**Minutes of the Regular Meeting**

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

**135 Santilli Highway**

**Everett, Massachusetts 02149**
**Tuesday, October 29, 2024, 9:07 a.m. – 1:07 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

**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

**Russell D. Johnston,** Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Chair Craven called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m., and members introduced themselves. She noted one or two members are participating remotely and votes would be taken by roll call, and that today’s Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board/BESE) meeting, like all regular meetings of the Board, is being [livestreamed and recorded](https://vimeo.com/user217853291).

**Statements from the Public:**

* **Michael Watson**, Superintendent of Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, addressed the Board on CTE admissions
* **Jonathan Evans,** Superintendent of Keefe Regional Technical High School in Framingham, addressed the Board on CTE admissions
* **Mirian Albert**, Lawyers for Civil Rights, affiliated with Vocational Education Justice Coalition, addressed the Board on CTE admissions
* **Sky Kochenour,** Center for Law and Education, affiliated with Vocational Education Justice Coalition, addressed the Board on CTE admissions
* **Aaron Polansky**, Superintendent of Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School in Rochester, addressed the Board on CTE admissions
* **Gerry Mroz** addressed the Board on the state assessment and accountability system
* **Kahris McLaughlin** addressed the Board on the RIAC report
* **Michelle Simon,** educator and parent, addressed the Board on Cohasset Public Schools

**Comments from the Chair:**

Chair Craven announced the BESE Budget Committee met on October 17, 2024 and that The following BESE members are on the committee; Member Mohamed, Chair, Member Moriarty, Member Fisher and Member Asikis. Member Moriarty gave a brief update, and the committee will meet again on November 7, 2024.

The Chair also mentioned that there has been turnover in the Education Diversification Committee, and that she would be reaching out to Board members to join the committee. Additionally, some of today’s topics will include Question 2, CTE Admissions Policies from the BESE Special meeting the evening before.

**Comments from the Secretary:**

Secretary Tutwiler welcomed everyone and spoke of how deeply inspired he was by over a dozen school visits he made during STEM week across the Commonwealth. He announced seventeen million dollars in Skills Capital grants, resulting in space and equipment upgrades to accommodate more students and purchase the most up to date equipment to have students better prepared for when they leave our care. He also announced 1.3 million dollars in grants to 26 districts to launch and support Innovation Career Pathways. The Secretary along with Acting Commissioner Johnston, and the Commissioners of Early Education and Higher Education visited Westfield High School along with a host of partners and legislators, to announce the results of a 14-month effort to ensure that Massachusetts maintains its commitment to a representative student body in higher education ordered by Governor Healy, the Advisory Council for the Advancement of Representation in Higher Education. The full report can be found at [www.mass.edu](http://www.mass.edu).

The Secretary spoke to Question 2 stating that he and the Administration are adamantly opposed to Question 2. Question 2 seeks to deconstruct a system that has worked for more the two decades and is part of the educational success story in Massachusetts. Furthermore, it does not replace any existing system, with a system. It will result in wide variability in the definition of what it means to earn a diploma in Massachusetts. This is very concerning, wherein the most vulnerable students will be hurt the most. To be clear, the current system is not perfect. The Healy-Driscoll administration remains open and committed to evolving the definition of what it means to graduate from high school in Massachusetts.

**Comments from the Acting Commissioner:**

Acting Commissioner Russell Johnston welcomed everyone and soke about STEM week. He expressed his appreciation to all that STEM week provides to students, especially those that are underserved in the STEM field. It provides an opportunity to engage in activities related to science, technology, engineering and math. STEM week is a shining example of DESE’s vision.

Acting Commissioner Johnston provided a brief update on Virtual Schools. There are two Virtual Schools in Massachusetts, The Greater Commonwealth School and the Technical Connections Academy Virtual School. The leaders of the two schools have expressed a desire to adjust and increase their current tuition rates. We will meet with the MA School Superintendents Association and other partners to gather information. He will provide an update in November.

