Minutes of the Regular Meeting

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

**June 26, 2012**

**8:35 a.m. – 12:55 p.m.**

**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

**75 Pleasant Street**

**Malden, MA**

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:

**Maura Banta**, Chair, Melrose

**Beverly Holmes**, Vice Chair, Springfield

**Vanessa Calderón-Rosado**, Milton

**Harneen Chernow**, Jamaica Plain

**Gerald Chertavian**, Cambridge

**Matthew Gifford**, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Brookline

**Jeff Howard**, Reading

**Ruth Kaplan**, Brookline

**Paul Reville**, Secretary of Education, Worcester

**David Roach**, Sutton

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

Member of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Absent:

**Dana Mohler-Faria**, Bridgewater

Chair Banta called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

**Comments from the Chair**

Chair Banta asked members to introduce themselves. The chair welcomed Ryan Casey, the newly elected chair of the Student Advisory Council. Mr. Casey’s term will begin on July 1, 2012. The chair said the Board had a terrific session last night that included presentations on wraparound zones and educator evaluation. Chair Banta said she had the pleasure to attend the teacher recognition ceremony at the State House to recognize the outgoing Teacher of the Year, Adam Gray; the 2013 Teacher of the Year, Kathleen Turner; and other teachers. The chair said the Teacher of the Year event celebrates all teachers in the Commonwealth.

**Comments from the Commissioner**

Commissioner Chester said the Teacher of the Year celebration is one of his favorite events each year. The commissioner provided a brief update on the Stand for Children / Massachusetts Teachers Association compromise legislation on educator evaluation. Commissioner Chester welcomed Mr. Casey to the Board. The commissioner directed Board members to the tabs in the back of the Board book to review items provided for information.

Ms. Kaplan arrived at 8:40 a.m.

Commissioner Chester welcomed and recognized Alan J. Ingram, the superintendent of schools in Springfield. The commissioner said he was thrilled to announce Alan’s hiring as a second deputy commissioner to work alongside Jeff Wulfson.

**Public Comment**

1. Dan Murphy, American Federation of Teachers–Massachusetts, and Frank McLaughlin, Lawrence Teachers Union, addressed the Board on the RETELL initiative and Lawrence Public Schools district turnaround plan.
2. Laurie Zucker-Conde and Marla Perez from the Massachusetts Association of Bilingual Education addressed the Board on the creation of dual language licensure.
3. Paul Toner from the Massachusetts Teachers Association addressed the Board on the RETELL initiative.
4. Robert Dutch and Roger Forget from Upper Cape Cod Vocational Technical School addressed the Board on Senate amendment #50 related to vocational technical school tuition.

Secretary Reville arrived at 9:10 a.m.

1. Anne O’Halloran from Citizens for Public Schools addressed the Board on the Gloucester Community Arts Charter School.

**Comments from the Secretary**

Secretary Reville said the Commission on Teacher Preparation is having its second meeting this week. The secretary welcomed Alan Ingram to the Department. Secretary Reville said it was a pleasure to serve on the Integrated College and Career Readiness (ICCR) Task Force. The secretary said Massachusetts has been selected as one of 7 or 8 states to work on the Pathways to Prosperity coalition. Secretary Reville welcomed the new student Board member, Ryan Casey, and thanked Matthew Gifford for his service.

# Approval of the Minutes

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approve the minutes of the May 22, 2012 regular meeting.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Report of the Task Force on Integrating College and Career Readiness**

Mr. Chertavian, who chaired the Integrating College and Career Readiness Task Force, thanked staff from the Department and the Executive Office for their support. Mr. Chertavian introduced the three following task force members: Gary Gottlieb, President and CEO, Partners HealthCare; Sheila Harrity, Principal, Worcester Technical High School; and Dan O’Connell, President and CEO, Massachusetts Competitive Partnership. Mr. Chertavian said the 36-member task force was charged with looking at how to integrate college and career readiness for all students. He said the goal was to complement the state’s high standards, and that this initiative is for all children.

