**Minutes of the Special Meeting**

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

**Meeting held virtually via Zoom**
**Monday, March 10, 2025, 5:03 p.m. - 7:08 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, *participated remotely*

**Ericka Fisher,** Worcester, *participated remotely*

**Michael Moriarty,** Holyoke, *participated remotely*

**Dálida Rocha,** Worcester, *participated remotely*

**Mary Ann Stewart,** Lexington, *participated remotely*

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

**Martin West,** Newton, *participated remotely*

**Farzana Mohamed,** Newton, *participated remotely*

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

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**Statements from the Public**

* **Representative Adam J. Scanlon** addressed the Board on the Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00
* **Andy Rodenhiser** addressed the Board on the Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00
* **Paul Yorkis, Chair, Norfolk County Agricultural High School Board of Trustees,** addressed the Board on the Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00
* **Eric Duda, Superintendent, Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School, Dr. Karen Maguire, Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School, Holly McClanan, Superintendent, Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School, and Michael Watson, Superintendent, Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School,** addressed the Board on the Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00
* **Toni Bourgea, Teacher, South Shore Vocational Technical High School,** addressed the Board on the Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00
* **Molly Quinn, Student, Bristol County Agricultural High School and Hope Healy, Alumna, Bristol County Agricultural High School,** addressed the Board on the Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00

Chair Craven thanked the public comment presenters and invited the Secretary to offer any comments. Secretary Tutwiler noted the Governor’s FY26 budget proposal seeks added funding to support the addition of CTE seats across the state. Chair Craven then asked Acting Commissioner Johnston to introduce the first topic.

**Career Technical Education: Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Vocational Technical Education, 603 CMR 4.00 (Recruitment and Admissions) — Discussion and Vote to Solicit Public Comment**

Acting Commissioner Johnston introduced DESE staff Elizabeth Bennett, Associate Commissioner of College, Career and Technical Education, Rob Curtin, Chief of Data, Assessment, and Accountability, and Nicole Smith, Director of College, Career, and Technical Education. Acting Commissioner Johnston then outlined the proposed amendments to the regulations that the Board will discuss this evening. Acting Commissioner Johnston stated that the proposed amendments differ from those brought forward at the last regular Board meeting and are responsive to the Board and stakeholder feedback. Acting Commissioner Johnston highlighted the changes that include:

* Language requiring sending districts to provide middle school students with information and opportunities to explore CTE schools and programs
* Language that would permit CTE schools and programs to require students to include an indication of interest in career technical education in their applications, provided that the CTE school or program holds at least two open houses and at least three virtual information sessions each school year
* A requirement that all students who apply to a CTE school or a CTE program at a comprehensive school would enter a lottery, and students with fewer than 27 unexcused absences over 270 school days would receive an additional weight. Likewise, students who have not had major disciplinary infractions would receive an additional weight.

Acting Commissioner Johnston and the panelists responded to comments and questions from Board members. The Acting Commissioner said the proposed amendments address key issues and the public comment process, which could include focused questions, will be helpful.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance**  **with M.G.L. c. 69, §§ 1B and 1F, and M.G.L. c. 74, § 2, hereby authorizes the**  **Commissioner to proceed in accordance with the Administrative Procedure**  **Act, G.L. chapter 30A, § 3, to solicit public comment on the proposed**  **amendments to the Vocational Technical Education Regulations, 603 CMR 4.00,**  **as presented by the Commissioner. The proposed amendments relate to**  **recruitment and admissions practices and also make minor edits to language.**

The vote, by roll call, was 7-3. Chair Craven, Members Asikis, Fisher, Rocha, Stewart, Secretary Tutwiler, and Member West voted in favor. Vice-Chair Hills and Members Mohamed and Moriarty voted in opposition.

**Transition and Appointment of Interim Commissioner — Discussion and Vote**

Chair Craven introduced the second agenda item. She acknowledged the contributions of Acting Commissioner Johnston and said his last day would be March 28, 2025. Chair Craven updated the Board on the search process and said the preliminary screening committee has started interviewing semi-finalists. She said she expects to have finalists selected by the end of March and she is asking Board members to be available to conduct public interviews of the finalists in the first half of April. The intention of the Board is to have a new Commissioner in place by July 1, 2025.

Chair Craven then recommended that the Board recommend Secretary Patrick Tutwiler to serve as Interim Commissioner as of March 29, 2025, until a permanent Commissioner is in place. Chair Craven invited a motion and discussion from the Board.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, pursuant to General**  **Laws c. 15, § 1F, recommends the appointment of Dr. Patrick Tutwiler as**  **Interim Commissioner, and requests that the Governor approve said**  **appointment, effective March 29, 2025.**

The vote, by roll call, was 7-2-1. Chair Craven and Members Asikis, Fisher, Moriarty, Rocha, Stewart, and West voted in favor. Vice-Chair Hills and Member Mohamed voted in opposition. Secretary Tutwiler abstained.

There being no further business, Chair Craven called for a motion to adjourn.

 On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

**VOTED:**  **that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourns the meeting at**  **7:08 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