

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Tuesday, January 24, 2017
11:20 a.m. – 2:10 p.m.
Bridgewater State University
Rondileau Campus Center, Large Ballroom, 19 Park Avenue, Bridgewater, MA**

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:

Paul Sagan, Chair, Cambridge
James Morton, Vice-Chair, Boston
Katherine Craven, Brookline
Ed Doherty, Boston
Margaret McKenna, Boston
Michael Moriarty, Holyoke
Pendred Noyce, Boston
James Peyser, Secretary of Education
Mary Ann Stewart, Lexington

Mitchell D. Chester, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Secretary to the Board

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Absent:

Roland Fryer, Cambridge
Nathan Moore, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Scituate

Chair Sagan called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m. He announced that because of members' schedules the Board would adjust the agenda to move up items requiring a vote. He invited public comments first on the charter school items.

Statements from the Public

1. Scott Carpenter, Superintendent, Monomoy Regional Schools, addressed the Board on Sturgis Charter Public School.
2. Matt Holzer, Headmaster, Boston Green Academy, addressed the Board on Boston Green Academy Horace Mann Charter School.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approve the minutes of the December 20, 2016 Regular Meeting.

The vote was unanimous.

Report on Probation for Boston Green Academy Horace Mann Charter School

Commissioner Chester said Boston Green Academy has made good progress in turning around the high school that it took over, although adding grades 6-8 has been a challenge. He recommended extending the charter school's probation through 2019 and imposing conditions that the school needs to meet. The Commissioner introduced Cliff Chuang, Senior Associate Commissioner; Alison Bagg, Director of Charter Schools and School Redesign; and Alyssa Hopkins, School Development Manager, Charter Schools and School Redesign. Chair Sagan said he supports turnaround efforts by charter schools and supports the recommendation.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 89, and 603 CMR 1.12(2), hereby extends probation and imposes five conditions on the school's charter, as recommended by the Commissioner:

- 1. Until further notice, Boston Green Academy Horace Mann Charter School must submit to the Department, at charterschools@doe.mass.edu, board meeting agendas, materials, and minutes prior to each board meeting at the same time that these items are sent to the school's board members. Additionally, if board materials do not already include this information, the school must also submit monthly financial statements.**
- 2. The school must maintain the established escrow account to pay for any potential closing, legal, and audit expenses associated with closure, should that occur.**
- 3. By June 30, 2017, BGA must submit to the Department a comprehensive evaluation of the school's mathematics, English language arts, and science programs including, but not limited to, whether and how such programs effectively create an environment conducive to learning, hold students to high expectations, and foster student engagement. Such comprehensive evaluation must be conducted by an external consultant(s) acceptable to and approved in advance by the Department. The external consultant(s) may be employed by Boston Public Schools if they are not also employees of BGA.**
- 4. By July 31, 2017, BGA must submit an action plan to improve academic performance to the Department for approval. Such action plan must specify the strategies to improve mathematics, English language arts, and science performance for all student groups. The action plan must set clear and specific implementation benchmarks, with a clear timetable and deadlines for completion of key tasks, to**

allow the school's board of trustees and the Department to monitor implementation.

- 5. By December 31, 2019, the school must demonstrate continued significant and sustained academic improvement in mathematics, English language arts, and science.**

In addition to meeting the terms of probation, Boston Green Academy Horace Mann Charter School, like all charter schools, must comply with the terms of its charter. The Commissioner shall review and report to the Board on the success or lack of success of Boston Green Academy Horace Mann Charter School in meeting the terms of probation and its charter and, based upon his review, shall recommend such further action as he deems appropriate.

The vote was unanimous.

Proposed Amendments for Boston Collegiate Charter School and Boston Preparatory Charter Public School

The Commissioner presented proposed amendments for Boston Collegiate Charter School and Boston Preparatory Charter Public School. He said Boston has about 850 seats available under the existing charter cap and he is recommending the addition of a total of 335 seats for these two high performing charter schools. The Commissioner said he is not bringing forward five additional requests for expansion amendments, although they are worthy.

