**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**

**November 15, 2022, 9:04 a.m. – 11:22 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 (via remote participation)

**Mary Ann Stewart,** Lexington

**Martin West,** Newton

**Member of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Absent:**

**Paymon Rouhanifard,** Brookline

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

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

**Public Comment**

* **Gerry Mroz, Melrose,** addressed the Board on Item 2: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education FY2024 Budget Proposal and Report from the Board’s Budget Committee
* **Karen Blumstein and Michelle Barmazel,** co-presidents of the Massachusetts Association for Gifted Education, addressed the Board on Item 2: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education FY2024 Budget Proposal and Report from the Board’s Budget Committee
* **Katharina Elbert, Newton,** addressed the Board on Item 2: Board of Elementary and Secondary Education FY2024 Budget Proposal and Report from the Board’s Budget Committee

**Comments from the Chair**

Chair Craven informed the Board that she may schedule a retreat in January or February and asked members to contact her with suggested topics.

**Comments from the Commissioner**

Commissioner Riley informed the Board that based on her expertise, Anne Gilligan, Health and Safety School Coordinator for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), has been asked by the U.S. Department of Education to do a podcast about school safety initiatives in Massachusetts. The Commissioner updated the Board about DESE’s support to schools and districts to prepare for a possible COVID surge after the Thanksgiving and winter breaks by providing test kits for teachers and students. He thanked the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency, Health and Human Services, Department of Public Health, and the Barnstable and Pittsfield school departments for their assistance in getting the materials out to different parts of the state. Commissioner Riley said DESE has ongoing interaction with Boston Public Schools (BPS) on the BPS Systemic Improvement Plan, noting that a data advisory group has been convened. He added that DESE recently received a broad complaint about BPS students with disabilities not receiving appropriate or consistent transportation services and DESE’s Problem Resolution System is investigating the matter.

Commissioner Riley said DESE is continuing to review MCAS data, analyzing areas of concern in relation to the pandemic. He said two areas of focus are English learners and boys, adding that achievement levels for these groups were concerning even before the pandemic. He said he expects to bring forth more information on these topics and on interagency data analysis. Concluding his update, the Commissioner said DESE will again support the high school senior internship program this year and will post information soon for a January start.

Chair Craven suggested the Board plan a joint meeting with the Board of Higher Education to discuss longitudinal education data.

Vice Chair Hills asked about Boston’s deliverables under the BPS Systemic Improvement Plan. Commissioner Riley said there were various deliverables over the summer and there is ongoing work around school transportation, bathroom renovations and repairs, and data review. He said he expects EY Parthenon to have a data report in February and he will continue to update the Board. Regarding school transportation in Boston, the Commissioner said DESE has flagged problems over the years and BPS is expected to meet a 95% on-time arrival rate for students, adding that BPS must also address the complaint about transportation for students with disabilities. Mr. Moriarty asked about the districts that are in state receivership. Commissioner Riley said he plans to present the first of this year’s reports at the December 2022 meeting.

Vice Chair Hills updated the Board about the Commissioner's Performance Evaluation Committee, noting a meeting is scheduled for next week on process and timelines. He said he will present a brief committee report in December.

**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 October 25, 2022 Regular Meeting**

The vote, by roll call, was 10-0.

**Family Engagement: Review of October 28, 2022 Summit and Next Steps**

Commissioner Riley said that on October 28, 2022, more than 400 family members, educators, administrators, and state organization representatives participated in the *Better Together: Strengthening Family School Partnership* summit in Sturbridge, organized by DESE and numerous partners. The Commissioner said it was a very positive event and affirmed that parents are eager to be involved in their children’s education.

Deputy Commissioner Regina Robinson, Associate Commissioner Rachelle Engler Bennett, and

Family Engagement Specialist Olga Lopez discussed the goals of the summit, the highlights of the day, and how it was an opportunity to foster an understanding of family engagement and model strategies for creating and strengthening meaningful partnerships between schools, families, and community organizations. Board member Mary Ann Stewart discussed her experience at the summit and the workshop she led with Deputy Commissioner Robinson. She said family engagement is a strategy for student success and DESE is clearly committed to this work. The panelists answered questions from members and discussed resources and supports that DESE is providing, sponsoring, and promoting in partnership with other organizations to strengthen family-school partnerships. Mr. Plankey encouraged continuing to include student voice in this work. Commissioner Riley said the family engagement theme will be reflected in the educational vision that DESE is developing, noting that Board members Mohamed and Plankey are participating in it.

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

Budget Committee Chair Farzana Mohamed discussed the priority areas of focus for the Board’s FY24 state budget priorities. She noted that committee members highlighted a number of specific areas including the following: early grade literacy; pilots and initiatives for alternative assessment frameworks; support to expand educational offerings to provide enhanced career and vocational technical education programs; targeted assistance to underperforming schools and districts; initiatives to address the learning loss resulting from the pandemic; several initiatives underway at the department to provide multi-tiered elements of support to schools; and furthering the department’s efforts to strengthen curriculum review and develop recommended best practices for adoption by school districts.

Ms. Mohamed said the committee also discussed the importance of providing adequate rural school aid and expressed support for and an interest in learning more about gifted and talented education in Massachusetts. She added they look forward to having the Commissioner present a report on this topic and would welcome a fuller discussion by the Board.

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

**VOTED:** **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with Mass. Gen. Laws chapter 69, § 1A, approves the priorities for the FY2024 education budget as recommended by the Board’s Budget Committee and the Commissioner, and directs the Commissioner to convey these recommendations and priorities to the Secretary of Education, the Governor, and the Legislature.**

The vote, by roll call, was 9-0-1. Secretary Peyser abstained, noting that the budget priorities get transmitted to the Secretary’s office.

Bill Bell, Senior Associate Commissioner/CFO, said the themes and priorities that the Budget Committee recommended all fit well under the Commissioner’s goals.

Chair Craven called for a break at 10:40 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:55 a.m.

**Postsecondary Enrollment and Workforce Earnings Report**

Commissioner Riley said DESE released a report on October 29, 2022, detailing the postsecondary enrollment and workforce earnings of Massachusetts public high school graduates. The Commissioner explained that the report allows users to access outcome information for the graduating classes of 2010-2021. He noted that the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) calls for the state to collect and make publicly available data on student preparedness for workforce and post-graduate success, and this report is the first release of its kind by DESE**.**

Rob Curtin, Chief Officer for Data, Assessment, and Accountability presented an overview and demonstration of the postsecondary enrollment and wage earnings data. In connection with the SOA requirement, Mr. Curtin said DESE has been reporting postsecondary enrollment for years back to the graduating class of 2004; what is new is the addition of wage earnings data for Massachusetts public high school graduates. He reviewed the sources for the postsecondary enrollment and wage earnings data. He explained this is the first version of the report, the information will be updated annually, and future reports will likely go deeper. He added that this release is for information only and there are no current plans to use the data for accountability purposes.

Mr. Curtin said the early findings, not unexpectedly, show there are wage gaps between and among different student groups, earnings increase over time and vary within industry field, and the small N-size in some districts and student groups can contribute to large variances in the data. He noted that a large percentage of Massachusetts high school graduates in each class (~60%) are employed in Massachusetts many years after graduation. Mr. Curtin answered questions from members and provided a live demonstration of the data available on the DESE website showing employment and earnings of high school graduates. Chair Craven and Board members thanked Mr. Curtin and commended him and the DESE team for gathering and analyzing the data and producing this new report.

Ms. Stewart asked about the process for following up on public comment. Chair Craven said it would be a good topic to discuss at the retreat.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 11:22 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