Dr. Gottlieb said these are challenging economic times, and that 54 percent of young college graduates are unemployed or underemployed. Dr. Gottlieb said too often the skills that young adults achieve do not fit the needs of employers. Dr. Gottlieb said employers see young adults’ preparation as inadequate to the task or not a fit for their employment needs. He added that two-thirds of students entering community colleges require some remedial education.

Principal Harrity said at its first meeting, the task force tried to define career readiness. She discussed the importance of educating the whole student by adding workplace readiness and social/emotional supports. Principal Harrity outlined the six recommendations in the report:

1. Incorporate Career Readiness into Massachusetts’s Recommended Course of Study
2. Strengthen School, Employer, Higher Education, and Community Partnerships
3. Improve the Utilization of School Counselors in Deployment of Career Readiness Education
4. Incentivize Schools to Create and Demonstrate Comprehensive Career Readiness Strategies
5. Promote the Importance of College and Career Readiness for All Students
6. Explicitly Identify Personnel Responsible for Effectively Executing the Task Force Recommendations

Mr. O’Connell said investment in public education is the best economic development tool. Mr. O’Connell said the task force saw the importance of having guidance counselors return to the job of guiding students. He said the task force supports Chair Peisch’s bill, House No. 3931, to establish six-year career plans for all public school students. Mr. O’Connell said the state could provide annual metrics to gauge how we are moving toward all of the goals.

Mr. Chertavian said young people will benefit from this approach and businesses as well as the Commonwealth and nation need this to be competitive. He said the imperative to integrate college and career readiness has grown, and all children deserve to be nurtured along the path of realizing their dreams.

Ms. Kaplan asked whether Northeastern had been used as a resource given their experience in career preparation through internships. She said this involves a huge shift in the way we think about higher education. Mr. Chertavian said the task force worked closely with Northeastern, and that they place 5,000-6,000 students into co-op internships. He said other states have figured out ways to do this more cheaply, and internships are one element. Mr. Chertavian said it is a cultural change to see that there are multiple pathways to careers.

Secretary Reville said the state has achievement gaps and opportunity gaps, and many students in high school are bored, indicating an inspiration gap. The secretary said we can do both high quality academics and career readiness and motivation. He said in Finland 40 percent of 9th graders are in some form of career pathway. Secretary Reville said the biggest challenge is that doing this right will require more time adding to the school day/year.

Ms. Chernow said it is a challenge for the private sector to understand the education community. She said one challenge is the role of the guidance counselor, who may have responsibility for 300-400 students. Ms. Chernow asked about next steps and a timeline. Commissioner Chester said he expects to come back early in the fall with suggestions for moving ahead. Dr. Calderón-Rosado said she is excited about this work, and agreed that the part about guidance counselors stood out. She said two concerns of hers were resources and how this relates to the Department’s strategic plan.

Commissioner Chester thanked the task force members for their service. The commissioner said academic preparation is necessary but not sufficient, and that workplace readiness habits prepare one for college too.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education receive the report of the Integrating College and Career Readiness Task Force with thanks to the chair and members of the Task Force for their work, and further, that the Board direct the Commissioner to review the recommendations of the Task Force and present to the Board at a future meeting his proposed next steps.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Lawrence Public Schools – Update on Receivership and District Turnaround Plan**

Commissioner Chester said the district released its turnaround plan on May 30, 2012. The commissioner said he is pleased with the progress to date. Superintendent Jeff Riley said he was pleased to be here. He presented a PowerPoint on the Lawrence plan.

Superintendent Riley said since January, he has visited all the schools in the district on multiple occasions. Superintendent Riley said the district’s turnaround plan represents where we want to go with our schools. He said typical plans have been top down and highly centralized, and have not worked. Superintendent Riley said the Lawrence turnaround plan has the following six overarching themes:

1. Combine the best of Lawrence and the best of the Commonwealth
2. Great schools for Lawrence
3. Empower principals and teachers, parents and the community
4. Use resources wisely
5. Implement with urgency
6. It’s all about results

Superintendent Riley said that high performing schools will earn autonomy around curriculum, budgets, and hiring. He said parents locally are excited about this process.

