



Deborah A. Gist  
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

### ***Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee***

*The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.*

**November 21, 2013**

**6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**

RI Parent Information Network  
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Edward Angilly, Kate Barnas, Wilfred Beaudoin, Sharon Bissonette, Eileen Botelho, Amy Canario, Jennifer Connolly, Cindy Duckworth, Joanne Eichinger, Gillian Elliott-Pearis, Deborah Garneau, Rosemary Gomes, Barbara Irons, Laura Laviano, Craig Lewis, Joann Nanning, Robin Pacheco, Mary Pendergast, Douglas Pierson, Brian Quigg, Elizabeth Santana, Maria Silvestri-Golotto & Sharon Ursini-Quimby

**Absent:** Allyson Dupont  
Eileen Botelho \*, Ann Brockmann\*, Cris Brodeur\*, Lori Dipina\*, Sue Donovan \*, Patti Hien\*, Cynthia Notarinni\*, Pamela O'Brien\* & Robert Wall\*

*\* Notes that prior notice was given regarding absence*

**RIDE/RITAP Attendees:** Beth Pinto, David Sienko & Andy Andrade

**Call to Order, Welcome, and Agenda Review:** The meeting was called to order at 6:36 by Mary Pendergast. Mary welcomed everyone, thanked them for attending & reviewed the meeting agenda.

#### **Announcements**

**\*SEAN Meeting** held November 7, 2013 had good turnout

Calli Cornell from RIDE addressed parental concerns related to the graduation requirements, in a myth vs fact format

**\*Parent Transition 101 Conference** was held on November 15, 2013

Cindy Duckworth spoke favorably about the event, reported that there were over 200 attendees and that the parent panel was very beneficial.

**\*504 Webinar** now available on RIPIN website

**\*College Forum** to be held March 8, 2014

**\*Statewide Transition Institute** will be held March 13 & 14, 2014

This is the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Institute. Panels will be composed of parents, teachers, ORS representatives and administrators of special education to build transition action plans for each District.

### **Old Business: Approval of minutes**

The October Meeting Minutes were reviewed by the membership body & amendments brought forward. Motion to accept the Minutes with amendments was made by Lauri Laviano & seconded by Robin Pacheco. Minutes were approved by the membership  
Leadership team is awaiting an appointment with the Commissioner to review Annual Report.

### **New Business:**

Andy Andradre, Special Assistant to the Commissioner for Legislative Relations presents “*The Legislative Process & Tracking Bills*”. Andy guided the membership body through how to track a Bill’s process on the RI General Assembly website. He also reviewed the Legislative Dates & Timelines schedule so that the membership would understand the process followed from the introduction of a Bill through the hearing process. Mary Pendergast questioned how RISEAC could actively engage in the process as far as how the education budget affects children with special needs. Andy replied that the best practice for the membership would be for them to contact their representatives directly & share their personal opinions with them Andy reports that the Representatives want to hear from their constituents especially in an election year.

Andy reports that approximately 200 Bills which are related to education in RI are proposed annually. Andy represents RIDE on 95% of these bills. Andy offered RISEAC members the opportunity to sign up for an email of a weekly tracking of the educational Bills the Assembly is reviewing. He tracks movement through the Assembly.

### **Director’s Report**

*David Sienko reviewed:*

#### **1. RIDE seeks examples of best practices in Social and Emotional Learning**

RIDE continues to advance the efforts to address the social and emotional learning needs of students as aligned to the Basic Education Program. Research shows that social-emotional competence is a key in being prepared for college and careers and has positive effects on academic performance. These areas of competency include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making ([www.CASEL.org](http://www.CASEL.org) )

RIDE is looking for evidence-based or promising practices related to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) that are taking place with students or in our schools. If you, or others you know, would like to share information about effective SEL-related activities, please download the [Promising SEL Practices in Rhode Island form](#), fill it out, and e-mail it to [Alice Woods](#) or [Sue Constable](#).

#### **2. High-school principals to be asked to participate in RIDE-sponsored study on behavioral health**

One of RIDE’s top priorities in the strategic plan for transforming education is “the development of a system of academic, social, and emotional supports for student health and well-being.” RIDE and the Rhode Island Regional Transition Centers have partnered with the University of Oregon and the National Post-School Outcome Center to conduct a research study about the behavioral health needs of high-school students in Rhode Island. RIDE is encouraging all high schools to participate. Questions regarding this project may be directed to Carolyn Aspinwall, at [carolynaspinwall@ebecri.org](mailto:carolynaspinwall@ebecri.org), or to Jane Slade, at [jane.slade@ride.ri.gov](mailto:jane.slade@ride.ri.gov).

