# Minutes of the Regular Meeting

# of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

# Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

# 75 Pleasant Street, Malden MA

# October 25, 2022, 9:04 a.m. – 11:53 a.m.

**Members of the** **Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:**

**Katherine Craven**,Chair,Brookline \*

**Matthew Hills**, Vice-Chair, Newton

**Tricia Canavan,** South Hadley

**Darlene Lombos,** Boston

**Farzana Mohamed,** Newton

**Michael Moriarty,** Holyoke \*

**James Peyser,** Secretary of Education**,** Milton

**Eric Plankey,** Westford, Student Member

**Paymon Rouhanifard,** Brookline

**Mary Ann Stewart,** Lexington

**Martin West,** Newton

**Jeffrey C. Riley,** Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

\* Via remote participation

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Chair Craven called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m., and members introduced themselves. She noted today’s Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) meeting, like all open meetings of the Board, is being livestreamed and recorded.

**Approval of Minutes**

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approve the minutes of the September 20, 2022 Regular Meeting.**

The vote, by roll call, was unanimous.

**Public Comment**

* **Gerry Mroz** addressed the Board on Item 2: Commissioner Riley’s Goals for 2022-2023

**Comments from the Chair**

Chair Craven thanked Board members for their condolences on her sister’s recent passing. She announced the members of the Commissioner’s Performance Review Committee: Vice-Chair Hills as Chair, Ms. Canavan, Mr. Moriarty, Mr. West, and herself as members. Chair Craven asked Ms. Mohamed, as Chair of the Board’s Budget Committee, to report on the committee’s recent meeting. Ms. Mohamed said the committee met on October 19 and discussed an overview of state and federal funding, the state budget process, and possible priorities for the FY2024 state education budget. She said the committee will meet again to prepare recommendations for the Board to discuss and consider at its November 15 meeting. Chair Craven asked Mr. Moriarty, as Chair of the Special Committee on Pandemic Recovery and Literacy, about plans for that committee. Mr. Moriarty said he expects to schedule an organizational meeting in the near future. He suggested that the topic of pandemic recovery and literacy might be appropriate for one or more Monday evening meetings of the Board.

**Comments from the Secretary**

Secretary Peyser highlighted the success of STEM Week and STEM education across the state. He discussed data from the Department of Higher Education reporting a 3.8% decline in college enrollment, which he said underscores the importance of the Early College initiative. Noting the recent school shooting in St. Louis, Secretary Peyser said the Commonwealth is continuing its efforts to keep schools safe and he hopes the Legislature will act on the Governor’s proposal to increase funding for school safety.

**Comments from the Commissioner**

Commissioner Riley said on October 28, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department or DESE) will host “Better Together: Strengthening Family School Partnership,” a statewide in-person summit focused on family-school partnership. He added that he and Deputy Commissioner Regina Robinson will present keynotes and the day will feature dozens of workshops, including one led by Board member Mary Ann Stewart.

The Commissioner provided a brief update on Boston Public Schools (BPS) and noted BPS still has transportation challenges. He said the Department has received a formal complaint regarding transportation for students with disabilities, which DESE’s Problem Resolution Systems office is investigating. The Commissioner said the Department has received data from BPS, as required by the strategic improvement plan, indicating that the district is not yet meeting its 95 percent goal for student transportation. Commissioner Riley said he will continue to update the Board on BPS. Noting that the Board will be discussing NAEP data at today’s meeting, the Commissioner said while Massachusetts remains the top performing state in the nation on NAEP, much work is needed to address the losses that students experienced during the pandemic.

Vice-Chair Hills asked how often the Board will be updated on BPS. Commissioner Riley said he will provide monthly updates. He added that DESE has contracted with EY Parthenon to review BPS data and he expects to have a report in February 2023.

**Assessment and Accountability Results**

Rob Curtin, Chief Officer for Data, Assessment, and Accountability presented a summary of results from the spring 2022 administration of the MCAS tests, as well as information about this year’s accountability data for schools and districts. Mr. Curtin noted that student absenteeism remains a challenge for recovery efforts. Mr. Moriarty said the needs are urgent, especially around early literacy, and added that getting back to the 2019 baseline is not enough because pre-COVID results were not acceptable either. Ms. Stewart said family engagement could help close gaps on chronic absenteeism and early literacy; she encouraged the Department to promote these efforts. Mr. Curtin said the Department is continuing to work with schools and districts around family engagement and would follow up with more information.

Mr. Curtin also presented initial results from the 2022 mathematics and reading assessments from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). He noted Massachusetts was the top performing state on the 2022 NAEP administration and was statistically tied for the top-ranking among all states on all four tests. Mr. Curtin said the changes in the Massachusetts NAEP results since 2019 mirror our student results on MCAS tests, which is a credit to the quality of the MCAS. Dr. West agreed, saying the NAEP and MCAS results are very consistent, with NAEP being a helpful audit on our own test results. He joined other members in calling for a sense of urgency about academic recovery.