Dr. Howard said the plan looks comprehensive and doable. He asked about the goal to double the number of schools achieving a student growth percentile (SGP) in English language arts and math in the first year. Superintendent Riley said the goal is very ambitious and the district plans to meet it. Dr. Howard wondered whether a superintendent prior to receivership could have put into place a plan of similar comprehensiveness. Superintendent Riley said no, and that part of the reason he left Boston for Lawrence is that he felt that the conditions of receivership would allow him to get done what needs to get done.

Ms. Chernow asked about the balance here and the components that are necessary to ensure a successful outcome. Superintendent Riley said a majority of schools asked that they be able to increase learning time. He said the district will not demand that they do any particular curriculum. Superintendent Riley said that while he does have substantial authority, he chose not to remove half the teaching force; instead, he has set clear expectations and standards for what is effective. He said the district is looking to build a system where all schools can prove they can perform at a high level, and then be rewarded with autonomy.

Mr. Roach asked about the arrangements with the educational management organizations (EMOs). Superintendent Riley described the relationships that two EMOs (Unlocking Potential, Community Day) will have in managing one school each, the support MATCH Tutors will provide to two turnaround high schools, and the creation of a new school for at-risk students, Phoenix Academy Lawrence. Commissioner Chester said those organizations are taking a risk to come in as management organizations with a contract as opposed to as a charter organization that doesn’t have to live by the rules of the district.

Secretary Reville said he visited Superintendent Riley in Lawrence recently, and he is impressed with the plan and the hybrid model. The secretary also said he likes the superintendent’s approach to addressing issues in students’ lives that affect their academic performance. Superintendent Riley said the district will use more time for academics, enrichment activities, and social-emotional supports. Ms. Kaplan commended Superintendent Riley for all he has done, and asked whether there was anything in the college/career readiness report that sparked his thoughts. Superintendent Riley said the caseload for guidance counselors is too great. He said the district has reached out to Merrimack College and with Northern Essex Community College about potential collaboration. Chair Banta thanked Superintendent Riley for his time and work.

**Citation for Matthew Gifford**

Chair Banta presented student Board member Matthew Gifford a citation on behalf of the Board and the Commissioner in recognition of his year of service. Chair Banta said Mr. Gifford was very engaged and involved, and that the new student member, Ryan Casey, will have big shoes to fill in the 2012-13 school year.

**English Language Learners: Educator Preparation and Training Required for Sheltered English Immersion (RETELL Initiative), 603 CMR 7, 14, and 44**

Chair Banta recommended that the Board go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to potential litigation on the proposed English language learners’ regulations.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education go into executive session, in accordance with Mass. General Laws chapter 30A, section 21(a), paragraph 3, to discuss strategy with respect to potential litigation on the proposed English Language Learners regulations.**

Jonathan Considine called for the roll of the vote. The vote was unanimous. The Board went into executive session at 10:50 a.m.

At 11:25 a.m., Chair Banta asked for a motion to return to open session.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education return to open session.**

The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Chester said he has made clear the Department’s commitment to do a stronger job of educating English language learners. The commissioner said training is just one component of a comprehensive system to ensure a strong curriculum and effective instruction for ELLs. Department counsel Dianne Curran made a presentation to the Board on what the new regulations will accomplish. Senior Associate Commissioner Robert Bickerton said there will be a lot of impact on incumbent educators, and discussions have focused on how to manage this so that it is effective. Esta Montano, the Department’s director of the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement, said if the regulations are approved today, the Department will pilot a course next month consisting of six online and ten face-to-face classes.

Vice Chair Holmes asked about the cultural component of the proposed syllabus. Ms. Montano said three of the 16 classes are focused on socio-emotional and socio-cultural matters, so that teachers will understand themselves and their ELL students better. Mr. Roach said it seems that we have benefitted from category training, and upped it a notch. He said we should be confident that this approach takes us a step forward. Mr. Roach said there are challenges ahead by prioritizing 26,000 teachers with immediate need for training, but this puts us on a good path. Mr. Roach asked if we are geared up to do this. Mr. Bickerton said yes, we have a high degree of confidence that we are focused on what’s most important.