Ms. Stewart noted that both schools had higher than average disciplinary rates. Ms. Bagg responded that neither school was identified as an outlier in the Department's review under the school discipline law. Mr. Chuang added that the suspension rates are declining and attrition rates are low at both schools. Ms. Stewart stated she would not support the amendment requests and would like to know more about what the schools are doing on discipline. Mr. Doherty stated he too would oppose the expansion requests. He said even though the additional seats would fit within the current cap, he believes the Board should pay attention to the message the voters sent on the November ballot question. Ms. McKenna also voiced concern about suspension rates.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 89, and 603 CMR 1.00, hereby amends the charter granted to the following school, as presented by the Commissioner:

Boston Collegiate Charter School (increase in maximum enrollment from 665 to 700)

Location:	Boston
Maximum Enrollment:	700

Grades Served: 5-12
Effective school year: FY2018

The charter school shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of General Laws chapter 71, section 89; 603 CMR 1.00; and all other applicable state and federal laws and regulations and such conditions as the Commissioner or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may from time to time establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the charter, including to limit the school's actual enrollment to an amount less than the maximum enrollment approved herein.

The vote was 6-3. Mr. Doherty, Ms. McKenna, and Ms. Stewart voted in opposition.

The Board discussed the amendment request from Boston Preparatory Charter Public School. Ms. Hopkins noted the decrease in out-of-school suspensions. Mr. Chuang added that the school's attrition rate is now below the state average. Ms. Stewart voiced concern about student suspensions and said she would need to see more improvement before she could support the motion.

Secretary Peyser said he appreciates the concern about suspension rates and commends the Commissioner for bringing more attention to this issue. He noted that while the school needs to continue to improve in this area, its low attrition rate and high performance show that students are succeeding, and parents are advocating for more seats. Mr. Moriarty said he has visited Boston Preparatory Charter School and was impressed with its program and parent support. Vice-Chair Morton asked how the school's suspension rates compare to the rates in the district's high schools. Ms. McKenna voiced concern about increasing enrollment by 300 students in light of issues the school may still be having with suspensions. Chair Sagan said families are choosing to enroll their children in the school and the demand for seats far exceeds the supply.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 89, and 603 CMR 1.00, hereby amends the charter granted to the following school, as presented by the Commissioner:

Boston Preparatory Charter Public School (enrollment increase from 400 to 700)

Location: Boston
Maximum Enrollment: 700
Grades Served: 6-12
Effective school year: FY2018

The charter school shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of General Laws chapter 71, section 89; 603 CMR 1.00; and all other applicable

state and federal laws and regulations and such conditions as the Commissioner or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may from time to time establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the charter, including to limit the school’s actual enrollment to an amount less than the maximum enrollment approved herein.

The vote was 6-3. Mr. Doherty, Ms. McKenna, and Ms. Stewart voted in opposition.

Proposed Amendment for Sturgis Charter Public School

Commissioner Chester said he has visited several schools and districts on the Cape and seen strong programs, and the Sturgis Charter Public School is unique because all students participate in the International Baccalaureate program. He said he did not recommend the school’s expansion request in 2013 because of concerns about the representativeness of its enrollment, but the school has taken action and he is confident making the recommendation now based on its track record of performance.

Board members asked about the demographics of the incoming students and what measures the school is taking to attract English language learners and low income/economically disadvantaged students. Mr. Chuang said the grade 9 entering class has a higher proportion of low income students, reflecting the school’s recruitment efforts. He noted that the law requires sibling preference in admissions. Ms. Hopkins said the school has working on community outreach and support systems for ELLs. Ms. Bagg said the Department reviews the school’s recruitment and retention plan annually.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with General Laws chapter 71, section 89, and 603 CMR 1.00, hereby amends the charter granted to the following school, as presented by the Commissioner:

Sturgis Public Charter School (increase in maximum enrollment from 800 to 850)

Location:	Hyannis
Districts in Region:	Barnstable, Bourne, Carver, Dennis-Yarmouth, Falmouth, Mashpee, Monomoy, Nauset, Plymouth, Provincetown, Sandwich, and Wareham
Maximum Enrollment:	850
Grades Served:	9-12
Effective school year:	FY2018

The charter school shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of General Laws chapter 71, section 89; 603 CMR 1.00; and all other applicable

state and federal laws and regulations and such conditions as the Commissioner or the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may from time to time establish, all of which shall be deemed conditions of the charter, including to limit the school's actual enrollment to an amount less than the maximum enrollment approved herein.