In response to a question from Ms. Lombos, Commissioner Riley said the Department has launched an academic vision initiative, led by Deputy Commissioners Russell Johnston and Regina Robinson, and he plans to bring that to the Board for discussion at a future meeting. Mr. Curtin responded to questions from Board members about goals for rate of recovery and evaluating intervention strategies. Chair Craven thanked Mr. Curtin for his presentation.

Mr. Rouhanifard left the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

**Commissioner Riley's Goals for 2022-2023**

Commissioner Riley outlined his goals and discussed his four main themes for the 2022-2023 school year: provide supports to accelerate student learning; build a diverse and culturally responsive workforce; cultivate safe and healthy learning environments; and align DESE supports to a shared academic vision of deeper learning. The Commissioner summarized the goals across the four themes. Board members expressed support and offered suggestions. Secretary Peyser said these are the right goals: they are ambitious, and the Commissioner has struck a good balance. The Secretary suggested broadening the early college strand to include early career pathways. Ms. Stewart suggested family engagement should be woven into every goal. Ms. Mohamed asked about measuring and reporting progress. Dr. West suggested emphasizing accelerating learning and adding a reference to supporting districts around changes to the competency determination standard and Educational Proficiency Plans. Vice-Chair Hills said the goals are comprehensive and suggested setting some expectations for a year from now, to help frame next steps. Commissioner Riley thanked members for their comments and suggestions.

**Board of Elementary and Secondary Education FY2024 Budget Proposal and Report from the Board's Budget Committee**

Bill Bell, Senior Associate Commissioner/CFO referred to Ms. Mohamed’s earlier report on behalf of the Budget Committee. He said the Department is currently working with the administration to put together the maintenance budget for baseline spending in the next fiscal year, anticipating the transition to the new administration in January. Mr. Bell gave a brief update on federal ESSER funding. Ms. Mohamed said the Budget Committee will present recommendations for FY2024 state education budget priorities to the Board at the November 15 meeting.

**Educator Preparation and Licensure:**

**MTEL Pilot Report and Proposed Extension**

Commissioner Riley said this is the second annual progress update on the Pilot of Alternative Assessments for Educator Licensure that the Board authorized in October 2020. He introduced Claire Abbott, DESE’s Director of Educator Effectiveness and Liz Losee, Director of Educator Effectiveness Policy, who gave a brief overview. They were joined by James Cowan, Dan Goldhaber, and Roddy Theobold from DESE’s evaluation partner, National Center for the Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER), American Institutes for Research, who presented the high-level findings from the report on the alternative assessment pilot. Panel members responded to questions from the Board.

Dr. West left the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

**Proposed Amendments to Educator Licensure Regulations, 603 CMR 7.00**

Brian Devine, Director of Licensure, Allison Balter, Director of the Office of Language Acquisition, and Lucy Wall of the DESE legal staff joined Ms. Abbott and Ms. Losee to discuss proposed amendments to the Educator Licensure Regulations including the following: extend the pilot of alternative assessments by one year through June 30, 2025, and update language regarding the pilot period; add a new Provisional license option for principals/assistant principals; add a new Military Spouse license; create a new option for out-of-state candidates to meet the Sheltered English Immersion endorsement requirement; and streamline and update other references within the regulations. Ms. Abbott said if the Board votes today to solicit public comment, the plan is to bring the regulations back to the Board for a final vote in February 2023. The panel answered questions from Board members.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B, and c. 71, § 38G, hereby authorizes the Commissioner to proceed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 3, to solicit public comment on the proposed amendments to the Regulations on Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval, 603 CMR 7.00, as presented by the Commissioner.**

**The proposed amendments would create a new military spouse license per M.G.L. c. 71, § 38G, as recently amended, create provisional licenses for principals and assistant principals, extend the current pilot for alternative licensure assessments through June 30, 2025, create an option for out-of-state candidates to meet the Sheltered English Immersion endorsement requirement, and streamline and update other references in the regulations.**

The vote, by roll call, was 9-0.

Ms. Mohamed left the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

**Amendment to Regulations on Notification of Bullying or Retaliation, 603 CMR 49.00 (Technical Amendment Per Statute)**

Commissioner Riley said that at the August 15 meeting, he asked the Board to vote to solicit public comment on a proposed technical amendment to 603 CMR 49.00. The proposed amendment conforms the regulatory definition of bullying to the statutory definition in the Mass. General Laws and makes non-substantive changes in formatting and numbering. The Commissioner explained that having reviewed and considered the comments that were submitted, he is recommending that the Board vote to adopt the technical amendment as presented.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with
M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B, and c. 71, § 37O, and having solicited comment in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 3, hereby adopts the amendment to the Regulations on Notification of Bullying or Retaliation, 603 CMR 49.00, as presented by the Commissioner. The amendment conforms the regulatory definition of bullying to the statutory definition and also makes non-substantive changes in formatting and numbering.**

The vote, by roll call, was 8-0.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 11:53 a.m., subject to the call of the Chair.**

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey C. Riley

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

and Secretary to the Board