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Public Hearing on the Proposed Revisions to the Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island

# SIGN-IN SHEET

Thursday, October 4, 2018

NAME (please print)	INSTITUTION/ORGANIZATION	In Favor	Opposed
✓ 1. Corinne McKamey, Ed.D Education Studies Pgr RIC			
✓ 2. Donna Rowland	Lincoln		✓
3. <del>Margaret Farr</del>			
✓ 4. Linda Mendonca	RICSNTA		✓
✓ 5. Tim Ryan	RISSA	✓	
✓ 6. <del>JOHN SANTANGELO</del>	Cranston		✓
✓ 7. Darcy Mollo	CTA		✓
✓ 8. Deborah	D'AMICO Ctn		✓
✓ 9. Spencer Foote	PCTA		✓
✓ 10. Brian Allen	Providence		✓
11. <del>Barbara Deo</del>	<del>PROV PCTA</del>		
✓ 12. Colleen McLoth	PROV Hopkins		✓
✓ 13. Rachel CRA	RI Social Worker Affiliates		✓
14. <del>Tefrey Lawton</del>	<del>Pilgrim HS</del>		✓
15. <del>Stacey Lawton</del>	<del>Veazie St School, Prov.</del>		✓



			Favor	Opposed
✓16	Mukara Keo	Rhode Island College		✓
✓17	Michael Hubin	Westerly High School / RIASP		
✓18	Frank Flynn	RIFTHP		
✓19	JEREMY CHIAPPETTA	BVP		
✓20	Maribeth Calabro	P. T. U.		
✓21	John Zollicie	CTA		✓
✓22	<sup>Bernadette</sup> Bernadette McDowell	CSNT		
✓23	Sarah Forchon Saint	Cranston		
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# Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

**PERSEVERANCE. RESPECT. INTEGRITY. DISCIPLINE. ENTHUSIASM.**

October 4, 2018

Barbara Cottam, Chair  
Rhode Island Board of Education

Daniel McConaghy, Chair  
Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

Ken Wagner, Commissioner  
Rhode Island Department of Education

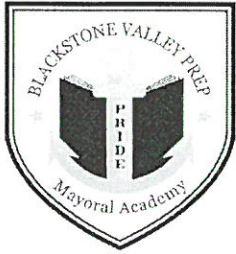
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chair Cottam, Chair McConaghy, Commissioner Wagner, members of the Rhode Island Board of Education and Council on Elementary and Secondary Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to share feedback on the proposed changes to educator certification. My experience of 20+ years working in public education, most of which has been in leadership roles here in Rhode Island, validate important research findings: educator quality is the most important and significant factor in providing an excellent educational opportunity for young people.

Rhode Island's educator certification regulations set important standards for our professionals. At the same time, certification regulations can also be a barrier to allowing talented people to work in our schools. With that in mind, I offer the following comments for your consideration.





# Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

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## Positive changes:

- **Registered School Nurse:** the proposed change is an excellent start in terms of acknowledging that there are different types of school nurses. While some spend significant time teaching—thus they should have pedagogical training— most school nurses spend their time reviewing doctors orders, distributing medication, providing important information to the community about medical issues, organizing flu shot clinics, and serving as a first responder. I have found that the additional pedagogical courses required to be a School Nurse Teacher are a real and significant barrier to employing many high-quality professionals who would love the role of a school nurse, but they lack the time or financial means to take the many courses required to be a School Nurse Teacher. *To that end, I strongly urge the council to both support the new role of Registered School Nurse, and to consider expanding the proposed change to allow any RN to be a Registered School Nurse, including those with an Associate's Degree.*
- **Reciprocity with Massachusetts and Connecticut:** this proposed change is an excellent move to remove barriers to talented professionals working in Rhode Island. I personally know of several talented people who have been hired to work in Massachusetts who preferred to work in Rhode Island but were unable to do so because of certification barriers. This extension of reciprocity is important to expanding our talent pool.
- **Substitute Teachers requiring an Associate's Degree or Equivalent** is a strong move to increase an important talent pipeline and to better serve our schools. Massachusetts currently has this as a standard; as a result, many aspiring teachers are able to work as professional substitutes, earning income to put toward their bachelor's degree and gaining important experience in the field. *Knowing we also have many instructional aids and teaching assistants who are seeking a pathway to teaching—many of whom are more diverse and representative of the students we serve—this may open up avenues for entering the teaching ranks that might not otherwise exist.*



## Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

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### Still desired changes:

By opening up the regulations of certification, there are still several opportunities the board should consider as it takes on the important work to set a high bar and, at the same time, not create unnecessary barriers to talented individuals working in Rhode Island public schools:

- **Costs of Emergency Certificates** are significant and should be reduced. Indeed, the cost is 500% more expensive than the fee for a professional certificate (\$200 for one year versus \$200 for five years) and 600% more expensive than an initial certificate (\$200 for one year versus \$100 for three years). Emergency certificates are only offered for those positions we are desperate to fill, yet we put a financial barrier in front of candidates that is significant. *I recommend that an emergency certificate application fee be waived entirely, as that certificate is needed for an emergency.*
- **Greatly expand Additional Certifications.** We have a number of excellent professionals in the work, including teachers of the year, Milken winners, and others who are gifted educators and have deep content knowledge. For example, the Blackstone Valley Prep 2017-2018 Teacher of the Year is a certified elementary educator teaching sixth grade mathematics - she has exceptional and deep mathematics knowledge, scoring nearly 30 points higher than a Rhode Island passing score on the Praxis Middle School Math exam. Yet, based on our experience, the additional certification pathway (e.g. to add 5-8 math) is closed to her. *If you are already deemed prepared and qualified enough to teach Rhode Island children in any one area, and you can show content mastery in an additional area, you should have the opportunity to add additional certificates without taking additional coursework or applying for Expert Residency or Emergency Certificates.*
- **Expand the grade span for Elementary Certification.** Today's kindergarten is not the kindergarten of yore. Years ago, when the grade 1-6 span was first introduced, most of Rhode Island had "half day" kindergarten with limited academic rigor. One look at the Rhode Island adopted Common Core State Standards shows that today's kindergarten expectations have ramped up dramatically. *By allowing Elementary Certified (grade 1-6) educators to teach kindergarten, we will expand the pool of teachers for kindergarten.*



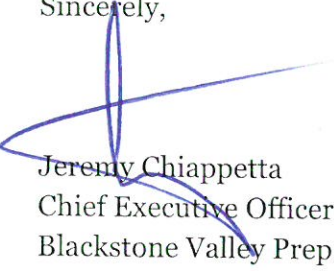
## Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy

**PERSEVERANCE. RESPECT. INTEGRITY. DISCIPLINE. ENTHUSIASM.**

- **Alternate Route Certification.** The Alternate Route Certification pathway is important to Rhode Island's efforts to increase our teacher pipeline, especially for diverse candidates, non-traditionally trained aspiring educators, and mid-career transitioners. Knowing that the approval process is very rigorous for these programs, candidates should be afforded greater latitude with regards to certification eligibility. For example, the approved program should have the flexibility to sponsor candidates for certification based on the approved program's assessment of content knowledge by reviewing a combination of GPA and standardized test scores. For example, a Political Science major with a very high Praxis exam in math should be allowed to be supported through the alternate program to be a math teacher. Likewise, a candidate with a 2.6 but a high test score should also be eligible for consideration, should the approved program see that the overall talents of the candidate warrant their sponsorship. *By awarding greater flexibility to approved alternate route programs, we will potentially increase our pool of candidates, especially for hard-to-fill positions.*

Finally, I applaud the effort to further improve and further professionalize the industry by requiring annual professional development. Doctors, accountants, lawyers, real estate professionals, to name a few, all require continuing professional education. While I am not certain that an annual requirement of thirty (30) hours is enough or too much, I agree with the initiative.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Chiappetta  
Chief Executive Officer  
Blackstone Valley Prep



October 4, 2018

Dear Council Members:

My name is Linda Mendonca and I am in opposition of the proposed changes that would add an additional pathway to school nurse certification that does not require additional course work. I currently teach Public/Community Health nursing at RI College School of Nursing and serve as a school nurse consultant at the RI Department of Health.

I have practiced school nursing for 23 years starting 25 years ago as a substitute in a Department of Defense school in Seoul, South Korea. When I returned to the states I became certified and have practiced school nursing working in five states; the last 13 years of my school nursing practice in Pawtucket. I have served on the National Association of School Nurses board representing RI for four years and am very cognizant of the different models of school nursing practice around the country and paths to certification.

RI is fortunate in that the ratio of school nurses to school buildings is 1:1 in most districts in this state. It baffles and concerns me as to why we would want to lower our standards to providing the best quality school health care services for our students and school communities?

