Minutes of the Regular Meeting

of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

Tuesday, March 27, 2018

8:33 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:**

**Paul Sagan**, Chair, Cambridge

**James Morton**, Vice-Chair, Boston

**Katherine Craven**, Brookline

**Ed Doherty**, Boston

**Amanda Fernandez,** Belmont

**Margaret McKenna**, Boston

**Michael Moriarty**, Holyoke

**James Peyser,** Secretary of Education

**Mary Ann Stewart**, Lexington

**Hannah Trimarchi**, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Marblehead

**Martin West**, Newton

**Jeff Wulfson,** Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Chair Sagan called the regular meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to order at 8:33 a.m. The members of the Board introduced themselves. He said the Board’s special meeting last night was very informative and the Board appreciated hearing from the speakers, especially the students. Chair Sagan said all Board members are invited to attend the Leading the Nation event at the State House on April 5, 2018, at which Jeff Riley will be sworn in as Commissioner. Looking ahead to the April 24 Board meeting, the Chair said he will participate remotely and Vice-Chair Morton will lead that meeting. Chair Sagan said the May 22 regular meeting will be held at Marblehead High School in honor of Ms. Trimarchi, and he anticipates starting that meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Acting Commissioner Wulfson stated this is his last Board meeting as Acting Commissioner. He said he never imagined having to step into this role last June and it has been a humbling experience. Acting Commissioner Wulfson said these nine months have been very full and expressed his appreciation to the members of the Board, Tom Scott and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, and everyone at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for their ongoing support and kind words. Acting Commissioner Wulfson offered special thanks to the staff in the Commissioner’s office, the Executive Senior Staff, and Karen Buttiglieri, the Commissioner’s Executive Assistant, adding that it has been a privilege to work with them. He noted there is still a lot of work to do and said we look forward to it.

Chair Sagan said the Board has greatly appreciated Mr. Wulfson’s work as Acting Commissioner; the Chair will provide him with more detailed feedback in the coming weeks, and the Board will honor Mr. Wulfson formally later this spring.

Secretary Peyser also expressed deep gratitude for Acting Commissioner Wulfson’s leadership and briefly summarized some of the Department’s accomplishments over the last nine months. Secretary Peyser said while a lot of work was underway when the Acting Commissioner stepped into this role, he lost no momentum, using his leadership and partnerships with the field to keep everything moving in a positive direction.

Ms. Craven arrived at 8:45 a.m.

# Statements from the Public

1. **Gerry Mroz**, *Parent,* addressed the Board on competency-based and personalized learning.
2. **Jayden Addison,** *11th Grade Student at PVCICS* – addressed the Board on Charter Schools – Request by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School for Review of Commissioner’s Decision.
3. **Giancarlo Crivelli**, *11th Grade Student at PVCICS* – addressed the Board on Charter Schools – Request by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School for Review of Commissioner’s Decision.

In response to a question from Chair Sagan, Mr. Crivelli said some students leave the charter school because it is too small to offer a full sports program. Vice-Chair Morton asked if the school has a co-op sports program with other schools. Mr. Crivelli said there was one but it was not the same as playing with students from your own school. He added that the charter school has a junior varsity soccer team but half of it is eighth graders.

1. **Libby Hernandez**, *Parent*, addressed the Board on Charter Schools – Request by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School for Review of Commissioner’s Decision.
2. **Peter Demling,** *Amherst School Committee, Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee*, addressed the Board on Charter Schools – Request by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School for Review of Commissioner’s Decision.
3. **Cara Castenson**, *Pelham School Committee, Chair*, addressed the Board on Charter Schools – Request by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School for Review of Commissioner’s Decision.

In response to a question from Chair Sagan, Ms. Castenson clarified a comment about reimbursements.

1. **John A. Provost, Ed.D**.,*Superintendent, Northampton Public Schools*, addressed the Board on Charter Schools – Request by Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School for Review of Commissioner’s Decision.
2. **Judith Houle,** **Ed.D***., Executive Director, Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School*, addressed the Board on Recommended Probationary Conditions for Greenfield Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School.