Acting Commissioner Johnston provided an update on recently enacted legislation directing DESE to make resources available relative to antisemitism and societal bias. We are pleased to announce that DESE has a new webpage that contains information on state and federal resources, including up to date guidance on schools’ legal obligations to prevent and address bias and hate crime incidences. Please visit our website: [Resources Relative to Antisemitism and Societal Bias - Student and Family Support (SFS)](https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/safety/antisemitism-societalbias.html)

The Acting Commissioner briefly recapped the Board’s special meeting on Monday, October 28 that focused on CTE admission and enrollment data since implementation, including a presentation from an external researcher with expertise in Massachusetts CTE admissions data.

At the meeting, Elizabeth Bennett, Associate Commissioner of College, Career and Technical Education, Caitlin Looby of DESE’s legal staff, Rob Curtin, Chief Officer of Assessment, and Accountability and Information, and Shaun Dougherty, Education and Policy, Boston College presented data and information.

The special meeting was an opportunity for the Board to hear the presentation about CTE admissions and engage in discussion.

During the briefing, the Board had a thoughtful discussion as well as questions and ideas on how to move forward.

The 10/28/24 meeting can be viewed at: **BESE live stream link:**[**livestream**](https://vimeo.com/user217853291)

There will be a second meeting regarding CTE Admissions held on Monday, November, 18, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. the meeting will be livestreamed and recorded: [**Vimeo: MADESEstream**](https://vimeo.com/user217853291)

**Chair Craven-Update on Commissioner Search Process:**

Chair Craven provided an update on the Commissioner’s search process, which is underway by the company Issacson-Miller. A member of their team will be at the next Board meeting. The following voting members of the Board have been asked to participate in this election process: Secretary Tutwiler, Chair Craven, Member Fisher and Member West.

Issacson-Miller is scheduling a meeting with all Board members as well as key DESE staff to provide information on the Commissioner position description. The first order of business was to develop a survey for community members and stakeholders feedback on the Commissioner’s position description. The survey is going live this morning on the DESE website and on [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) in multiple languages. [Commissioner Search - Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](https://www.doe.mass.edu/commissioner-search/?section=english)

**The Chair called for a motion and vote to approve meeting minutes.**

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

**VOTED: Approval meeting minutes; BESE Special Meeting, 10/28/2024, and BESE Regular Meeting 10/29/2024**

**The vote, by roll call, was unanimous.**

**District and School Accountability Decisions:**

Lauren Woo, Acting Chief of Staff and Michelle Ryan, Acting Chief of Schools, will provide you with an overview of 2024 district and school accountability determinations, including decisions made for certain underperforming schools and chronically underperforming schools and districts. These determinations are based in part on the 2024 MCAS results for districts and schools.

At the beginning of the 2024-25 school year, nineteen schools in Massachusetts continued to be designated as underperforming; three schools continued to be designated as chronically underperforming; and three districts continued to be designated as chronically underperforming. No additional schools or districts were designated as underperforming or chronically underperforming.

**Background on the Accountability System:**

State and federal laws require all states to implement an accountability system for schools and districts. The purpose of Massachusetts’ accountability system is twofold: to provide clear, actionable information on school and district performance for families, community members, and the public, and to guide the Department of Elementary and Secondary’s (DESE’s) resource allocation and assistance efforts. The system helps DESE identify schools that require support or intervention, as well as those demonstrating success.

Massachusetts' accountability system combines two components: (1) a normative component that measures student performance at a school relative to others statewide and (2) a criterion-referenced component that assesses a school or district’s progress toward improvement targets. Based on these components, schools are classified into two categories: schools requiring assistance or intervention, and schools not requiring assistance or intervention.

Consistent with state law and regulations, when improvement in these school stalls, DESE may designate schools as underperforming or chronically underperforming, while the Board may designate districts as underperforming or chronically underperforming.  (M.G.L. c. 69, §§ 1J and 1K, 603 CMR 2.05, 2.06). The two tiers of state designation result in different levels of accountability and assistance, as described in 603 CMR 2.05 and 2.06.

