**Minutes of the Special Meeting**

**of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education**

**Monday, December 1, 2014**

**12:00 noon – 6:00 p.m.**

**UMass-Boston, Campus Center, 3rd Floor Ballroom C,**

**100 Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA 02125**

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:

**Margaret McKenna**, Chair, Boston

**David Roach**, Vice-Chair, Millbury

**Vanessa Calderón-Rosado**, Milton

**Harneen Chernow**, Jamaica Plain

**Katherine Craven**, Brookline

**Karen Daniels**, Milton

**Matthew Malone**, Secretary of Education, by James DiTullio, Designee

**James Morton**, Springfield

**Pendred Noyce**, Boston

**Mary Ann Stewart**, Lexington

**Donald Willyard**, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Revere

**Mitchell D. Chester**, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Secretary to the Board

1. **Welcome and Overview**

Chair McKenna called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m. She welcomed members of the Board to the special meeting/FY15 planning retreat. She then appointed members of the Board to serve on two committees. (Per the Board’s by-laws, the Board Chair is a member *ex officio* of each committee, and any member of the Board may attend any meeting of any Board committee.)

The members of the Charter School Committee are:

Vanessa Calderón-Rosado, Chair

Karen Daniels

Secretary Matthew Malone

David Roach

Donald Willyard

The members of the Commissioner’s Performance Evaluation Committee are:

Margaret McKenna, Chair

James Morton

Penny Noyce

David Roach

Chair McKenna reviewed the agenda for the planning retreat and asked members to speak about what they would like to accomplish. The ideas included:

* Clarity of vision and process
* Ongoing process questions about the role of the Board’s
* Priorities for the next year
* BESE’s role in supporting all students
* Shared sense of education history reform and direction
* Common sense of direction
* Major actions the Board wants to take in the coming year
* Official stance on PARCC
* Develop consensus on strategies
* Pace of change and implementation
* Confirmation/reaffirmation of partnership that we have with the schools
* Calendar of the 2015 topics and votes
* Understanding the individuals of the BESE and their perspectives
* Understanding our linkages to early and higher education
* The vision for the coming year
* What are we doing to address the achievement gap and the “other 92%” of students

1. **Evolution of ESE Role in the Context of Education Reform in Massachusetts**

Commissioner Chester shared his thoughts on the evolution of the Department’s role in the context of the 20 years of Massachusetts education reform. Board members discussed various aspects of the state’s role.

1. **Proficiency Gaps: Data, Causes, and Mission to Close the Gaps**

The Commissioner introduced former Board member Jeff Howard, who chaired the Proficiency Gap Task Force that produced the April 2010 report, *A Roadmap to Closing the Proficiency Gap*. Jeff shared his experiences serving on the Board and provided an overview of the report. Commissioner Chester noted that the report was the foundation for the gap-closing target we have adopted as the core of the current Massachusetts system for accountability and assistance. Board members discussed a range of strategies that the state uses or could use to close proficiency gaps.

1. **Understanding and Addressing Hunger in Schools: One Way to Address the Gaps**

Andrea Silbert from the Eos Foundation presented an overview of the Breakfast in the Classroom initiative. Katie Millett (ESE Director of Nutrition, Health and Safety Programs) joined the discussion along with Donna Lombardi, Director of Nutrition for the Worcester Public Schools. Ms. Lombardi shared her experiences implementing the program in Worcester and the positive impact it has had on students.

1. **Board Operations and Process**

Chair McKenna facilitated a discussion of strategies the Board identified, including extended time/summer programs/out-of-school time; leadership training and coaching; sharing best practices; school nutrition/breakfast in the classroom; and school-to-career connecting activities, and how these strategies connect or do not connect to the budget proposal. Vice-Chair Roach noted that with federal Race to the Top funding disappearing, it is vital to protect the capacity of the Department to build on successes, support districts, and meet increased expectations for leadership and technical assistance.

The Board reviewed the current mission of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education:

The mission of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education is to strengthen the Commonwealth's public education system so that every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education, compete in the global economy, and understand the rights and responsibilities of American citizens, and in so doing, to close all proficiency gaps.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: That the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education affirms its mission of closing all proficiency gaps as its priority.**

The vote was unanimous.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: That the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education re-establish the Proficiency Gap Committee.**

The vote was unanimous.

Chair McKenna noted the upcoming joint meeting with the Board of Early Education and Care on December 15, 2014. The Board discussed the work of the two boards and ways to intersect on common policy issues. In order to increase collaboration, the boards will formalize this commitment by creating a joint committee with two members from each board. This discussion will continue at the joint meeting on December 15, 2014.

Jim DiTullio and Harneen Chernow left the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

1. **Wrap-up and Next Steps**

During the meeting the following action items were identified:

* BESE tentative calendar of upcoming votes and actions through June 2016.
  + This will be available at the December 2014 meeting and will be updated periodically.
* Foundation Budget Review Commission
  + Future special meeting topic (tentatively January 27th): Commissioner will provide an overview of Chapter 70 and the work and timeline for the commission, plus information about how other states calculate local aid.
* Overview of Educator Licensure and Redesign
  + Initial discussion at November 2014 meeting.
  + Commissioner will provide the Board with an overview of how the current licensure system works, including reciprocity: March 2015 meeting
* Level 5 schools discussions
  + Educator compensation (spring topic)
  + Pending Level 5 schools litigation (Possible January executive session)
  + Exit criteria (spring topic)
* Commissioner will provide regular updates on closing proficiency gaps
  + Connect to annual release of graduation and dropout rate data as well as September discussion of achievement data
  + Possible February 2015 meeting topic
* Proficiency Gap Report
  + Department will share the report with the advisory councils
* Advisory Councils
  + Department will provide a status report on recommendations from each advisory council
  + Department will draft a letter from the Board Chair to each council acknowledging recommendations
* Further information regarding breakfast in the classroom
  + Data report and Commissioner recommendation added to January 2015 meeting agenda
* Future topics
  + Adult Basic Education, Metco
  + Department will send Metco information to Board members in December and schedule future Board discussions.
* Commissioner will update Board budget request memo with language from budget priorities discussion and motion. Available at the December meeting.

**Board’s FY16 Budget Proposal – Discussion and Vote**

The Board’s discussion of its mission and priorities laid the groundwork for a discussion of the FY16 budget proposal.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with Mass. Gen. Laws chapter 69, § 1A, approve the budget priorities for the FY 2016 education budget as recommended by the Board’s budget committee and the Commissioner, and direct the Commissioner to convey these recommendations and priorities to the Secretary of Education, the Governor, and the Legislature, with a preamble emphasizing the importance of addressing all proficiency gaps through investments in outlined budget priority areas and the following additional areas: out-of-school time, professional development for principals with a focus on change management, and breakfast in the classroom programs.**

The vote was unanimous.

**On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:**

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m., subject to the call of the chair.**

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell D. Chester

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

and Secretary to the Board