Ms. Chernow said it seems that training 26,000 teachers in four years is going to be challenging. Mr. Bickerton said that by next June, we anticipate having 3,000 teachers complete the course. Mr. Bickerton said the Department will begin with districts that have a high incidence of ELLs and lower performances. Commissioner Chester said this is very ambitious, and that is why the Department has focused on teachers working with ELLs now. Secretary Reville said he is very supportive of the commissioner’s recommendations and he likes the emphasis on competency versus seat time. The secretary said there is a big issue with the amount of instructional time we provide to ELLs, who have to learn their subjects and acquire a second language at the same time. Commissioner Chester assured the Board that the Department is committed to continuous monitoring and refinement of this initiative, and he may return to the Board in a year or two with recommended improvements.

**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; c. 71, § 38G; and c. 71A, and having solicited and reviewed public comment in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c.30A., § 3, hereby adopt the amendments to the Regulations on Education of English Learners (603 CMR 14), Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval (603 CMR 7); and Recertification (603 CMR 44) as presented by the Commissioner. The amendments relate to the RETELL Initiative as outlined in the Commissioner’s June 15, 2012 memorandum.**

The vote was unanimous.

Ms. Kaplan left the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

**Educator Preparation Program Approval, Professional Licensure including English as a Second Language License, and Other Matters, 603 CMR 7**

Commissioner Chester said these amendments revise the regulations on Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval; the changes include the English as a Second Language (ESL) license standards and relate to the RETELL initiative. The regulations would also strengthen the accountability system for educator preparation institutions, revise requirements for the professional licensure, increase the number of hours of practical experience that educators are expected to have in preparation for licensure, and clarify exemptions.

Chair Banta asked about the ESL license internship. Ms. Montano said it is a 150-hour internship. Dr. Howard asked if a web-based accountability system would extend to evaluating preparation programs and student outcomes. Assistant Director of Educator Policy, Preparation and Leadership Liz Losee said yes.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with G.L. c. 69, § 1B, and c. 71, § 38G, and having solicited and reviewed public comment in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c.30A, § 3, hereby adopt the Regulations on Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval, 603 CMR 7.00, as presented by the Commissioner. The amendments revise standards for the English as a Second Language educator license, revise standards for preparation program approval, and make other changes as outlined in the Commissioner’s June 19, 2012 memorandum.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Equal Educational Opportunity, 603 CMR 26, and Charter Schools, 603 CMR 1 (Non-Discrimination Based on Gender Identity, per C. 199 of 2011)**

Commissioner Chester said the proposed amendments would incorporate the new requirements of state law protecting students from discrimination in public schools based on gender identity. The new law takes effect on July 1. Ms. Chernow commended the Department for responding to the recommendations we heard and the written comments from GLAAD and the Transgender Coalition. Ms. Chernow said she is pleased about the next step of working with the field to provide guidance to schools.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with G.L. c. c. 69, § 1B; and c. 71, § 89, and c. 76, § 5, as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011; and having solicited and reviewed public comment in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c.30A, § 3, hereby adopt the Regulations on Access to Equal Educational Opportunity (603 CMR 26.00) and Charter Schools (603 CMR 1.00), as presented by the Commissioner. The proposed amendments incorporate the new requirements of state law protecting students from discrimination in public schools based on gender identity.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Accountability and Assistance for School Districts and Schools, 603 CMR 2**

Chair Banta said this set of regulations was necessitated by the state’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) flexibility waiver. Commissioner Chester said the amendments to the regulations would remove references to Adequate Yearly Progress, align the regulations to evolving practice, and clarify the status of districts that the Board had declared underperforming prior to April 2010. Chair Banta said the Department has shown great sensitivity to the needs of the field. Dr. Howard asked whether all districts with Level 4 schools were designated as Level 4 districts. The commissioner said that is correct, that a district’s level corresponds to the level of its lowest performing school.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with G.L. c. 69, § 1B; and c. 69, §§ 1J and 1K, and having solicited and reviewed public comment in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c.30A, § 3, hereby adopt the Regulations on Accountability and Assistance for School Districts and Schools (603 CMR 2.00), as presented by the Commissioner. The amendments implement the flexibility waiver that the U.S. Department of Education granted to the Commonwealth in February 2012 and make other changes as outlined in the Commissioner’s memo of June 19, 2012.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Annual Performance Evaluation of the Commissioner: Report from Committee on Commissioner’s Performance Evaluation**