The eligibility criteria and processes for designating schools or districts as underperforming or chronically underperforming are described in M.G.L. c. 69, §§ [1J](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/Section1j) and [1K](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter69/Section1K) and the associated regulations at [603 CMR 2.05 and 2.06](https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr2.html?section=all).

**Support for Schools Requiring Assistance or Intervention:**

DESE, through its Statewide System of Support (SSoS) and the Office of Strategic Transformation (OST), provides direct assistance and accountability to schools and districts.  For example, DESE provides funding, evidence-based resources, and preferred access to professional development to districts with schools designated as in need of focused/targeted support or broad/comprehensive support. These efforts are designed to enhance school and district capacity to effectively and proactively use proven instructional and supportive practices to boost and sustain rapid gains in student achievement.

**Exit Decisions:**

As provided in the regulations, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education may remove a designation of underperforming or chronically underperforming from a school or district at any time, if the Commissioner determines that the school or district has made sufficient progress and that existing conditions will support continued improvement without the additional state assistance afforded by the designation. 603 CMR 2.05(10)(c), 2.06(10)(c) and 2.06(12)(c).

The Commissioner receives periodic progress updates throughout the school year from DESE’s SSoS and OST offices on each of the underperforming and chronically underperforming schools and districts. Each academic year, these progress updates culminate in a careful, collaborative review of data, including the summative outcomes published in the annual accountability reports in the fall. The data that the Commissioner incorporates into his exit decisions include both quantitative measures of student outcomes and qualitative data on the conditions for continuous improvement at the school and/or district. The qualitative data are generated throughout the year by DESE’s progress monitoring activities, which include periodic site visits, classroom observations, external evaluations, stakeholder focus groups, and meetings with school and/or district leadership.

**Schools Exiting Underperforming Status in 2024​:**

The schools exiting underperforming status in 2024 have been on an upward trajectory for several years across various school quality measures. ​

* Oliver Middle School, Lawrence ​​
* Van Sickle Academy, Springfield​​
* High School of Commerce, Springfield

**Process for Identifying Schools in Need of Support:**

Schools “requiring assistance or intervention” (603 CMR 2.03): ​

* Designated as underperforming or chronically underperforming ​
* Lowest 10th percentile of schools statewide ​
* One or more low performing specific student groups​
* Low graduation rates as defined by ESSA ​
* Low assessment participation rates ​

**District Targeted Supports:**

* Support with the development of instructional priorities and an action plan ​
* Direct assistance to district and school instructional leadership teams ​
* Refinement of systems and structures ​
* Routine classroom observations and progress monitoring ​

**2024 Districts Receiving Direct Assistance​ 2024 Districts Receiving Direct Assistance​:**

The following districts have schools that were prioritized for direct support and progress monitoring in the SY2024- 2025 school year:**​**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Receiving direct support from SSoS:** | **Receiving direct support from OEPI & KCL:** |
| Athol-Royalston ​​ | Hoosac Valley ​ |
| Boston ​​ | Marlborough ​ |
| Brockton ​​ | Waltham ​ |
| Chelsea​​ | Westfield ​ |
| Chicopee ​​ | Gill-Montague ​ |
| Everett ​​ | Revere ​ |
| Fall River ​​ | Somerville  |
| Fitchburg​​ | Hoosac Valley ​ |
| Framingham​​ | Marlborough ​ |
| Gardner​​ | Waltham ​ |
| Greenfield​ | Westfield ​ |
| Lowell ​​ | Gill-Montague ​ |
| Lynn ​​ | Revere ​ |
| New Bedford​​ | Somerville  |
| North Adams ​​ | Hoosac Valley ​ |
| Pittsfield ​​ | Marlborough ​ |
| Springfield ​​ | Waltham ​ |
| Taunton​​ | Westfield ​ |
| Webster ​​ | Gill-Montague ​ |
| Winchendon ​​ | Revere ​ |
| Worcester | Somerville  |