# Approval of Minutes

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approves the minutes of the February 27, 2018 Regular Meeting.**

The vote was unanimous.

**Level 5 Districts –**

**Lawrence Public Schools: Remarks from John Connolly, Chair of Lawrence Alliance for Education**

Acting Commissioner Wulfson provided a brief update on the Lawrence Public Schools, which for the last six years have been under the leadership of Jeff Riley as receiver. The Acting Commissioner described the seven-member partnership board that he announced on February 6: the Lawrence Alliance for Education (LAE), a non-profit that will assume the role of district receiver with the authority granted by state law and will hire a superintendent to run day-to-day operations. Acting Commissioner Wulfson noted that five of the seven members of the LAE live and/or work in Lawrence. He introduced John Connolly, Chairman of the LAE board, and Ventura Rodriguez,Associate Commissioner for the Statewide System of Support, who is a member of the LAE board.

Mr. Connolly described his career experience, including serving on the Boston City Council and being the co-founder and executive director of The 1647, Inc., an organization that helps schools in Lawrence and other communities to increase family engagement. He said he appreciates the strengths that the LAE members all bring to the board. He commended the work of outgoing Superintendent/Receiver Riley. Mr. Connolly said the search for a new superintendent is underway and the board hopes to have an excellent candidate to start on July 1. Mr. Rodriguez said the LAE is working with a search firm and just finished the process for receiving input from the community on the characteristics they would like to see in the next superintendent. Acting Commissioner Wulfson noted that Mary Lou Bergeron will serve as Interim Superintendent and that the Lawrence Teachers Union overwhelming ratified their new contract last week.

Mr. Moriarty said this is the next step, not the new status quo. Mr. Connolly agreed that more work needs to be done before receivership concludes. In response to a question from Ms. Stewart about how to continue the gains in achievement, Mr. Connolly said while the board has just begun meeting, members have offered ideas including creating a pathway for Lawrence students to become teachers in the Lawrence schools. Mr. Doherty asked about the current role of the school committee. Mr. Connolly said two members of the school committee, including the mayor, are on the LAE board. He said he has met with all but one member of the school committee and he wants the elected school committee members to have a voice in the process. Mr. Connolly said the elected committee still meets to discuss issues and the outgoing Superintendent/Receiver has met with them periodically.

Chair Sagan thanked Mr. Connolly, Mr. Rodriguez, and the other members of the LAE, noting that the Board made a difficult but necessary decision when it voted to place the school district in receivership. Chair Sagan said the Commissioner and Board need to see long-term, sustainable excellence in the Lawrence Public Schools, and receivership will last as long as it takes to reach that point. Chair Sagan said this is an appropriate next step and the Lawrence Alliance for Education has the Board’s support. Mr. Connolly thanked the Department staff for their help.

# Holyoke Public Schools: Progress Report by Superintendent/Receiver Steve Zrike

Acting Commissioner Wulfson introduced Dr. Steve Zrike,Superintendent/Receiver of the Holyoke Public Schools, and Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner. Acting Commissioner Wulfson said he is pleased that he and Dr. Zrike have agreed to extend his contract for three more years.

Dr. Zrike presented a progress update. He said the district’s vision is a pathway for every student and its mission is to be the first educational choice for Holyoke families by designing multiple pathways enabling all students to graduate prepared to excel in college, career, and community leadership. Dr. Zrike said he is pleased with the progress in increasing graduation rates, decreasing the number of dropouts, increasing the number of students feeling connected to adults at school, and raising to 85 percent the proportion of parents who feel welcome in their child’s school. He said the district has also seen an increase in early childhood literacy.

