**Minutes of the Special Meeting**

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

**Meeting held virtually via Zoom**  
**Monday, February 24, 2025, 5:08 p.m. – 5:59 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

**Michael Moriarty,** Holyoke

**Dálida Rocha,** Worcester

**Mary Ann Stewart,** Lexington

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

**Martin West,** Newton

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

**Farzana Mohamed,** Newton

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

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Chair Craven called the meeting to order at 5:08 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).

**Educational Vision Update and Advancing Student Learning**

Acting Commissioner Johnston introduced the final annual update on the pilot of alternative assessments for educator licensure, noting this work connects with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (DESE’s) Educational Vision. Acting Commissioner Johnston stated the Board voted in 2020 to pilot alternative assessments, through an amendment to the Educator Licensure regulations. He said tonight the Board would hear about the evaluation of the pilot, and at the meeting tomorrow the Board would vote on sending out for public comment the proposed regulatory amendments that would continue the use of alternative assessments beyond the pilot.

**Final Report on Pilot of Alternative Assessments for Licensure — Discussion**

Acting Commissioner Johnston introduced Claire Abbott, DESE’s Director of Educator Effectiveness. Ms. Abbott briefly reviewed key statutory requirements for educator licensure, the reasons the Board decided in 2020 to pilot alternatives to the Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL), and the purpose, duration, timeline, and substance of the pilot. Ms. Abbott then introduced the research questions and findings from the evaluation and invited James Cowan from the Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER), American Institutes for Research, to present on the evaluation in more detail.

Mr. Cowan from CALDER presented the MTEL Alternative Assessment Pilot Evaluation Final Report. He reviewed outcomes such as how pass rates on the alternatives compare to the traditional MTEL, licensure and employment for pilot participants, and whether pilot participants differed from other teachers in terms of their performance evaluations and contributions to student outcomes. Summary findings of the report that were highlighted in the presentation include:

* Pilot participants were more diverse than other Massachusetts educators in terms of ethnoracial identity and preparation background, and more likely to be working on an emergency license
* Pass rates varied across alternative assessments; higher pass rates for the MTEL-Flex and program attestation options, in particular, appear to have increased the number of teachers entering the profession
* Overall, pilot participants did not appear to differ from other teachers at this stage of their teaching career in their contributions to student outcomes or their performance evaluations

Acting Commissioner Johnston and the presenters then responded to questions and comments from Board members. Chair Craven thanked the presenters and said it is great to have this outside evaluation of the pilot program.

**Update on Commissioner Search Process**

Chair Craven said the Commissioner search is well underway, Isaacson Miller has identified about two dozen applicants, the posting is still open, and the search committee will meet on February 28 and again in March. Chair Craven said they are on track to bring finalists to the Board for public interviews this spring.

Chair Craven thanked Board members and the Acting Commissioner and called for a motion to adjourn today’s special meeting.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourns the meeting at**  **5:59 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