Dr. Calderón-Rosado, who chairs the Board’s Committee on the Annual Performance Evaluation of the Commissioner, described the process to evaluate the commissioner’s performance. Dr. Calderón-Rosado said the commissioner was rated based on his performance in five areas. Dr. Calderón-Rosado said that based on the commissioner’s evaluation, the committee is recommending that the Board approve a 3.5 percent salary increase for the commissioner.

Mr. Chertavian thanked Commissioner Chester for the role he plays in leading our system and for the high expectations that he has set. Mr. Roach said the commissioner’s energy, focus, and direction are impressive. Mr. Roach said the commissioner models the style of leadership that is distributive, and that is reflected in the quality of the organization. Mr. Roach said he enjoys the commissioner’s frankness and the level of detail he provides to the Board.

Dr. Howard applauded Commissioner Chester’s knowledge of a range of issues and his openness to the field and to conversations with the Board. Secretary Reville thanked the committee for doing a thorough job. Secretary Reville said Commissioner Chester is diligent, thoughtful, and persistent. Chair Banta thanked the commissioner for his leadership, his multiplier effect, and for his openness to doing new things.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approve the Commissioner’s FY2012 performance rating of “outstanding” as recommended by the Board’s committee. Further, that the Board approve a salary increase for the Commissioner of 3.5 percent, effective July 1, 2012.**

The vote was unanimous.

Commissioner Chester thanked Board members, and said this process has been very humbling. The commissioner said it is a privilege to serve in this capacity and to work with the Board.

**Update on FY2013 Education Budget**

Department Chief Financial Officer Bill Bell said we are awaiting the final conference committee report. Mr. Bell said there is a $30 million swing across all accounts between the Senate and House education budgets. Mr. Bell said in the interim, the Administration has filed a temporary spending bill.

**Delegation of Authority to Commissioner to take Necessary Action between Board Meetings**

Chair Banta said the motion before the Board would approve Commissioner Chester to act on the Board’s behalf between now and the next Board meeting in September.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education authorize the Commissioner, in accordance with General Laws c. 15, § 1F, paragraph 3, to act on behalf of the Board in approving any matters that are not otherwise covered by the Board’s previous delegations of authority and that require Board action between June 27, 2012 and the next regular meeting of the Board in September 2012; provided that the Commissioner shall notify Board members in advance of any such action and shall report to the Board on any matters that have been so approved.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Schedule for Regular Board Meetings through June 2013**

The Board voted on the dates of scheduled meetings during the 2012-2013 Board session.

The proposed dates for 2012-2013 are:

Monday, September 24, 2012 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, September 25, 2012 – Regular Meeting

Monday, October 22, 2012 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, October 23, 2012 – Regular Meeting

Monday, November 26, 2012 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, November 27, 2012 – Regular Meeting

Monday, December 17, 2012 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, December 18, 2012 – Regular Meeting

Monday, January 28, 2013 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, January 29, 2013 – Regular Meeting

Monday, February 25, 2013 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, February 26, 2013 – Regular Meeting

Monday, March 25, 2013 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, March 26, 2013 – Regular Meeting

Monday, April 22, 2013 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, April 23, 2013 – Regular Meeting

Monday, May 20, 2013 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, May 21, 2013 – Regular Meeting

Monday, June 24, 2013 – Special Meeting

Tuesday, June 25, 2013 – Regular Meeting

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approve the schedule of regular meetings through June 2013, as presented by the Commissioner.**

**State Student Advisory Council End-of-Year Report**

Student board member Matthew Gifford, who chairs the State Student Advisory Council (SSAC), presented the council’s year-end report. The report summarizes the work of the state council and regional councils over the past school year. Chair Banta wished Mr. Gifford well as he plans to enter Suffolk University in the fall.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 12:55 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