Dr. Zrike addressed some of the district’s key challenges, including retention of effective teachers, student engagement, discipline referrals, and budget gaps. He highlighted the secondary school redesign work and noted that one thing he can get the community to agree on is that they want middle schools. Dr. Zrike described the redesign concept for middle and high school. He said he is proud to work in the Holyoke Public Schools.

Board members voiced concerns about the financial challenges the district is facing. Dr. Zrike acknowledged that while it is an economically depressed area, the district is strengthened by partnerships with Veritas Prep, the Chamber, Westfield State University, and Holyoke Community College. Ms. McKenna suggested expanding partnerships with teacher prep programs as well. Secretary Peyser noted that Holyoke is participating in the federal preschool expansion grant through the Department of Early Education and Care.

Ms. Craven complimented Dr. Zrike on the facilities redesign plan. She and Vice-Chair Morton offered to come out to Holyoke to discuss budget issues and get a better understanding of the situation. Dr. Zrike said he would welcome their visit. He expressed his thanks to Acting Commissioner Wulfson and said he looks forward to working with the incoming Commissioner. Chair Sagan thanked Dr. Zrike on behalf of the Board.

Chair Sagan announced that the Board would take a short break at 10:10 a.m. He reconvened the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

# School Climate and Safety

Acting Commissioner Wulfson said this item follows up on the Board’s request at the February 27 meeting for a report and discussion on school safety. He called attention to the materials in the briefing book and said there are two dimensions to this issue: physical safety in school buildings and the social-emotional wellbeing of students. Acting Commissioner Wulfson introduced Rachelle Engler Bennett, Associate Commissioner; Anne Gilligan, Office of Student and Family Support; Matt Deninger, the Department’s designee on the Massachusetts School Building Authority board; Julie Hackett, Taunton Superintendent; and Steven Wojnar, Dudley Police Chief and president of the Massachusetts Police Chiefs Association.

Ms. Bennett provided an overview on school safety initiatives that the Department, school and municipal officials, and other agencies are supporting. Ms. Gilligan described the requirement for schools and districts to develop a school-specific multi-hazard evacuation plan and medical emergency response plan. Superintendent Hackett discussed the importance of having a good communication plan with emergency responders and the community. She added that she and other superintendents are dealing increasingly with student mental health issues as well as school infrastructure. Chief Wojnar said schools are a microcosm of society and each community has to determine its needs and its approach, adding that school resource officers can be a valuable part of the school team. In terms of building new school facilities, Mr. Deninger said the Massachusetts School Building Authority looks for collaboration in school design between school and municipal officials and local police and fire officials.

In response to questions from the Board, Superintendent Hackett said superintendents take emergency plans very seriously. Ms. Gilligan noted that small emergencies (e.g., frozen pipes) happen frequently and schools deal with them through their emergency plans. Chief Wojnar noted that plans are in place but schools may not publicize them in order to protect security. Chair Sagan asked about funding to retrofit schools for safety enhancements. Mr. Deninger responded that the MSBA has no funding stream for this purpose.

Ms. Trimarchi said the strong student-led movement initiated by the students of Parkland is focusing on safety in the communities outside of school as well as safety within schools. Ms. Trimarchi asked about support for students who have issues traveling to and from school. Superintendent Hackett explained that her district has community liaisons who connect students to youth crisis intervention teams if they are facing problems, but some communities do not have as much support. Chief Wojnar said he was encouraged to see young people getting involved and watching out for each other, adding that students who pay attention to social media and report an issue could make all the difference.

Ms. Trimarchi said some school resource officers send mixed messages about their role and asked about changing the messaging. Chief Wojnar said schools have to find the right person for that role, adding that he has seen school resource officers establish trust by being involved with various groups in the school and the community. Superintendent Hackett said in Taunton, she and the police chief jointly evaluate the school resource officer. Acting Commissioner Wulfson asked if school resource officers receive specialized training. Chief Wojnar said training is available but not required. Ms. McKenna asked the panel if the Department could do more in this area. Superintendent Hackett said it would be helpful to compile a repository of information and resources in one place for districts to access.