Thank you for your time in reading and/or listening.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Linda Mendonca', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Linda Mendonca, RN, MSN, PHNA-BC, NCSN, FNASN  
42 Cole Avenue  
Providence, RI 02906  
[Linda.mendonca58@gmail.com](mailto:Linda.mendonca58@gmail.com)





RHODE ISLAND  
COLLEGE

October 4, 2018

Department of Educational Studies

Respected members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education:

My name is Corinne McKamey, and I am an Associate Professor of Culture, Communities, and Education at Rhode Island College. **I am here to publicly object to the process of reviewing these regulations as a full 133 page packet.** There are too many important issues here that need to be discussed and examined, including:

**There should be NO cultural competence expert residency certificate. ALL teachers need to be culturally responsive, competent, and attentive.**

Rhode Island young people are increasingly diverse in many ways. For instance, ¼ of RI children live in immigrant families and almost half identify as being in a minoritized racial or ethnic group ([2017 RI Kids Count](#)). Students are diverse across many other identifications including gender, sexual orientation, disability, and social class.

The regulations frame cultural competence as “making sure that each student, staff member, and school community member is treated fairly, respectfully, and with an understanding of culture and context.” It is hard to disagree with this statement, and yet it too narrowly focuses on an intention towards an individual. This focus undermines the point of cultural competence which includes self knowledge and reflection; knowledge of students and their families and communities; and constructivist teaching strategies. Rather than only focusing on the individuals in a building, culturally attentive educators also teach students to recognize and address issues of power and structural inequalities within and across MULTIPLE cultures and contexts (Villegas and Lucas, 2002).

Culturally responsive teaching is not optional, and it should not be relegated to a few “experts” who are certified. There should be no expert residency certificate based upon cultural competence. In this rapidly diversifying state, we need ALL of our teachers to be culturally responsive in their teaching.

I respectfully ask that the council separate, untangle, and more carefully consider this and other policy changes in this packet of regulations.

Sincerely,

Corinne McKamey, M.A.T., Ed.M., Ed.D.

Rhode Island College

Associate Professor of Culture, Communities, and Education

Villegas, A. M. & Lucas, T. (2002). *Educating culturally responsive teachers*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.



## Teixeira, Angela

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**From:** McKamey, Corinne L. <cmckamey@ric.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 27, 2018 8:10 PM  
**To:** Teixeira, Angela  
**Subject:** October 4 testimony

Dear Angela Teixeira,

I would like my name added to the list of people testifying about the new RIDE regulations on October 4th at Providence Career and Tech Academy.

Thank you,

Corinne McKamey

**Corinne McKamey, Ed.D.**  
**Associate Professor of Culture, Communities and Education**  
**Co-Director, Youth Development BA Program**  
**Educational Studies Department**  
**Rhode Island College \* Henry Barnard School 218**

[YDEV Website](#)





**Public Hearing on the  
Regulations Governing the Certification of Educators in Rhode Island**

**October 4, 2018**

**5:00 p.m.**

**Providence Career and Technical Academy**

**Agenda**

5:00 – 5:10 p.m. – Prehearing Remarks – Commissioner Wagner

5:10 – 5:15 p.m. – Opening Remarks – Council Member

5:15 until... – Public Hearing

Post Hearing Q&A – RIDE Staff



***RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER AFFILIATES***

**c/o 15 Breana Lane  
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886  
pat\_beauchemin@verizon.net**

October 4, 2018

Rhode Island Board of Education  
Rhode Island Department of Education  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Members of the Board:

As the spokesperson for Rhode Island School Social Worker Affiliates, I write on the matter before you relative to the creation of a two-path system to hire more nurses to serve in our school districts throughout the state. Our organization stands ***in opposition*** to any change that would bring registered nurses into the districts without adequate educational preparation for them to serve in our schools. Any attempt to change the current certification process of the certified school nurse teachers fails to understand the critical role of this professional group as an integral component of the educational team.

The notion that school nurses merely distribute Band-Aids to students is an archaic perception of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The reality is today's certified school nurse is an active member of the school community educating children in the classroom, communicating with outside physicians and providing important medical trainings to educators and support staff, to name a few of their multi-faceted responsibilities.

School social work practitioner's work collaboratively with school nurse teachers on behalf of students who present with complex medical and mental health needs. It is imperative for those of us who work in educational settings to understand the complicated interplay of dynamics operant in the culture of the schools. Consequently, the specific coursework and training for their certification is wholly unique to certified school nurse teachers, enabling them to enter a school building and "hit the ground running" without having to experience "on the job training". Our children deserve nothing less in health care delivery.

Rhode Island School Social Worker Affiliates urges the members of the Rhode Island Board of Education to maintain the ***current and single*** certification process for the specialization of certified school nurse teachers.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia L. Beauchemin, LICSW  
Rhode Island School Social Worker Affiliates, Public Relations