The vote was 6-3. Mr. Doherty, Ms. McKenna, and Ms. Stewart voted in opposition.

Comments from the Chair

Chair Sagan thanked the Department for providing this month's Board materials electronically. Chief of Staff Helene Bettencourt said the goal is to have all the materials available for downloading.

Chair Sagan reminded members that Board meetings are now being live-streamed and asked that all members be attentive to presenters and each other throughout each meeting. He said he would schedule periodic breaks during meetings and asked members to wait until the breaks to use their devices for email or texting or social media.

The Chair called a fifteen-minute recess at 12:15 p.m. Ms. Craven left the meeting.

The Board resumed at 12:35 p.m. and Chair Sagan invited members of the public who had signed up to comment on matters other than charter schools to speak.

Statements from the Public (continued)

3. Katie Ryan, Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative/Massachusetts Advocates for Children, addressed the Board on ESSA and school climate.
4. Glorja Wornum, Boston Student Advisory Council/Youth on Board, addressed the Board on ESSA and school climate.
5. Gerry Mroz addressed the Board on the early college initiative.
6. Jonathan C. Rappaport, Executive Director, Arts|Learning, addressed the Board on ESSA and arts education.

Level 5 Schools: Second-Quarter FY2017 Reports and Update from Superintendent Pia Durkin, New Bedford Public Schools.

Commissioner Chester introduced Russell Johnston, Senior Associate Commissioner, and New Bedford Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Pia Durkin to update the Board on the progress of the John Avery Parker School, the Level 5 school in New Bedford. Mr. Johnston noted the school's progress in increasing proficiency from the 8th percentile in 2015 to the 18th percentile in 2016.

Supt. Durkin presented an overview of the Parker School's core improvement strategies, student data, and highlights of the modified school turnaround plan. She said the Level 5 statute provides the right tools to accelerate improvement and she is using the Parker School as an incubator to

transfer successful strategies and autonomies to other schools in New Bedford. Board members commended Supt. Durkin on her work, including the district's expansion of summer programs for students through its partnership with the Y and the BELL Foundation.

Mr. Johnston briefly updated the Board on the other Level 5 schools. He said UP Holland in Boston has reduced its suspension rate, the new principal of the Dever School in Boston has a strong instructional focus that is having a positive impact, and at the Morgan School in Holyoke, teachers are systematically making home visits to students and their families.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Proposed Accountability Plan, Timeline, and Next Steps (Recap of January 23rd Special Meeting)

Chair Sagan said the Board had an excellent discussion at the special meeting last night and thanked Mr. Curtin for returning today to continue the discussion. Commissioner Chester provided an overview of the process. He said after a 30-day period for public comment on the draft state plan, he expects to bring a revised draft to the Board for review at the March Board meeting. The Department will submit the state plan to the U.S. Department of Education on April 3, 2017. Commissioner Chester said after the state submits its plan, there is generally some negotiation between the state and the U.S. Department of Education.

Secretary Peyser asked why submit the plan in April when there is an additional submission date in September. Commissioner Chester said the earlier submission will give districts more certainty about expectations because by submitting the plan in April, the state will receive a reply during the summer and will be able to advise districts.

Commissioner Chester summarized some themes the Board identified at the meeting last night: be clear about what schools need to do; if we expand the metrics, be certain the identified schools are in fact the ones most in need of intervention; academic results are critical; and distinguish student outcomes from opportunity indicators. Ms. Noyce suggested keeping the basic accountability framework focused on outcomes and creating a separate narrative report or data dashboard on opportunity indicators. Mr. Moriarty said the issue of chronic absenteeism is important to include and for schools to address. On the issue of including a metric about students passing all 9th grade courses, Commissioner Chester said the goal is to incentivize productive behavior without creating unintended consequences.

Commissioner Chester thanked the Board for an excellent discussion. He said adjustments will be made to the proposed plan, it will be posted for public comment, and he will bring the revised plan back to the Board for consideration at the March 28 meeting.

Information on New Charter Applicants

Commissioner Chester briefly described the review process for new charter applicants. The Commissioner said he will send his recommendations on new charter applications to the Board in advance of the February meeting, at which the Board will vote on those recommendations. He thanked Board members for attending the hearings on proposed new charters.