#### **3. OSCAS Briefing for Administrators of Special Education**

This meeting provided an overview of the functions of the state education agency with the local education agencies in the implementation of IDEA, important reporting requirements and the structure of OSCAS. Topics included: CRPs/Accelerants and Special Education Performance Reports,

Disproportionality, Dispute Resolution & Private Schools, FAPE and Service Plans, Early Childhood Education, Parent Engagement & Local Advisory Committees, and Secondary Transition. 30 folks participated.

#### **4. RIDE held a meeting for Special Education Administrators about New Alternate Assessment**

The new alternate assessment is the National Center and State Consortium (NCSC) alternate assessment. More Information will be provided as decisions about alternate assessment are determined. Districts have been notified about the **NCSC Pilot Test Technology Requirements**.

For more information visit

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/Assessment/RhodeIslandAlternateAssessmentRIAA.aspx> and click on NCSC Web Page or contact Heather Heineke, RIDE Office of Assessment, Instruction, and Curriculum, at [heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov](mailto:heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8493.

#### **5. Assistive Technology Survey for Special Education Directors**

RIDE in collaboration with TechACCESS of RI wants to help districts to optimize the use of assistive technology resources. A 10 question survey will collect specific information regarding the interest for such a program as well as current assistive technology information in RI School Districts, Educational Collaboratives and other special education programs around the state. A proposed Assistive Technology (AT) School Share program would establish an online inventory and data recording system to help track and monitor district's assistive technology devices and software. The program would provide a means to share information and knowledge of various assistive technologies as well as support the loan and/or borrowing of assistive technologies for trial and/or long term use across RI districts.

#### **6. Common Core State Standards Community Outreach**

RIDE received a grant from the GE Foundation to help parents and the community understand what the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) mean for our students and our classrooms and how the CCSS prepare our students for college and for challenging careers. As part of this grant, throughout the current school year, RIDE will be conducting outreach to help promote increased understanding of the CCSS throughout the state. RIDE is developing materials and CCSS videos, and we are scheduling outreach events throughout the state. If you have any questions or want to schedule an outreach event for parents in your community, please contact Lauren Bryar, at [CommonCoreRI@pcgus.com](mailto:CommonCoreRI@pcgus.com). An outreach handout can also be found at: [www.ride.ri.gov/CCSS-Outreach](http://www.ride.ri.gov/CCSS-Outreach).

#### **7. Mathematics Common Core State Standards Professional Development**

RIDE is offering two additional dates for the professional development session focusing on the concept of function as developed in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). This workshop will highlight the types of experiences students should have in order to develop a deep understanding of this critical concept, as described in the CCSS content standards. The workshop will also highlight the variety of expertise required by the Standards for Mathematical Practice. Participants will examine the progression and focus of the function standards from 8th grade through Algebra 1, and the participants will see how these standards build on work in the earlier grades. The new sessions are scheduled for:

- Tuesday, March 4, 2014 – Coventry Public Schools Administration Building, 1675 Flat River Rd.
- Monday, March 31, 2014 – Warwick Public Schools Administration Building, 34 Warwick Lake Ave. For questions regarding this Mathematics CCSS professional development, please contact, Susan Pagliaro, at [susan.pagliaro@ride.ri.gov](mailto:susan.pagliaro@ride.ri.gov), or Patricia Carnevale, at [patricia.carnevale@ride.ri.gov](mailto:patricia.carnevale@ride.ri.gov).

#### **8. NAEP Results: Rhode Island surpasses national average in mathematics, reading**

Rhode Island students scored above the national average on all four components: mathematics and reading in grade 4 and grade 8. Particularly impressive was the performance of our 8<sup>th</sup>-graders, who were significantly behind the nation as a whole four years ago. Over the past four years, our 8<sup>th</sup>-graders

have improved by 8 percentage points (based on percent of students scoring proficient or better), far outpacing the national growth and moving above the national average. There is still work ahead of us, of course, particularly when it comes to closing achievement gaps. The performance of several student groups – notably black students, Hispanic students, and economically disadvantaged students – has improved, but achievement gaps still remain. The gaps are particularly large in relation to English learners and students with disabilities.

### **9. PARCC releases more sample items**

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) released new sample test items. With this release, PARCC has now made public exemplar test items across the grades in both mathematics and English language arts/literacy. These sample items are designed to help teachers, students, and parents get a better sense of how PARCC will measure student learning in mathematics and ELA/literacy. The PARCC assessments are aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Schools are scheduled to field-test the assessments this spring and to roll them out formally in the 2014-15 school year. The sample items have gone through a rigorous review process to ensure that they are of high quality and that they reflect the range of items that will be on the operational tests. PARCC will make all of its sample items available later this year on the PARCC technology platform, providing an opportunity for students and teachers to try out the assessment system in the manner in which it will be administered. The new sample items are available at: [www.parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes](http://www.parcconline.org/samples/item-task-prototypes).