Minutes of the Special Meeting

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

**June 25, 2012**

**5:10 p.m. – 7:05 p.m.**

**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

**75 Pleasant Street**

**Malden, MA**

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:

**Maura Banta**, Chair, Melrose

**Beverly Holmes**, Vice Chair, Springfield

**Vanessa Calderón-Rosado**, Milton

**Gerald Chertavian**, Cambridge

**James DiTullio**, Designee for the Secretary of Education

**Jeff Howard**, Reading

**Ruth Kaplan**, Brookline

**David Roach**, Sutton

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

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Absent:

**Harneen Chernow**, Jamaica Plain

**Matthew Gifford**, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Brookline

**Dana Mohler-Faria**, Bridgewater

Chair Banta called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. The chair welcomed members and thanked staff for putting together materials for this evening’s discussion. Commissioner Chester said tonight’s discussion would include a general overview of the end of year 2 of Race to the Top (RTTT) and an update on Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL).

RTTT Update

The commissioner introduced staff members Helene Bettencourt, Rebecca Shor, and Samantha Warburton.

Ms. Bettencourt, the Department’s RTTT program manager, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the vision and theory of action behind RTTT. Ms. Bettencourt talked about the project’s accomplishments and the 53 projects the Department is tracking.

Ms. Shor talked about progress around the establishment of Wraparound Zones to address students’ non-academic barriers to learning. Ms. Shor said four priority areas are: (1) climate and culture; (2) identifying and addressing students’ needs; (3) community coalitions; and (4) district systems. Ms. Shor said there are currently 21 schools piloting the approach in five Level 4 or 5 districts.

Ms. Warburton provided an update on educator evaluation. She said the 34 Level 4 schools from the first cohort and 11 early adopter districts had implemented the regulations during the 2011-12 school year. Ms. Warburton said that among the challenges faced were timing, capacity, and culture.

Dr. Howard arrived at 5:25 p.m.

Ms. Warburton said there is a huge ramp-up for next year as the 235 Race to the Top districts are required to implement the new evaluation system and training requirements.

Chair Banta thanked the presenters. The chair asked about the sustainability of this work and resources available. Ms. Short said that schools engaged in this effort receive $16,000 per year from the Department. Where funding is needed, schools have looked to Title I or other funds freed up under the state’s *No Child Left Behind* waiver. Mr. Chertavian asked where health care fits into this model. Ms. Shor said the Peck School in Holyoke is a good example of a school that uses strategic approaches to address needs. That school is used as a hub, and there is a health center located within the school. Ms. Shor said Peck started with a lot of challenges but has made significant growth on different dimensions over the past two years. In response to questions, Ms. Shor said Peck is a K-8 school and has one FTE (full time equivalent) working on this initiative.

Chair Banta asked how participation in MassCore will be increased. Ms. Bettencourt said the Department has made clear that this is a recommended course of study. She said the Department has focused on collecting information on the class and course level. Commissioner Chester said it’s important to make clear which schools are offering MassCore. The commissioner said Race to the Top districts use RTTT funds to increase participation in more advanced courses. Commissioner Chester also said the Board of Higher Education early in the year approved new admissions policies to the state’s four-year universities that will require four years of high school mathematics beginning in fall 2016.

Ms. Kaplan asked if Wraparound Zones were mandatory. Ms. Shor said they are optional, and in the first year were open to all Level 4 and 5 districts. Mr. Roach asked about the first cohort and how broad the terms were. Ms. Shor said the strategies used in each priority area included better connection to agencies that provide services and more efficient protocols. Mr. DiTullio asked how many cohort 1 schools are Innovation Schools. Ms. Shor said that five schools in Worcester are Innovation Schools.

Vice Chair Holmes asked about the educator evaluation cycle. Ms. Warburton discussed the five steps in the cycle. Mr. Chertavian asked what we have learned about the implementation of the new evaluation system. Ms. Warburton said this is challenging work and takes time and conversation.