Other Matters

Chair Sagan announced that he and Margaret McKenna will serve on the new Early College Joint Committee and all Board members are welcome to attend the committee meetings. Board members discussed a letter from Representative Kaufman about a bill on civic engagement. Ms. McKenna suggested it would be helpful to work with the drafters of this and similar bills and not create a new unfunded mandate. Chair Sagan asked that a response be drafted. Commissioner Chester confirmed that staff is working on it and will provide the response to Chair Sagan.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adjourn the meeting at 2:10 p.m., subject to the call of the Chair.

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitchell D. Chester
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education
and Secretary to the Board

**Minutes of the Joint Meeting
of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
with the Board of Higher Education
Tuesday, January 24, 2017
9:05 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.
Bridgewater State University
Rondileau Campus Center, Large Ballroom, 19 Park Avenue, Bridgewater, MA**

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Present:

Paul Sagan, Chair, Cambridge
James Morton, Vice-Chair, Boston
Katherine Craven, Brookline
Ed Doherty, Boston
Margaret McKenna, Boston
Michael Moriarty, Holyoke
Pendred Noyce, Boston
James Peyser, Secretary of Education
Mary Ann Stewart, Lexington

Mitchell D. Chester, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, Secretary to the Board

Members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Absent:

Roland Fryer, Cambridge
Nathan Moore, Chair, Student Advisory Council, Scituate

Members of the Board of Higher Education Present:

Chris Gabrieli, Chairman
Jasson Alvarado-Gomez, Student Member
Nancy Hoffman, Ph.D.
Robert E. Johnson, Ph.D.
J.D. LaRock, J.D., Ed.D., Community College Trustee Representative
Paul Materra, J.D., State University Trustee Representative
Dani Monroe
James Peyser, Ex Officio
Fernando M. Reimers, Ed.D.

Members of the Board of Higher Education Absent:

Sheila M. Harrity, Ed.D.
Tom Hopcroft
Paul F. Toner, J.D.
Henry Thomas III, J.D., University of Massachusetts Trustee Representative

Carlos E. Santiago, Commissioner of Higher Education, Secretary to the Board

Chair Gabrieli called the joint meeting to order at 9:05 a.m., acknowledged Chair Sagan, and asked members of both boards to introduce themselves. He introduced Bridgewater State University President Frederick W. Clark Jr., who welcomed board members to the campus and provided a brief overview of the university's history and commitment to education, including its role as the Commonwealth's largest single producer of teachers.

Massachusetts Early College Initiative

Elementary and Secondary Education Commissioner Chester and Higher Education Commissioner Santiago introduced the Massachusetts Early College Initiative. Commissioner Chester said this is an opportunity to build on exemplary programs and create a statewide approach that will provide multiple pathways for students. Commissioner Santiago said early college would open doors for young people and increase alignment between K-12 and higher education. He thanked all those who worked on this initiative.

Chair Gabrieli summarized the evolution of this initiative over the last year and thanked the Barr Foundation for funding the Parthenon-EY study which produced the report on early college that the two boards have received. He thanked the Smith Foundation, Jobs for the Future, and colleagues and staff from DESE and DHE who have been involved.

Chair Gabrieli invited Cliff Chuang, ESE Senior Associate Commissioner; Keith Westrich, DESE Associate Commissioner; Pat Marshall of the Department of Higher Education; Dan Riley, Marlborough Public Schools STEM-Early College Director; and Ali Huberlie, Parthenon-EY, to discuss the Massachusetts Early College Initiative.

Mr. Chuang explained the proposed structure of the Early College Joint Committee (ECJC) and the charge to the committee. Ms. Marshall outlined the proposed Massachusetts Early College Designation process, key elements, and design principles. Mr. Riley introduced a video on the STEM Early College High School within the Marlborough Public Schools.

Chair Gabrieli presented a proposed joint resolution relating to the Massachusetts Early College Initiative. It would establish the Early College School designation and create the Early College Joint Committee to determine details to be approved by each board by June 30, 2017. The intent is to set up the first programs by September 2018. The motion was duly made and seconded by the Board of Higher Education and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Secretary Peyser thanked both board chairs for their leadership and commitment to working together. He said this initiative will build on effective programs such as the one in Marlborough and create a coherent statewide system. Secretary Peyser added the early college initiative would complement the New Skills for Youth grant that Massachusetts has received and would help with college accessibility and affordability as well as economic development.

