# Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education 135 Santilli Highway Everett, Massachusetts 02149 Tuesday, June 24, 2025, 9:15 a.m. – 1:05 p.m.

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

**Katherine Craven**,Chair,Brookline

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

**Ioannis Asikis,** Brookline, Student Member

**Ericka Fisher,** Worcester

**Christina Grant**, Cambridge, *participated remotely*

**Farzana Mohamed,** Newton, *participated remotely*

**Michael Moriarty,** Holyoke

**Dálida Rocha,** Worcester, *participated remotely*

**Mary Ann Stewart,** Lexington

**Patrick Tutwiler**, Secretary of Education, Andover

**Martin West,** Newton

**Patrick Tutwiler,** Interim Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Chair Craven called the meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) to order at 9:15 a.m., and members introduced themselves. Members Grant, Mohamed, and Rocha participated remotely. The meeting was livestreamed and recorded.

**Statements from the Public**

* **Catherine Cooper, Executive Director, Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative,** addressed the Board on the topic of Time-Out Practices
* **Jean Spera, President, Massachusetts Administrator for Special Education,** addressed the Board on the topic of Time-Out Practices
* **Emily Howland** addressed the Board on the topic of Time-Out Practices
* **Stefanie Krantz, Senior Attorney, Disability Law Center**, addressed the Board on the topic of Time-Out Practices
* **Kahris McLaughlin** addressed the Board on various topics
* **Gerry Mroz** addressed the Board on various topics
* **Isabelle Macean (former student in Taunton, now at Milton Academy), Sophia Lee (rising senior at Haverhill High School), Yoki Eyob (rising sophomore at Lynn High School), and Isha Hassan (senior at Revere High School and Member BESE Gifted and Talented Advisory Council),** addressed the Board on the topic of the Biggest Winner Math Challenge

**Comments from the Chair**

Chair Craven noted this is the Board’s last meeting of the school year and named several successful initiatives including Literacy Launch and hiring a new Commissioner. Chair Craven thanked Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler for his leadership and thanked Member Asikis for his year of service as the student member on the Board. Noting that Member Moriarty is concluding his service on the Board after ten years, Chair Craven said it has been a pleasure to work with Member Moriarty and highlighted his ongoing focus on strengthening literacy and using data. She invited Member Moriarty to address the Board. Member Moriarty spoke about his tenure as a Board member and said this is a pivotal moment for change and he is leaving with optimism.

**Comments from the Secretary/Interim Commissioner**

Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler began by celebrating Member Moriarty’s ten years of service to the Board and the students of the Commonwealth. The Secretary/Interim Commissioner addressed the topic of support for immigrant students and families. He provided updates on the Massachusetts Statewide K-12 Graduation Council including publicizing a public stakeholder survey.

Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler said he looks forward to welcoming Commissioner Martinez to the Department and thanked Chair Craven and Board members for the opportunity to serve in the interim role. He then highlighted the successful end of the first year of the Massachusetts Aspiring Principal Fellowship program. The Secretary/Interim Commissioner provided updates on the Literacy Launch initiative including information on the PRISM grants, the Literacy Launch institutes, and high-dosage tutoring for early literacy.

Lastly, Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler presented the Mitchell D. Chester Award to DESE’s Director of Educator Effectiveness and Policy, Liz Losee. The Board took a brief recess to take photos with Ms. Losee.

**Innovation Career Pathways Overview: What We Can Learn from North Attleborough High School – Discussion**

Chair Craven introduced the first agenda item regarding Innovation Career Pathways (ICP) and welcomed North Attleborough guests to the table. Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler introduced DESE staff members and guests. Associate Commissioner Liz Bennett introduced the agenda item and invited the Coordinator of Innovation Career Pathways Jennifer Gwatkin to present. Ms. Gwatkin gave an overview of ICP including what they are, the key characteristics, funding sources, and the current pathways by sector including Advanced Manufacturing, Business and Finance, Information, Health Care and Social Assistance, Environmental and Life Sciences, and Clean Energy.

Ms. Gwatkin invited the guests from North Attleborough High School to present on their Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Career Pathway. Staff and students from North Attleborough shared their experiences with the pathway. The guests then responded to comments and questions from Board members. Chair Craven then invited Representative Scanlon to provide input on the presentation.

The Board then took a brief recess to take photos with the guests from North Attleborough.

**Exit Determination on the Holyoke Public Schools from Chronically Underperforming Status – Discussion**

Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler invited to the table Mayor and Holyoke School Committee Chair Joshua A. Garcia, Holyoke School Committee Vice Chair Dr. Yadilette Rivera Colón, and Holyoke Public Schools Receiver Anthony Soto. The Secretary/Interim Commissioner stated that Holyoke Public Schools will exit chronically underperforming status as of July 1, 2025. He reminded the Board that this process began as a provisional decision under Acting Commissioner Johnston, and said based upon the evidence of progress that the Holyoke School Committee’s Local Control Subcommittee has presented to Acting Commissioner Johnston and to him, he is confident that the Holyoke School Committee is well prepared to resume local governance of the district, with transitional supports provided by the exit assurances. Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler recognized Acting Deputy Commissioner Lauren Woo for her support of the district and the entire process.

