# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:**  | Russell D. Johnston, Acting Commissioner  |
| **Date:**  | June 17, 2024 |
| **Subject:** | Briefing for the June 17, 2024 Special Meeting and June 18, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education |

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will have three meetings this month: a **special meeting** on **Monday, June 17, 2024,** 5:00–7:00 p.m.(held virtually); the **regular meeting** on **Tuesday, June 18, 2024**, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.(held in person at the office of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), 135 Santilli Highway, Everett, MA 02149) and a **joint meeting with the Board of Higher Education** on **Thursday, June 20, 2024**, 3:00–5:00 p.m.(held virtually). Helene Bettencourt will assist with all arrangements; please email or call her if you have any questions.

**SPECIAL MEETING, JUNE 17, 2024**

At the special meeting, the Board will hear a presentation from Dr. Thomas Kane, Professor of Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and faculty director of the Center for Education Policy Research, on findings from the Education Recovery Scorecard. Board members will have the opportunity for an in-depth discussion on this topic. No votes will be taken.

**REGULAR MEETING, JUNE 18, 2024**

Our business agenda leads off with an update from Chair Craven on the Commissioner search process. Ela Gardiner will present the End-of-Year Report from the State Student Advisory Council. Following that, the Board will vote on the schedule of regular meetings through June 2025. We will have a report on support for newly arrived homeless students. The final item for discussion on our business agenda is the education budget update.

**Statements from the Public**

**Comments from the Chair**

**Comments from the Secretary**

* Mental Health
* Preschool Partnership
* Skills Capital
* Summer EBT

**Comments from the Acting Commissioner**

* Review of BESE Special Meeting, June 17, 2024
* Presentation of Mitchell D. Chester Awards

**Routine Business: Approval of the Minutes of the May 21, 2024 Regular Meeting**

The Board will vote on approval of the minutes.

**ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

1. **Update on Commissioner Search Process – Discussion**

Chair Craven will update the Board on the search process.

1. **State Student Advisory Council End-of-Year Report for 2023-2024 – Discussion**

Ela Gardiner has served with distinction as the elected chair of the State Student Advisory Council and as a member of this Board. She will present the SSAC’s 2023-2024 end-of-year report.

1. **Schedule for Regular Board Meetings through June 2025 – Vote**

The Board received the proposed meeting schedule last month and will vote on the schedule at the June 18 meeting.

1. **Update on DESE’s** [**Educational Vision**](https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner/vision/)
	1. **Supports for Newly Arrived Homeless Students – Discussion**

This month we will update the Board on DESE’s actions to support districts that are experiencing an influx of newly arrived homeless students in connection with the emergency assistance shelter system. The memorandum in your materials provides information. At the June 18 meeting, DESE’s Assistant Director of Student and Family Support Kristen McKinnon, Director of the Office of Language Acquisition Allison Balter, and Chief Schools Officer Komal Bhasin will present an overview of these efforts and respond to your questions. We will also hear from Salem Public Schools Superintendent Stephen Zrike and colleagues who will discuss with the Board their work to support newly arrived students.

1. **Education Budget Update – Discussion**

The House and Senate have released their state spending recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year. Your materials include updated information about items under our purview. The next step in the process is the legislative conference committee. At our June 18 meeting, Senior Associate Commissioner/Chief Financial Officer Bill Bell will update the Board on the education budget outlook for FY25.

**OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

1. **Report on Grants Approved by the Commissioner**

Enclosed is information on grants I have approved since the last meeting, under the authority the Board has delegated to the Commissioner.

1. **Chronically Underperforming Schools: Annual Reports**

Enclosed is the annual evaluation report for SY2023-2024 on the three chronically underperforming schools – John P. Holland Elementary School (UP Academy Holland) and Paul A. Dever Elementary School (Dever) in Boston, and John Avery Parker Elementary School (Parker) in New Bedford.

1. **Update on Early Literacy Expectations in Teacher Preparation**

This memorandum updates the Board on DESE’s work to establish evidence-based, culturally and linguistically sustaining early literacy practices in Massachusetts teacher preparation.

1. **Annual Report on Non-Operating School Districts Approved by Commissioner**

By statute, towns that do not operate their own public schools (generally because the town is small and is not a member of a regional school district) must request and receive approval annually from the Board to tuition their students to public schools in other towns. In June 2009, the Board voted to delegate this approval authority to the Commissioner. Enclosed is a memorandum reporting on the approvals I have granted.