Mr. Doherty said schools need more resources to address students’ mental health needs. He added that he proposed the motion/resolution strictly in response to the president saying we should arm teachers. Mr. Doherty said he went to the student march in Boston on March 24 and was very impressed that students were talking about not just drills in schools but broader issues including assault weapons bans and background checks, and he advocated that the Board support them.

Ms. Craven asked Chief Wojnar how much training a person would need to use a firearm responsibly. Chief Wojnar said police receive at least 100 hours of basic training and periodic recertification, as well as training on safety and security for storage. He added that the MA Association of Chiefs of Police has not taken an official position on this proposal but police chiefs do not favor having untrained individuals carry firearms in schools or anywhere else.

Vice-Chair Morton asked if there are standards or best practices for school resource officers. Chief Wojnar said his association has met with superintendents and district attorneys to share ideas but each community or region determines its standards based on its needs.

Chair Sagan thanked the panelists and encouraged the Department to work with the MASS on a resource clearinghouse plan. He said it is very rare for the Board to take a position on a broad policy matter such as this. Chair Sagan noted that Mr. Doherty raised it and he asked Mr. Doherty to make the motion to adopt the resolution. Mr. Doherty made the motion and Ms. Trimarchi seconded it.

Mr. Moriarty said the Board is not an editorial board and he does not want it to be adopting resolutions on a regular basis, but this is a unique case. Board members discussed minor amendments to the main motion.

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

**VOTED: to add the phrase “by other than law enforcement personnel” to the third paragraph.**

The vote was unanimous.

Ms. McKenna asked that the Board amend the resolution to strike the last “whereas” clause as not in keeping with the rest of the resolution.

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

**VOTED: to strike the last “whereas” clause.**

The vote was unanimous.

Secretary Peyser said he concurs with the Chair that this is a special case and we all agree teachers play a critical role in support and safety by creating a supportive, caring school culture and identifying students who are in distress. He said the education and public safety sectors in Massachusetts are working together to protect student safety. Secretary Peyser encouraged the adoption of the resolution as amended.

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

**VOTED: WHEREAS the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education was deeply troubled by the February 14, 2018 shooting at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, that killed 14 students and three adults, and equally troubled by previous school shootings, including the 1999 shooting at Columbine High School in Colorado that killed 12 students and one adult, and the 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut that killed 20 students and six adults; and**

**WHEREAS there is no evidence-based research showing that arming teachers would reduce casualties in mass shootings; and**

**WHEREAS allowing guns in schools by other than law enforcement personnel would increase the risk of accidental shootings of students and other bystanders; and**

**WHEREAS teachers are first and foremost educators and therefore should be employed solely on the basis of their educational skills and credentials, not their skills as a security officer;**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education believes arming educators will make schools less safe, and the Board opposes any move to do so.**

The vote was unanimous.

Chair Sagan thanked Mr. Doherty for bringing this motion forward and said he expects the Board will return to the topic of school climate in the future.

# Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School’s Request to Appeal Commissioner’s Decision

Chair Sagan said the Board would take this item out of order to accommodate the attendees from western Massachusetts. He said the bar is very high for the Board to override a decision of the Commissioner. Chair Sagan reminded the Board that no vote is required. Acting Commissioner Wulfson explained that the Department would not make a presentation; however, Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner; Alison Bagg, Director of the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign; and Alyssa Hopkins, School Development Manager, Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign, are here to answer questions.

Acting Commissioner Wulfson said while this school has an innovative model and is successful, it is premature to grant the request for expansion; the school has not yet used all its available seats, further demand is not evident, and some districts in the region are close to their net school spending caps. Richard Alcorn, Executive Director of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School, addressed questions from Board members about kindergarten demand, rates of attrition, waitlist, the school’s growth plan, students with disabilities, and English learners.