Holyoke Mayor Joshua A. Garcia, Holyoke School Committee Vice Chair Dr. Yadilette Rivera Colón, and Holyoke Public Schools Receiver Anthony Soto addressed the Board on the exit determination. Chair Craven then invited comments and questions from the Board.

The Board then took a brief recess to take photos with the guests from Holyoke.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Craven called for a motion and vote to approve the minutes of the May 20 regular meeting.

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

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the May 20, 2025 regular meeting.**

The vote, by roll call, was unanimous.

**State Student Advisory Council End-of-Year Report for 2024-2025 – Discussion**

Chair Craven introduced Member Asikis who presented on the State Student Advisory Council (SSAC) end-of-year report. Member Asikis presented on the SSAC’s yearlong journey, highlighting that they used statewide data to inform their priorities. He discussed the focus areas and activities of the regional student advisory councils and statewide student workgroups, and how stakeholder engagement, student-led research, and coordination focused their work on student mental health and student-school connections. Member Asikis then responded to Board members’ comments and questions.

The Board then took a brief recess to take photos with Member Asikis. Member Asikis closed with appreciation to the Board and DESE about his experience on the Board representing students across the Commonwealth. Chair Craven thanked Member Asikis for being the voice of students and contributing so much to the Board this year.

Members Mohamed and Rocha, participating remotely, left the meeting.

Chair Craven said the Board will defer the budget update as the state budget is pending in conference committee. She said the Board will take up the agenda items requiring a vote, concluding with the vote on regulations.

**Delegation of Authority to Commissioner to Approve Proposed Contracts with Education Management Organizations for Community Day Charter Public School and Holyoke Community Charter School**

Chair Craven called for a motion and vote.

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

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education authorizes the Commissioner, in accordance with General Laws c. 15, § 1F, paragraph 3, to act on behalf of the Board in approving the management contracts for Community Day Charter Public School and Holyoke Community Charter School as required by General Laws c. 71, § 89(k)(5), and 603 CMR 1.00. Such approval will follow a**  **legal and technical review of each proposed contract and a vote by the charter**  **school’s board of trustees to approve such contract and to submit a request to**  **amend its charter accordingly.**   
**Any such approval by the Commissioner shall also operate to amend the charters granted to Community Day Charter Public School and Holyoke Community Charter School to include the approved management contract.**

The vote, by roll call, was unanimous. The motion passed.

**Schedule for SY 25-26 BESE Meetings**

Chair Craven called for a motion and vote.

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

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approves the schedule of regular meetings through June 2026, as presented by Interim Commissioner Tutwiler.**

The vote, by roll call, was unanimous. The motion passed.

**Time-Out Practices: Amendments to Program and Safety Standards for Approved Public or Private Day and Residential Special Education School Programs (603 CMR 18.00) and Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements if Used (603 CMR 46.00) – Discussion and Vote**

Secretary/Interim Commissioner Tutwiler invited DESE staff members to the table including Iraida J. Álvarez, Acting Executive Director of Special Education, Jamie Camacho, Acting State Director of Special Education, and Jannelle Roberts, Director of the Office of Approved Special Education Schools. He thanked the team for all their work reviewing and summarizing the public comment received and engaging with stakeholders. He stated that based on the public comment received, he is recommending additional changes to the regulations.

Ms. Álvarez reviewed the proposed changes to the regulations that were initially presented to the Board in March 2025 and subsequently went out for public comment. Ms. Roberts then presented a summary of the public comment received. Ms. Camacho presented non-regulatory responses to public comment and next steps. The presenters outlined the key changes that have been made in response to public comment, including moving the effective date to August 2026 to allow more time for planning and training, and clarifying language. The presenters then responded to comments and questions from the Board.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

**VOTED:**  **at the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B, M.G.L. c. 71, § 37G(c), and M.G.L. c. 71B, §10, and having solicited public comments in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, M.G.L. c. 30A, § 3, hereby adopts the regulations for Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements If Used, 603 CMR 46.00, and the regulations for Program and Safety Standards for Approved Public or Private Day and Residential Special Education School Programs, 603 CMR 18.00, as presented by the Interim Commissioner.**

The vote, by roll call, was unanimous. The motion passed.

Chair Craven thanked Board members, the Secretary/Interim Commissioner, DESE staff and all presenters. She congratulated Member Asikis on his graduation and thanked Member Moriarty again for his service to the Board. There being no further business and with no objection, Chair Craven declared the meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, September 30, 2025.