**Support for 2024 Schools of Concern:**

* Brockton: Dr. W. Arnone Community Elementary School ​
* Chelsea: Clark Avenue Elementary School ​
* Framingham: Harmony Grove Elementary School ​
* Springfield: Lincoln Elementary School ​
* Worcester: North High School ​

Each of these schools will receive progress monitoring visits from DESE staff throughout the year and be eligible to apply for competitive Intensive Assistance Grant (IAG) funding for FY26-28. ​

**Schools Continuing Underperforming Status:**

The following 16 schools will remain in Underperforming Status for the 2024-2025 school year: ​

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Athol Community Elementary School (Athol-Royalston) ​ | High School of Science and Technology (Springfield) ​ |
| Brighton High School (Boston) ​ | *Springfield Empowerment Zone*(Springfield)​ |
| Dearborn 6-12 Academy (Boston) ​ | Legacy Academy​ |
| Excel High School (Boston) ​ | Forest Park Middle School​ |
| Madison Park Technical Vocational High School (Boston) ​ | Impact Prep at Chestnut​ |
| Fonseca Elementary (Fall River) ​ | Kennedy Middle​ |
| Oliver Elementary School (Lawrence) ​ | Kiley Academy​ |
| New Bedford High School (New Bedford)  | Kiley Prep​ |
| Athol Community Elementary School, (Athol-Royalston) ​ | Rise Academy at Van Sickle​ |
| Brighton High School (Boston) ​ |  |
| Dearborn 6-12 Academy (Boston) ​ |
| Excel High School (Boston) ​ |
| Madison Park Technical Vocational High School (Boston) ​ |
| Fonseca Elementary (Fall River) ​ |
| Oliver Elementary School (Lawrence) ​ |
| New Bedford High School (New Bedford)  |

**Two Schools to Exit Chronically Underperforming Status:**

**John Avery Parker Elementary School, New Bedford - Year of Designation: 2013**

History of Receivers:​ 2014 – 2018: Supt. Pia Durkin; 2018 – present: School & Main Institute

**Holyoke Public Schools - Year of Designation: April 2015​**

History of Receivers:​ 2015 - 2020: Stephen Zrike; 2020 - 2021: Alberto Vázquez Matos; 2021 - present: Anthony Soto ​

**Transitional Period:**

To assist schools and districts in successfully transitioning out of DESE’s most intensive levels of technical assistance, state law authorizes the Commissioner to retain measures adopted in the turnaround plan for a transitional period, if in the Commissioner’s judgment, the measures would contribute to the continued improvement of the school or district.  If, two years after the removal of the school or district from its designation as underperforming or chronically underperforming, any such measure remains in place, the Commissioner must conduct a review of the school or district to determine whether the measure should remain in place or be discontinued.

The Acting Commissioner turned it over to the Mayor of Holyoke, Joshua Garcia who expressed his experience and gratitude along with Anthony Soto, Superintendent of Holyoke Public Schools.

**The Chair stopped the meeting to take a 5 minute break, then resumed the meeting.**

**DESE's Educational Vision and Strategic Objectives:**

Literacy items from September included; Special Committee on Pandemic Recovery and Literacy report -follow up on recommendations in January; Literacy Launch's Partnership for Reading Success - Massachusetts (PRISM) Grants; district participation and targets coming in January; Literacy Launch's planning for statewide professional learning in evidence-based, culturally and linguistically sustaining early literacy knowledge and practices.

**Curriculum Data Dashboard:**

Welcome to Erin Hashimoto-Martell, Associate Commissioner of Instructional Support, and Craig Waterman, Assistant Director of Instructional Policy, who will demonstrate the dashboard and invite discussion.