Mr. Moriarty said he is sympathetic to providing the option for more families and asked if a different number might work. Acting Commissioner Wulfson said the Department would be willing to discuss a more modest increase. Chair Sagan said this is not the place to negotiate numbers and urged the school to take a more collaborative approach.

Chair Sagan concluded the discussion, stating that the school has not persuaded the Board to take action today. He encouraged the school to work with the Department and come up with a better proposal.

# Recommended Probationary Conditions for Greenfield Commonwealth of Massachusetts Virtual School

Acting Commissioner Wulfson welcomed Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner, and Ken Klau, Director of the Office of Digital Learning. He said he has been impressed with the actions theGreenfield Commonwealth Virtual School has taken to address problems. The Acting Commissioner recommended that the Board extend the virtual school’s probationary status with conditions for the remainder of the certificate term, through June 30, 2019. Acting Commissioner Wulfson said the Department has a positive working relationship with the school and hopes to see sustained progress. In response to a question from Chair Sagan, Mr. Chuang said condition 3 is about the maximum number of students that the virtual school may enroll.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 94, and 603 CMR 52.11, hereby extends probation for the Greenfield Commonwealth Virtual School (GCVS) and directs the school to meet the following conditions on the school’s certificate, as recommended by the Commissioner:**

1. **Reporting Requirements**
   1. **GCVS must continue to submit to the Department, at** [**odl@doe.mass.edu**](mailto:odl@doe.mass.edu)**, board meeting agendas and materials prior to each board meeting at the same time that these items are sent to the school’s board members. Further, the school must submit to the Department the minutes of these proceedings as soon as the school’s board approves them. The Department reserves the right to require the submission of additional information, such as quarterly or monthly financial statements, if board materials do not already include this information. The school must provide such additional information within two business days.**
   2. **GCVS must continue to submit to the Department weekly student enrollment reports.**
2. **GCVS must continue to maintain an escrow account in an amount determined by the Department in consultation with the school to pay for any potential closing, legal, and audit expenses associated with closure, should that occur.**
3. **GCVS must continue to enroll a maximum of 750 students.**
4. **By December 31, 2018, GCVS must demonstrate significant and sustained academic improvement in mathematics, English language arts, and science. Should the school fail to do so, the Commissioner and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will consider nonrenewal or revoking the school’s certificate at the end of the term on June 30, 2019.**
5. **By April 30, 2018, GCVS must submit to the Department for its approval, at sedmond@doe.mass.edu or 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA, 02148, in a format prescribed by the Office of Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement, a detailed plan for serving students who are English learners. The plan, which must be implemented upon approval, must provide descriptions and timelines for:**
   1. **Identifying and screening all students potentially eligible for English learner services;**
   2. **Providing high-quality, specialized instructional support to English learners, including standards-aligned curriculum, formative assessments, and pedagogical strategies;**
   3. **Providing all teachers of English learners with ongoing professional development to effectively meet the needs of English learners and their parents/guardians;**
   4. **Providing on-demand translation services to current and prospective students' parents/guardians who do not speak English; and**
   5. **Conducting outreach to prospective students' parents/guardians who do not speak English, in multiple languages, using the same channels the school uses for English-speaking parents, which may include web/social media, radio, print, and television.**

**In addition to meeting the terms of probation, GCVS must also comply with the terms of its certificate. The Commissioner shall review and report to the Board on the success or lack of success of GCVS in meeting the terms of probation and its certificate and, based upon his review, shall recommend such further action as he deems appropriate.**

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts virtual school shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of General Laws chapter 71, section 94; 603 CMR 52.00; and all other applicable state and federal laws and regulations and such conditions as the Commissioner or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may from time to time establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the certificate.**

The vote was unanimous.

