*****Massachusetts Department of***

***Elementary and Secondary Education***

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| Jeffrey C. Riley*Commissioner* |  |

# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:**  | Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner |
| **Date:**  | May 14, 2021  |
| **Subject:** | Briefing for the May 25, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education  |

The next regular meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will be on **Tuesday, May 25, 2021**, at the Department ofElementary and Secondary Education’s office in Malden. The meeting will start at **9:00 a.m.** and should adjourn by **1:00 p.m.** As in recent months, the Board will meet in person, following the Commonwealth’s health and safety guidelines, including limiting the number of people in our meeting room, and the meeting will be live-streamed. Helene Bettencourt and Courtney Sullivan will assist with all arrangements; please email or call them if you have any questions.

**OVERVIEW**

Our business agenda leads off with a presentation by Jessica Descartes, school counselor at TechBoston Academy, who has been selected as the 2021 School Counselor of the Year by the Massachusetts School Counselor Association. I will report on the Department’s recent actions to support schools and districts in bringing students back for in-person learning, and our plans for the Academic Excellence Roadmap and use of federal ESSER III funds. We will update the Board on the Kaleidoscope Collective for Learning, a key initiative to support deeper learning for students throughout the Commonwealth. The Board will take a final vote on the Student Learning Time regulations that you adopted in March on an emergency basis. Jasper Coughlin will present the State Student Advisory Council’s end-of-year report. We will conclude the meeting with a report on Early College and Innovation Pathways, review of current education budget matters, and an initial look at the proposed meeting schedule for 2021-22.

**REGULAR MEETING**

**Statements from the Public**

**Comments from the Chair**

Chair Craven will brief the Board on current issues and activities.

**Comments from the Commissioner**

Commissioner Riley brief the Board on current issues and activities.

**Comments from the Secretary**

The Secretary will brief the Board on current issues and activities.

**Routine Business: Approval of the Minutes of the April 20, 2021 Regular Meeting**

The Board will vote on approval of the minutes.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

1. **School Counselor of the Year, Jessica Descartes – Presentation and Discussion**

Jessica Descartes, school counselor at TechBoston Academy, has been selected as the 2021 School Counselor of the Year by the Massachusetts School Counselor Association, and I am delighted that she will join us at the Board meeting to speak about her experience. Please see the memo under Tab 1 for more information about Ms. Descartes.

1. **School Reopening Update: Recent Developments and Anticipated Next Steps – Discussion**
2. **Academic Excellence Roadmap and Other Plans for Summer and Fall**
3. **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund Planning (ARP ESSER III)**

I will update the Board on actions the Department has taken in the past month to support schools and districts as they bring more students back into classrooms. We are increasingly turning our attention to the summer and fall and will report on the Academic Excellence Roadmap that the Department has produced, and on our plan to support effective use of the significant infusion of federal ESSER III funds for schools. Senior Associate Commissioner Komal Bhasin and Acting Chief Strategy/Research Officer Matt Deninger will join the presentation and respond to your questions.

1. **Advancing Deeper Learning: Update on Kaleidoscope Collective for Learning – Discussion**

In November 2019, the Board received a report on the launch of the Kaleidoscope Collective for Learning. Kaleidoscope is key to our work to advance deeper learning for students throughout the Commonwealth. On May 25, Senior Associate Commissioner Komal Bhasin and other members of the Kaleidoscope team will update the Board on our progress to date and next steps.

1. **Amendments to Student Learning Time Regulations, 603 CMR 27.00 (Return to In-person Instruction) – Discussion and Vote to Adopt Permanent Regulations**

On March 5, the Board adopted amendments to the Student Learning Time regulations on an emergency basis to prioritize in-person instruction by authorizing the Commissioner to determine when hybrid and remote models would no longer count towards meeting the required student learning time hours. As a result of our action, schools across the Commonwealth have reopened for in-person instruction. The Department solicited public comment on the regulatory amendments in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. I recommend that the Board vote on final adoption of the regulations at the May 25 meeting.

1. **State Student Advisory Council End-of-Year Report for 2020-2021 – Discussion**

Jasper Coughlin has served with distinction as the elected chair of the State Student Advisory Council and as a member of this Board. He will present the SSAC’s 2020-21 end-of-year report.

1. **Update on Early College and Innovation Pathway Programs – Discussion**

The Career/Vocational Technical Education programs that the Board discussed at the February 22 special meeting are part of the Commonwealth’s broad initiative to support high quality college- and career pathway programs. On May 25, the Board will hear a report on two other important components of this initiative: Early College and Innovation Pathways. Kristin Hunt, Early College Director, and Jennifer Gwatkin, Innovation Pathways Lead, will be at the meeting to address the Board and answer questions.

1. **Education Budget Update – Discussion**

Senior Associate Commissioner/CFO Bill Bell will update the Board on the latest information we have about federal and state funding for K-12 education in the Commonwealth.

1. **Proposed Schedule for Regular Board Meetings through June 2022 – Discussion**

Enclosed for your review is a list of proposed Board meeting dates for the upcoming school year. The Board will vote on the schedule at the June meeting.

**OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

1. **Report on Grants Approved by the Commissioner**

Enclosed is information on grants that I have approved since the last meeting, under the authority the Board has delegated to the Commissioner.

If you have questions about any agenda items, please call me. I look forward to meeting with you on May 25.