Members of the two boards expressed general support and offered comments on the proposed joint resolution. Several members stated the priority should be to help students from groups currently underrepresented in higher education. In response, Chair Gabrieli noted that the first design principle is equitable access, adding that programs would be accountable through a five-

year performance agreement and could lose their designation if they do not produce results. Chair Gabrieli stated the early college programs would include STEM as well as other fields.

Following the discussion, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Higher Education each voted on the joint resolution.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Board of Higher Education (BHE) (collectively “the Boards”) receive the December 2016 report issued by Parthenon-EY entitled *Breaking Down Silos to Put Students on the Path to Success: The Promise of Early College in Massachusetts*. The Boards express their appreciation to Parthenon-EY, the members of the Steering Committee and the Working Group for their efforts.

The Boards affirm their shared commitment to helping students attain the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to succeed in college and careers, be engaged citizens and lead productive and fulfilling lives. The Boards recognize that “early college” programs that allow high school students to experience and complete college level academic work and reduce the time and expense of earning a college credential can be a powerful tool to achieve the Commonwealth’s overall goals for educational achievement.

Therefore, the Boards jointly resolve as follows:

1. The Boards hereby establish an Early College Joint Committee (ECJC) comprised of: the BHE chair, the BESE chair, one member of the BHE appointed by the chair of the BHE, one member of the BESE appointed by the chair of BESE, and the Secretary of Education. The Commissioner of the Department of Higher Education (DHE), and the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), or their respective designees, shall be non-voting members of the ECJC and shall staff the ECJC.
2. The ECJC is charged with designing, developing and coordinating the administration of a Massachusetts Early College program based on the process and key design principles set forth in Attachment A to the memorandum presented to the Boards at the joint meeting on January 24, 2017.

- 3. No later than June 30, 2017, the ECJC shall report back to and seek final approval from the BHE and BESE boards, either individually or through a joint session, on the proposed design, development and administration of the program.**

The vote by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education was unanimous. The vote by the Board of Higher Education was unanimous. Chair Gabrieli and Chair Sagan thanked board members and the presenters.

Next-Generation MCAS: High School Assessments

Commissioner Chester introduced Jeff Wulfson, Deputy Commissioner; Michol Stapel, Associate Commissioner; and Heather Peske, Senior Associate Commissioner, to discuss the next-generation MCAS high school assessments. Commissioner Chester provided a brief overview of the ongoing work to develop the next-generation MCAS assessment, in particular with regard to high school testing. Mr. Wulfson thanked staff from the Department of Higher Education and faculty from higher education institutions who have been working closely with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to update the state curriculum standards and assessments.

Mr. Wulfson highlighted components of this initiative and responded to questions from board members. He said a key principle is to be sure the high school assessments will provide a clear signal as to whether students are meeting academic expectations. Additional recommendations include: keeping the competency determination for English language arts and mathematics at grade 10, adding history and social science to the competency determination, and phasing out the high school chemistry and technology/engineering tests.

Board members commented on the need to address the high rate of remedial courses in higher education, particularly community colleges. Mr. Reimers suggested employers might help identify early competencies needed in the workforce. Mr. Wulfson said the DESE is engaging with both higher education and the workforce sector around these issues. Ms. Hoffman suggested early college programs could improve alignment between K-12 and higher education. Secretary Peyser encouraged DESE to explore using off-the-shelf tests to maintain the option for chemistry and technology/engineering assessments for the competency determination. Mr. Alvarado-Gomez voiced his concern that some students do not test well and MCAS testing could affect their futures.

Commissioner Chester stated that since the advent of MCAS testing, Massachusetts has seen steady improvement in graduation rates, lower dropout rates, and success for students of color and low income students. He added that of students who drop out in grades 11 and 12, over half have passed the MCAS tests and earned the competency determination. Commissioner Chester said assessment should be a gateway, not a gatekeeper, and the goal is to provide accurate information about whether students have acquired solid academic skills.

Chair Sagan thanked members of both boards and staff of both departments for their work.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was:

VOTED: that the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and Board of Higher Education adjourn the meeting at 11:05 a.m., subject to the call of the Chairs.

The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Mitchell D. Chester
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education
and Secretary to the Board