DESE partners with districts, schools, and programs to promote **deeper learning** so that all students engage in **grade-level work**that is **real-world, relevant, and interactive**. ​​

Districts, schools, and programs feel empowered and prepared to: ​​

**2.1**Select and skillfully implement high-quality and engaging **instructional materials** that support culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and foster deeper learning.​

High-Quality curricular materials exhibit a ​coherent sequence of lessons that ​target learning of grade-appropriate skills and knowledge through instructional strategies that are well supported by research and other characteristics, ​such as engaging content and inclusive design.​

**CURATE Reports Available**​

* Digital Literacy & Computer Science (K-12)​
* English Language Arts / Literacy (K-12)​
* Mathematics (K-12)​
* Science (6-12, K-5 coming soon)​
* History / Social Science (9-12 coming soon)​
* Archiving reports reviewed under older CURATE rubric versions​
* Reviews and reports will focus more on evidence of program addressing MA priorities with instructional supports specific to:​
* Multilingual Learners & Linguistically Sustaining Practices​
* Culturally Sustaining Practices​
* Inclusive Practices​
* Reports will have ratings for each criterion for standards alignment & classroom application, ​

but not a single "overall" rating​

**Live demonstration on the Data Dashboard:**

The [Curriculum Data Dashboard](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/mass.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d8f37d1a90dacd97f207f0b4a&id=a27fd63927&e=583fc2bc03__;!!CPANwP4y!QcnfDp_EzaqBH-ARwAbemQ_JTg6hTlveKcO3Ikju15ISA2HEtE4nsMj9cIdvYFnzSqp4EWYzGfPXe8TbVUTTElD6ZjSI5WxZ9w$) that DESE has created has been [collecting and reporting data on the curricula schools and districts are using](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/mass.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=d8f37d1a90dacd97f207f0b4a&id=60cfd98354&e=583fc2bc03__;!!CPANwP4y!QcnfDp_EzaqBH-ARwAbemQ_JTg6hTlveKcO3Ikju15ISA2HEtE4nsMj9cIdvYFnzSqp4EWYzGfPXe8TbVUTTElD6ZjSShsxiww$) for grades K-8 ELA/literacy, K-12 math, and 6-8 science. We have seen a steady increase in the percentage of districts using high-quality instructional materials. The new Curriculum Data Dashboard builds on the existing curriculum data and presents it in a user-friendly format.

**Strategic Objective #3: Developing and Sustaining a Diverse & Effective Workforce:**

Erin Hashimoto-Martell, Associate Commissioner; Claire Abbott, Director of Educator Effectiveness; and Lakia Baymon, RTAP Coordinator, will present overviews of these two initiatives update on DESE’s Educational Vision and Strategic Objective #3, with a specific focus on **two** key initiatives: the ***Accelerated Literacy Reviews in Educator Preparation***, and the new ***Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program***.

DESE is committed to all aspiring teachers of students in grades PK–3 being prepared with the knowledge and skills to teach evidence-based, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically sustaining early literacy. To advance [Mass Literacy](https://www.doe.mass.edu/massliteracy/), DESE launched the [Early Literacy in Educator Preparation](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/early-literacy.html) initiative in 2020.

**Mass Literacy Vision:**​

Every student in Massachusetts will develop the language comprehension, fluent word reading, and writing skills needed **by the end of grade 1**, and will continue to increase literacy proficiency **through the end of grade 3**. Students will have affirming and enriching experiences with literacy. ​

By SY2024-2025, all Early Childhood, Elementary, and Moderate Disabilities teacher candidates in Massachusetts will be prepared, through coursework and opportunities for practice and high-quality feedback, in evidence-based early literacy as outlined in the Mass Literacy Guide.​

With the state's investment in early literacy through [Literacy Launch](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/literacy-launch-reading-success-from-age-3-through-grade-3), DESE is *accelerating* early literacy reviews of 170 programs over the next four years. More information about Accelerated Early Literacy Program Review and Approval, including the timeline and review schedule, is available at **Accelerated Literacy Program Reviews.**

Individual programs will receive one of the following approval designations:​

* Approved with Distinction​
* Approved​
* Approved with Conditions ◊ improvement plan​
* Probationary Approval ◊ improvement plan + 1-3 year approval term ​
* Not Approved​

For questions, please email: ​EducatorPreparation@mass.gov

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/accelerated-early-literacy.html>

**Registered Teacher Apprenticeship:**

This fall we began the process of launching an exciting new pathway to teaching: the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP). This fall, DESE will be inviting districts and their partner educator preparation providers to submit applications to operate an RTAP in accordance with the state’s expectations and requirements for this new role. Grant funding will also be available for RTAPs that prioritize teacher shortage areas.