Mr. West left the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

# Amendments to Special Education Regulations, 603 CMR 28.10, to Align with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Foster Care Provisions

Acting Commissioner Wulfson welcomed Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner;

Teri Williams Valentine, Director of Special Education Planning and Policy; Elizabeth Keliher, Assistant Director of Special Education Planning and Policy; and Josh Varon, Legal Counsel. He recommended that the Board vote to adopt the amendments to the regulations, which have gone through the public comment process. Ms. Stewart asked if any themes emerged in the public comments. Mr. Johnston said only two comments were submitted, which indicates that the regulations and proposed amendments were well understood. Ms. Keliher said the Department has posted a joint advisory with the Department of Children and Families about the ESSA changes relating to education of students in foster care.

**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 G.L. c. 71B, and having solicited public comment in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c. 30A, § 3, hereby adopts the amendments to the Special Education Regulations, 603 CMR 28.10, as presented by the Commissioner.**

**The amendments clarify programmatic and financial responsibility for the special education services of students in foster care; resolve a conflict between the current state regulation and new provisions in federal law relating to students in foster care; and simplify, and provide consistency and predictability for the process of assigning responsibility to school districts for the special education services of students in foster care. The amended regulations take effect on July 1, 2018.**

The vote was unanimous.

# Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Accountability and Assistance for School Districts and Schools, 603 CMR 2.00

Acting Commissioner Wulfson recommended that the Board vote to send out the proposed amendments for public comment. He noted that the Board has discussed the elements of the accountability and assistance system at previous meetings. Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner, was available to answer questions. The members had no questions.

**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 §§ 1J and 1K, authorize the Commissioner to proceed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c. 30A, § 3, to solicit public comment on the proposed amendments to the Regulations on Accountability and Assistance for School Districts and Schools (603 CMR 2.00), as presented by the Commissioner.**

The vote was unanimous.

# English Learner Programs under the LOOK Act – Proposed Amendments to Regulations 603 CMR 4.00, 7.00, 14.00, 31.00, 44.00

Acting Commissioner Wulfson introduced Heather Peske, Senior Associate Commissioner; Paul Aguiar, Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement; Arabela Thomas, Associate General Counsel; and Marnie Jain, Supervisor for College, Career, and Technical Education. The panelists presented an overview of the proposed Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) regulations for the following: English Learner Programs, English Learner Parent Advisory Councils, Bilingual Education Endorsement, and the State Seal of Biliteracy. They outlined the key timelines for implementation of the LOOK Act. They then reviewed the proposed regulations on the SEI Endorsement for Vocational Technical Educators and the overall goals. In conclusion, Ms. Peske explained that if approved by the Board, the public comment period would run until May 18, 2018, and the Board would take a final vote on the regulations at the June 26, 2018 meeting.

Acting Commissioner Wulfson thanked the staff for their work, which he said was a huge lift in a very short time. In response to questions from Mr. Doherty about SEI courses for vocational-technical teachers, Acting Commissioner Wulfson said the Department has requested state funding for FY2019 and would encourage teachers to do the training in FY2019 if possible. In response to Ms. Fernandez’s question about the seal of biliteracy, he said the law is intended to recognize students who gain proficiency in English and another language. Ms. McKenna asked whether colleges would have adequate time to respond to the new regulations. Associate Commissioner Wulfson said the statute sets a tight timeframe.

**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; c. 71, § 38G; c. 71A, as amended by the LOOK Act, Chapter 138 of the Acts of 2017; and G.L. c. 74, authorize the Commissioner to proceed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, G.L. c. 30A, § 3, to solicit public comment on the proposed amendments to the Regulations on Vocational Technical Education (603 CMR 4.00), Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval (603 CMR 7.00), Education of English Learners (603 CMR 14.00), Massachusetts Certificate of Mastery (603 CMR 31.00), and Educator License Renewal (603 CMR 44.00), as presented by the Commissioner.**

**The proposed amendments are intended to implement the Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) Act through standards for English learner education programs and the educators who provide them, improve the instruction of English learners in career vocational technical programs through standards for career vocational technical educators, and update certain provisions of the vocational technical regulations relating to licensure.**

The vote was unanimous.