**10. RIDE updates Personal Literacy Plan Guidelines** The Personal Literacy Plan Guidelines have been updated to reflect current initiatives, including the Common Core State Standards, Comprehensive Assessment System: Rhode Island Criteria & Guidance document, Rhode Island Response to Intervention Framework, and Data Use Professional Development. Personal Literacy Plan (PLP) Guidelines Third Edition -2013 document is now available, at: [www.ride.ri.gov/PLP-Guidelines](http://www.ride.ri.gov/PLP-Guidelines).

### **11. Transition 101 Parent Conference- November 15, 2013**

This parent conference was an introduction to the transition process in Rhode Island schools for families of students with disabilities ages 14-21 who are entering or involved in transition. This conference was free of charge and there were about 180 participants.

### **12. RIDE launches new Early Learning and Development Standards website**

RIDE is pleased to announce the launch of the new Early Learning and Development Standards website, which is located at: [www.rields.com](http://www.rields.com). This new site will house Early Learning and Development Standards resources, including: the standards themselves, a poster template, a technical paper, a Parent Guide, and Fun Family Activities cards, as well as links to professional development. The new standards went into effect this fall and will be used for future Kindergarten Entry Assessment development. If you have questions about these standards, e-mail: [Allison.Comport@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Allison.Comport@ride.ri.gov), or call her at 222-8890.

### **13. Conference on secondary schools**

The New England Secondary School Consortium (NESSC), of which RIDE is a member, is hosting its fifth annual conference, High School Redesign in Action, for educators across the country to share success stories, exchange best practices, and continue to build momentum for innovations that will prepare all students for success in college, careers, and communities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The conference will be held on Thursday and Friday, March 20-21, 2014. For more information, see: <http://newenglandssc.org/conference> .

### **14. Educators encouraged join weekly discussions on #EdchatRI**

#EdchatRI is a weekly online exchange of ideas on Twitter among Rhode Island educators. Two principals – Don Miller, of Shea High School, in Pawtucket, and Alan Tenreiro, of Cumberland High School – are the founders and co-moderators of #EdchatRI. The Commissioner joins Edchats almost

every week. #EdchatRI maintains a website, on which they archive past discussions: <http://www.edchatri.org/> Here's how the site introduces #EdchatRI: #EdchatRI is an opportunity that all educators have to come together once a week to discuss all of the happenings in education and R.I. education in particular. It is a chance for teachers and administrators of the Ocean State to share best practices both in the classroom and districts. #Edchatri will take place every Sunday night @ 8 p.m. and has a specific focus each week.

Questions from Membership during David's presentation:

Kate Barnas queried if there were any grants available to districts to support CASEL as it is a Bill & Melinda Gates program. David replied that at this time the focus of CASEL remained the five test states he was not aware of additional funding. Kate also mentioned the PSAs (Public Service Announcements) New York is running in support of CASEL programming & how powerful they are; David said he would have Alice Woods contact Kate for information

***Proposed Guest Speaker Schedule***

<b><i>December</i></b>	<b><i>Deb Garneau will present Youth Behavior Risk Assessment</i></b>
<b><i>January</i></b>	<b><i>Susan Wood State Performance Plan</i></b>
<b><i>February</i></b>	<b><i>Jane Slade</i></b>
<b><i>March</i></b>	<b><i>TBA</i></b>
<b><i>April</i></b>	<b><i>Alice Woods &amp; Sue Constable will review SEL &amp; restraints</i></b>
<b><i>May</i></b>	<b><i>Emily Kline Multi-Tiered System Supports</i></b>

***Workgroups:***

At 7:37 members were requested to meet to continue their work on their topics

***Secondary Transition***

This group will review the graduation requirements, PBGR's and the current transitioning planning within the State

***Legislative Advocacy***

This workgroup will focus on reaching out to legislators within our State to educate them on how the policies they are reviewing impact the children with special needs within our State. They will be tasked with drafting a letter which will be forwarded to said legislators to inform them of the RISEAC Mission Statement.

***Social & Emotional Learning***

Social Emotional Learning is a holistic approach to education which is being reviewed by RIDE. This workgroup has been tasked with gathering data related to the impact that SEL has on student achievement by reviewing data from the CASEL program's test districts.

***Physical Restraint***

This workgroup will continue to work with RIDE & DD. They intend to form a partnership with parents & educators. They are seeking electronic data collection at the State level as well as a review of how other States are gathering restraint data. They are seeking information on the distribution of the restraint brochure they developed to families.

***Educational Initiatives***

This workgroup will focus on the State's transition to Common Core Standards & PARCC testing. They will gather information on the materials & teacher certifications which are required to educate students within this curriculum.

**Public Comment: None**

**Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was initiated by Amy Canario & seconded by Maria Silvestri Golotte

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20

Recording Secretary:  
Kate Barnas, RN  
RISEAC website: [www.riseac.org](http://www.riseac.org)