Developing and sustaining a workforce that is diverse, culturally responsive, well-prepared, and committed to continuous improvement is an essential component of our Educational Vision. In support of this strategic objective, we are partnering with districts, schools, and educator preparation providers to develop more expansive and robust pipelines of diverse and well-prepared educators and leaders; to create the conditions to sustain and retain diverse and effective staff, particularly those who entered the field through alternative pathways; and to implement opportunities for all staff to continually grow and develop through cycles of continuous improvement. This initiative includes the following key components:

1. Setting clear expectations for educator preparation programs through the [*Early Literacy Program Approval Criteria*](https://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/resources/early-literacy-criteria.pdf).
2. Assessing educator preparation programs' alignment to the criteria in order to make decisions about program approval, including authorizing individual programs or groups of programs to operate.
3. Supporting educator preparation programs across the Commonwealth to make meaningful shifts in their approaches so that prospective Elementary, Early Childhood, and Moderate Disabilities PK–2/PK–8 teachers are well-prepared on day one in their licensure role to support every student's early literacy development.
4. Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Programs. This fall we are in the process of launching an exciting new pathway to teaching: the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP).

In partnership with the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development’s Division of Apprentice Standards, DESE developed the RTAP to expand and further diversify the educator workforce by providing an affordable, job-embedded pathway to teaching. With an emphasis on preparing aspiring teachers to meet the needs of our increasingly diverse student population, RTAPs will prioritize some of our hardest-to-staff roles (e.g., special education, ESL, early childhood, STEM), build pipelines in communities with representation gaps between student and teacher demographics, and invest in a teaching workforce that better reflects and serves the rich diversity of our communities.

This fall, DESE will be inviting districts and their partner educator preparation providers to submit applications to operate an RTAP in accordance with the state’s expectations and requirements for this new role. Grant funding will also be available for RTAPs that prioritize teacher shortage areas.

More information about the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program is available at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/csi/diverse-workforce/teacher-apprenticeship/default.html>.

**Examples of ongoing and new initiatives:**​

* Alternative MTEL pilot​
* Aspiring principal fellowship​
* Regional licensure assistance centers​
* **Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program**​

**Role-Specific Shortages:**​

* Special education ​
* English as a Second Language​
* Early Childhood​
* Secondary STEM​

**Regional Shortages:**​

Findings show the most acute & persistent shortages in Central and Western MA (vacancies most likely to persist into October)​.

**Key Elements of RTAPs in MA:**

This fall we are in the process of launching an exciting new pathway to teaching: the Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP). This fall, DESE will be inviting districts and their partner educator preparation providers to submit applications to operate an RTAP in accordance with the state’s expectations and requirements for this new role. Grant funding will also be available for RTAPs that prioritize teacher shortage areas.

* Diversity​
* Provides wrap-around supports and a pathway to licensure at little to no cost to apprentices​
* Embedded in local communities seeking to close the gap between student and teacher demographics​
* Pipeline ​
* Prioritizes high-need, hard-to-staff roles (special education, ESL, early childhood, secondary STEM)​
* Allows for multiple entry points (paraprofessionals, career changers, instructional aides)​
* Quality​
* Supported by approved EPPs committed to equity-driven preparation​
* Aligned to all state requirements for preparation and licensure​
* Job-embedded teaching and learning​