RETELL Update

Commissioner Chester introduced Senior Associate Commissioner Bob Bickerton; Esta Montano, director of the Office of English Language Acquisition & Academic Achievement; and Dianne Curran, legal counsel to the Department. They went through a PowerPoint presentation. The commissioner said he will ask the Board to vote on the final regulations at tomorrow’s meeting. Commissioner Chester said the key is the state’s commitment to strengthening teaching and learning for English language learners. The commissioner said the training is only one component of the RETELL initiative, which includes clear standards for English proficiency, educator evaluation, assessment, accountability and school turnaround, and use of data. The commissioner said part of the tension is that some are not confident that the course of study the Department is developing is sufficient. The commissioner said no course by itself is sufficient; this is a whole package.

Ms. Curran gave an overview of the regulations, noting that the Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) endorsement is the credential and the regulations set forth the standards that teachers who provide SEI must meet. As of July 1, 2016, all core academic teachers of ELL students must have the endorsement. Current SEI teachers and the administrators who evaluate them must participate in cohort training. Ms. Curran said in addition, as of July 1, 2016, all applicants for license renewal must have at least 15 professional development points related to SEI or English as a Second Language.

Senior Associate Commissioner Bickerton said the Department received a lot of feedback on the proposed regulations, through 186 written comments and a couple dozen presentations around the state. Mr. Bickerton said it became clear that the 26,000 educators who have an assignment with ELL students today need to be our priority. Mr. Bickerton said this approach will be more powerful than the previous category training in that it is strong in SEI and content standards. Mr. Bickerton said we will need 100 trained instructors to reach 26,000 teachers.

Ms. Montano said the Department is about to pilot this course, through a blended model consisting of six online and 10 face-to-face classes. The pilot this July will be a four-week long course. After the pilot phase, the Department will review whether any revisions are needed in the course. Ms. Montano said a supplemental or bridge course will be available for educators who have completed two or more category trainings, so their prior training is honored and recognized.

Ms. Montano said the Department realized the ESL license was also in need of improvement to update subject matter knowledge. This will result in a new MTEL exam.

Commissioner Chester said that in terms of next steps, the Department will continue its conversations with the Department of Justice, look at what’s working and not working, and make adjustments as we go along based on what we learn. Chair Banta said she is very pleased with the spirit of honesty in looking at what is and is not working. Mr. Roach asked about the delivery of the course. Ms. Montano said we hope to serve the needs of districts through instructors that the Department will provide, and teachers will also have the option to go to institutions of higher education.

Mr. Bickerton said the Department is prequalifying instructors to address concerns about the uneven quality of the previous category training. He said in the coming year, educator preparation programs will update their program by integrating the new course requirements. Dr. Calderón-Rosado said she is pleased to see the regulations will also apply to charter schools and collaboratives. She asked about teachers who hold an ESL license. Ms. Montano said they are exempted because there is a presumption that ESL teachers already have the skills and knowledge.

Mr. Bickerton said a great deal of thought was given to how to build awareness and understanding and practice, and the course will provide great grounding. Ms. Montano said the course opens the door for teachers to continue professional development in areas of most interest or greatest need. Dr. Howard asked if the endorsement will be a supplement to the license. Mr. Bickerton said that is true for licensed educators, and those in preparation would get the endorsement while preparing to get the license.

Mr. Bickerton said the requirement applies to the 26,000 educators and administrators who have ELL students assigned. He said some districts have no ELLs. Mr. Bickerton said this is a moving target. Ms. Kaplan said she had hoped the regulations would apply to all teachers. She asked whether a teacher not required to meet the requirement could opt to take the training. Mr. Bickerton said the core academic teachers with ELLs are our priority, and we are pretty confident we can get to all 26,000 educators over the next four years. Other teachers will get additional professional development in ELL issues through the 15 professional development points (PDPs) that will be required for license renewal.

Chair Banta thanked the presenters and Board members for an excellent discussion.

Commissioner’s Performance Evaluation

Dr. Calderón-Rosado, who chairs the Board’s Committee on the Annual Performance Evaluation of the Commissioner, distributed a memorandum to the Board in advance of tomorrow’s vote on the commissioner’s annual evaluation.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m., subject to the call of the chair.**

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitchell D. Chester

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education