**Minutes of the Special Meeting**

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

**Meeting held virtually via Zoom**  
**Friday, November 15, 2024, 1:05 pm – 2:46 p.m.**

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

**Katherine Craven**,Chair,Brookline

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

**Ericka Fisher,** Worcester

**Farzana Mohamed,** Newton

**Dálida Rocha,** Worcester

**Mary Ann Stewart,** Lexington

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

**Martin West,** Newton

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

**Ioannis Asikis,** Brookline, Student Member

**Michael Moriarty,** Holyoke

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

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Chair Craven called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., and members introduced themselves. She announced that today’s Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) special meeting, like all open meetings of the Board, is being [livestreamed and recorded](https://vimeo.com/user217853291). Members introduced themselves.

Chair Craven thanked the Commissioner for holding this special meeting and announced that she will be appointing a subcommittee to further investigate this topic. Chair Craven said the subcommittee will be led by Member West and will also include Member Fisher, Vice-Chair Hills, and Member Rocha.

**Career Technical Education (CTE) Admissions Study Session: Session 2**

Acting Commissioner Johnston introduced the agenda for the meeting including a review of the context of Career Technical Education (CTE), a recap of research from the previous study session, a review of the legal standard, and updated data.

Acting Commissioner Johnston presented the connection between the Department’s Educational Vision and CTE programs across the Commonwealth. He then recapped data presented by Dr. Doherty in the previous study session that demonstrated that students admitted to CTE schools are more likely to graduate and later have higher earnings than similar applicants who are not admitted. Acting Commissioner Johnston invited Associate Commissioner Liz Bennett to share additional data showing higher graduation rates and attendance rates for students enrolled in CTE schools. Acting Commissioner Johnston responded to a question from Vice-Chair Hills about possible causes for the outcome data.

Acting Commissioner Johnston then reviewed the context of CTE programs, including that students participate in immersive learning time, co-operative education, and work-based learning in partnership with local employers, and have opportunities to earn high-value industry recognized credentials. He reviewed statistics on the number of students in CTE programs across the state and the array of schools with CTE programs, including regional CTE schools and agricultural schools (29), municipal CTE schools (5), and comprehensive high schools with CTE (58). He confirmed that, for purposes of these study sessions, the focus is on the 34 regional CTE schools and agricultural schools and municipal CTE schools. At 1:20 p.m. Chair Craven left, and Member Rocha joined the meeting.

Acting Commissioner Johnston then reviewed the legal standards related to this topic including the federal legal standard and the history and changes to state regulatory language. Acting Commissioner Johnston and Associate Commissioner Bennett responded to questions from Board members regarding the status of waitlists at CTE schools. Acting Commissioner Johnston then continued to review the current state regulations for CTE admissions, noting they mirror federal requirements, and that locally determined policies include how criteria are used and weighted.

Acting Commissioner Johnston said this policy discussion about access to public CTE schools and programs goes beyond legal compliance. He presented an overview of CTE admissions including current practices for awareness and recruitment, admission, and retention and success. Included in this section of the presentation was a description of CTE schools’ awareness activities including My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP), and the results from the administration of a CTE middle school access survey. Acting Commissioner Johnston and Associate Commissioner Bennett responded to questions from Board members about awareness and recruitment activities. Member West joined the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

Acting Commissioner Johnston then reviewed in more detail changes that have occurred since the regulations changed in 2021. He said CTE schools commonly use a combination of selective criteria including grades, recommendations, interviews, attendance, and discipline records. Acting Commissioner Johnston reviewed the opportunity gap tool and noted some of the challenges observed for different student groups related to the use of selective criteria. Acting Commissioner Johnston and Associate Commissioner Bennett then responded to questions from Board members regarding the use of selective criteria.

Board members offered comments on the presentation. Acting Commissioner Johnston thanked the members and said he hoped this session helped bring issues into focus for informed action around the goal of promoting access to educational opportunities. He previewed the agenda for the next study session scheduled for Monday, November 18, 2024, and said the Board will hear from an array of panelists.

Vice-Chair Hills thanked Board members and the Acting Commissioner and noted that the Board would reconvene in the next virtual special meeting on this topic on November 18 at 5:00 p.m. Vice-Chair Hills called for today’s special meeting to adjourn. Hearing no objection, he declared the meeting adjourned.

**The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourned the meeting at 2:46 p.m., subject to the call of the Chair.**

Respectfully submitted,

Russell D. Johnston

Acting Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

and Secretary to the Board