**Advancing Student Learning: Potential New Initiatives:**

Acting Commissioner Johnston ended the meeting with this final presentation. Since the September Board Meeting, we have conducted a deeper data analysis on the most recent 2024 results alongside historical data.​ The Advancing Student Learning Working Group met to discuss strategic staffing solutions and ways to leverage our highest-impact resources.​ Strategic Objective Leads, in partnership with DESE leadership, began a gap analysis to pinpoint areas for intensifying efforts in the coming year.​

​An outline on potential initiatives and strategies, both new and ongoing, to accelerate student learning.​ These initiatives and strategies align with the statewide progress measures endorsed by BESE last fall, designed with a forward-looking approach (FY26 and beyond).​

**Proposal to Intensify Efforts: Diverse and Effective Workforce:**

The goal is for an Aligned Statewide Measure of Progress. By 2026, the percentage of diverse staff in schools and districts will increase by at least 4 points to 17.9 percent.​

Potential Solutions​:

* Through the RTAP program, recruit, select, and train a second cohort of registered teacher apprentices and continue the first cohort (up to 150 teacher apprentices).  ​
* Train a cohort of teacher leaders/instructional coaches to be trained in evidence-based, culturally and linguistically sustaining instructional practices (up to 600 teacher leaders/instructional coaches). ​
* Provide training to a cohort of up to 80 aspiring principals and their mentor principals with a year of professional development that will increase the diversity and effectiveness of the principal pipeline. ​

Provide one year of grants to up to 70 school districts to support efforts in recruiting and retaining diverse candidates. ​

**Aligned Statewide Measure of Progress:​**

* By 2026, the state will return to pre-pandemic levels (or higher) of the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the MCAS. ​
* By 2026, the state will return to pre-pandemic levels (or lower) of the percentage of students who are chronically absent. ​

Potential Solutions​

* Provide one year of high dosage tutoring in literacy to up to 13,000 students in grade 1 resulting in a decrease in students categorized as significantly below benchmark from beginning of year to end of year as measured by the early literacy screener. ​
* Provide one year of high dosage tutoring in math to up to 10,000 students in grades 4-5 resulting in a decrease in students not meeting expectations as measured by the 2026 math MCAS exam. ​
* Provide one week of additional intensive instruction to up to 20,000 students in grades 3-12 resulting in an increase in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations as measured by the 2026 MCAS exams.

**Proposal to Intensify Efforts: Literacy Launch:**

* By 2026, the state will return to pre-pandemic levels (or higher) of the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the MCAS. ​
* By 2027, the state will offer structured professional learning on evidence-based practices for literacy for all teachers and administrators with responsibility for early literacy. ​

Potential Solutions​

* Provide professional development to 1,500 educators in evidence-based early literacy instruction. ​
* Award at least 40 communities with early literacy grants, enabling 150+ elementary schools and partner early childhood programs to replace outdated curriculum materials, train in-service teachers, and provide extra support to students who are struggling in reading. ​
* Review 14 educator preparation programs and provide program approval (or corrective action).

**Proposal to Intensify Efforts: Reimagining High School**

* By 2026, at least 85,000 high-school students will be enrolled in a designated high school college-and-career pathway or program (e.g., Career and Technical Education, including Chapter 74 and “After Dark” programs, Innovation Career Pathways, and Early College).​
* By 2026, the state will return to pre-pandemic levels (or lower) of the percentage of students who are chronically absent.

Potential Solutions​

* Provide grants to up to150-200 districts to employ strategies to increase college access including MyCAP implementation and FAFSA completion, resulting in an increase in MyCAP implementation and FAFSA completion rates. ​
* Provide grants to up to 50 districts to employ strategies to reduce the number of students dropping out, resulting in a decrease in dropout rates. ​
* Provide opportunities for up to 4,000 additional students to participate in CTE programs, Early College, and/or Innovation Career Pathways.

Acting Commissioner Johnston thanked everyone for their time and hard work.

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

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourns the meeting at 1:17 p.m., subject to the call of the Chair.**

***The vote, by roll call, was unanimous.***

 Respectfully submitted,

Russell D. Johnston

Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

and Secretary to the Board