**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,

Jeff Wulfson

Acting 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**

**Monday, March 26, 2018**

**5:35 p.m. – 7:10 p.m.**

**Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

**75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA**

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

**Paul Sagan**, Chair, Cambridge

**James Morton**, Vice-Chair, Boston

**Amanda Fernandez,** Belmont

**Margaret McKenna**, Boston

**Michael Moriarty**, Holyoke

**James Peyser,** Secretary of Education

**Hannah Trimarchi**, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Marblehead

**Martin West**, Newton

**Jeff Wulfson,** Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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

**Katherine Craven**, Brookline

**Ed Doherty**, Boston

**Mary Ann Stewart**, Lexington

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Chair Sagan called the special meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Educationto order at 5:35 p.m. The members of the Board introduced themselves. Acting Commissioner Wulfson said the Board would hear a panel presentation and engage in discussion about personalized and competency-based learning in Massachusetts and its relevance to helping close achievement, employability, and equity gaps. Acting Commissioner Wulfson introduced Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner, who said the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has co-founded the Massachusetts Personalized Learning EdTech (MAPLE) Consortium and has joined the multi-state New England Secondary Schools Consortium (NESCC) to assist Massachusetts districts and educators in implementing personalized and competency-based learning strategies.

Mr. Chuang introduced Mr. Michael Horn, member of the Board’s Digital Learning Advisory Council, who provided an overview of personalized and competency-based learning in Massachusetts. Mr. Horn explained that technology is necessary to implement personalized learning effectively, affordably, and at significant scale. He discussed the definitions of blended learning and the benefits of online and blended learning, adding that within the framework of established curriculum standards and high expectations, personalized learning motivates students to reach their goals and take ownership of their own learning. Mr. Horn concluded by explaining that effective use of technology allows teachers and students to focus more on creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Ken Klau, Director of the Department’s Office of Digital Learning, introduced the following panelists: Lourenco Garcia, Principal, Revere High School; Sarah McLaughlin, science teacher, Melrose Middle School; Raven Guerra, student, Boston Day and Evening Academy; and Avanti Mohan, graduate, Francis W. Parker Charter School. They discussed their perspectives on leading, teaching, and learning in schools that support personalized and competency-based learning. Principal Garcia stated that it has been rewarding for both teachers and students. He said he supports high standards for student learning and believes this approach enables students and teachers to focus on mastery and build strong relationships. Ms. McLaughlin said that despite initial challenges, the initiative has helped her students show their learning and helped her assess their proficiency.

Ms. Guerra described how competency-based learning has allowed her to learn at her own pace and identify specific areas of study she needed to focus on. She added that her experience at the school encouraged her to believe in the opportunities she will have after high school. Ms. Mohan said this approach has resulted in her becoming more engaged in her own learning and more confident about building her skills and knowledge. Vice-Chair Morton commented that both students were impressively articulate in talking about their experiences.

Following the first panel discussion, David O’Connor, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Personalized Learning Edtech (MAPLE) Consortium; David Ruff, Executive Director of Great School Partnerships; and Ann Koufman-Frederick of MAPLE and LearnLaunch Institute provided brief overviews of their work in Massachusetts. Mr. O’Connor said the MAPLE Consortium includes 39 districts in Massachusetts and described some of the personalized learning practices those districts are using. Mr. Ruff said he is pleased that Massachusetts has joined the New England Secondary School Consortium, a network for the New England states and their school districts to learn from each other.

Board members engaged in discussion with the panelists about how this initiative could address achievement and opportunity gaps, how it applies to higher education institutions, whether it could be used to expand summer learning opportunities for K-12 students, and how these initiatives relate to parents’ engagement in their children’s learning.

Chair Sagan thanked all the panelists and commended the students for their contribution. He said the Board looks forward to future discussions.

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

**VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m., subject to the call of the Chair.**

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Wulfson

Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

and Secretary to the Board