place at the next meeting.

6. ACTION ITEMS:

a. Approval of Governor’s Learning365 Plan

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Karen Davis, it was,

(Discussion was held prior to the vote)

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education endorse the Governor’s Learn365RI initiative and authorize the Commissioner to enter into a Subaward Agreement between the Governor’s Office and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education which delegates to the Department the authority to develop a request for proposals in connection with Learn365RI, and award approximately \$4 million worth of grants from the Governor’s GEER II funds to Rhode Island municipalities to support initiatives to foster new or expanded learning programs operated by municipalities in partnership with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and/or Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to provide after school, weekend, and summer learning and enrichment opportunities for students in the community.

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative, 0 members voted in the negative and 0 members abstained, as follows:

YEAS: Mary Barden, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

7. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Mary Barden, it was,

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

Vote: 7 members voted in the affirmative, 0 members voted in

the negative, and 0 members abstained as follows:

YEAS: Mary Barden, Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis,
Patricia DiCenso, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.