June 3, 2013

TO: Members of the Board of Education

FROM: Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner

RE: RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees - Recommendation

The Rhode Island Department of Education has been notified by Travis Zellner that he will be resigning as Chair of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf Board of Trustees.

At its May 7, 2013, meeting, the Board of Trustees unanimously recommended consideration and appointment of Dr. Marie Lynch, Vice-Chair, to become the next Chairperson of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees.

Attached is Mr. Zellner's letter of resignation as well as Dr. Lynch's resume.

At your June 6, 2013, Board meeting, I will be recommending that you approve my recommendation to appoint Dr. Lynch as the new Chair of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees.
May 20, 2013

Dear Commissioner Gist,

As you are aware, on September 4th, 2012, I submitted my letter of resignation as Chair, by next month, however, will remain as Trustee through the summer, until a qualified Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing successor is identified.

At its May 7th meeting, the Board of Trustees unanimously recommends consideration and appointment of Dr. Marie Lynch, Vice Chairperson, to become the next Chairperson of the RISD Board of Trustees pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-26-3.1 (3) ‘The chairperson shall also be selected in this manner.’

I and the Board have worked closely with Dr. Lynch for the past 3 years; she possesses the leadership, strength and commitment to advance the RISD goals and mission.

Both Dr. Lynch’s and Nancy Maguire Heath’s exemplary and dedicated leadership will continue to feed the schools steadfast march toward success!

I am immensely proud and optimistic for the future of our RI deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Very warm regards,

Travis R. Zellner
Board of Trustees, Chairperson

Enclosures

c: Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner
   Andrea Castaneda, Chief of Accelerating School Performance
   RISD Board of Trustees
   Nancy Maguire Heath, RISD Director
   Sara A. Rapport, Esq., RISD Board of Trustees Legal Counsel
September 4, 2012

Mr. George D. Caruolo, Esq., Chairman
c/o Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Chairman Caruolo:

This letter is in response to your written inquiry, dated August 1, 2012, seeking that I indicate whether I remain interested in continuing to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in my response.

I was appointed by the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education to serve on the Board of Trustees on June 26, 2003. I served approximately fifteen months before resigning, then returned and was reappointed on April 26, 2007. Just over one year later, on August 6, 2008, I was selected by the Board of Regents to serve as its Chair. Thus, my aggregate service, from my initial appointment in 2003 to date, is nearly eight years.

Several Trustees have come and gone; in fact, the membership has changed completely nearly five times during my period of service. Moreover, throughout this period, the Board of Trustees consistently has operated with fewer than the statutorily mandated nine members.

Despite its changing and at times thin membership, the Board of Trustees has responded effectively to multiple challenges over the past decade. In recent years, for example, the School underwent an audit by the Department of Education as mandated by the state law on Progressive Support and Intervention, and developed a reform plan in compliance with the Board of Regents’ Protocol for Interventions: Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools. On a more positive note, the Board of Trustees obtained support for and constructed a new state-of-the-art building. We are confident that our new Director, Nancy Maguire Heath, will lead the School with success through this period of reform.

Although I have witnessed tears, sadness, and anger through these struggles, I have remained steadfast, moved by the commitment of teachers, administrators, and staff, and most important, by the determination of the students themselves. Their smiles, and the passion of their parents and community supporters, have encouraged me to remain strong.
It was a very difficult decision for our family to leave Rhode Island in 2010, and relocate to Massachusetts. We felt compelled to make this move, however, because at the time, my wife and I did not believe that the School could provide the appropriate level of service and culture to our then 3-year old Deaf son. I might have justified resigning from the Board of Trustees at that point, but did not. I believed that it was my responsibility, as a leader in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, and a former citizen of this State, to continue to support its Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students, its culture, and its language.

With great relief, I have witnessed the progress of the past two years. Now, I am finally cautiously optimistic that the School has the tools and plans in place to continue its march toward success.

I promised the Director that I would remain on the Board of Trustees this forthcoming school year (2012-13). And yet, in fairness to my family, I cannot continue my service beyond this date. Therefore, after careful consideration, I am submitting my resignation as Chair effective June 5, 2013. I will agree to remain on the Board until August 7, 2013, however, as a general Trustee, to provide support and input to the next selected Chairperson.

It is time for the Board of Regents to start looking for a new Chairperson, someone with the strength and commitment to advance the RISD goals and mission. It is also time to locate and secure leadership to help support our outstanding new Director.

I have made this decision with a heavy but very proud heart.

Very warm regards,

Travis R. Zellner
Board of Trustees, Chairperson

Enclosures

c: Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner
David V. Abbott, Deputy Commissioner
Andrea Castaneda, Chief of Accelerating School Performance
RISD Board of Trustees
Nancy Maguire Heath, RISD Director
Sara A. Rapport, Esq., RISD Board of Trustees Legal Counsel
CURRICULUM VITAE

Marie A. Lynch, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Special Education
Rhode Island College
Horace Mann 059
Providence, RI 02908
401-456-8763(w);
email: mlynch@ric.edu

EDUCATION:

University of Rhode Island/Rhode Island College
Ph.D. in Education
May 2005

Lesley College
Masters of Education: Middle School & Moderate Special Needs
May 1993

Syracuse University
Bachelor of Science: Rehabilitation Service & Psychology
May 1985

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Chair of Special Education
Rhode Island College, Providence, RI (6/11-present)
- Schedule semester classes, and assign all full and part-time faculty
- Annually evaluate all full-time faculty, provide summary to Dean’s office
- Represent department interests/concerns at Dean’s Leadership Committee, and College-Wide Committees
- Generate annual data reports re: growth and progress of respective courses/programs

Associate Professor, Special Education
Rhode Island College, Providence, RI (7/05-present)
- Taught special education courses to undergraduate & graduate students
- Designed & supervised practicum placements for teacher candidates in urban and urban ring districts
- Advised undergraduate/graduate teacher candidates during acceptance, & formative/summative points
- Oversee M.Ed. Special Education Certification Program
- Accreditation data collection, analyses, generation of formal reports (NCATE; CEC; RIPA)

Special Education Administrator
International Charter School, Pawtucket, RI (7/03-7/05)
- Created and designed special education programs to serve all students with identified need
- Facilitated all special educational meetings re IEPs: to design services for students with disabilities.
- Hired/supervised all special educational staff/consultants to serve all students’ needs
- Managed budgets/materials to deliver quality programming; secured additional funds through Medicare reimbursements.
- Oversaw the successful School System Support Review process to ensure federal/state compliance.
Adjunct Faculty
Rhode Island College (1/01-6/03)
- Taught undergraduate & graduate Special Education courses:
  - SPED 312: Assessment Procedures of Children & Youth with Disabilities
  - SPED 412: Assessment, Curriculum, & Methodology for Children with Mild/Moderate Disabilities
  - SPED 531: Instructional Approaches to Children with Special Needs in Regular Classes

Special Educator
Rhode Island School for the Deaf (8/01-8/02)
- Taught (one-year leave of absence) content area classes to middle school students who were deaf or hard of hearing, and had multiple disabilities.
- Active participant on Middle School Team.
- Acted as special education consultant with teachers re: deaf students with additional special education needs for whole school.
- Assessed individual students; helped co-design and implement IEPs based on individual need

Special Educator/Consultant
Boston Public Schools (9/99-7/03)
- Advised the Elementary Math Department re: best coaching practices for special education teachers to instruct students with special needs.
- Offered workshops to teachers about inclusive practices for students with disabilities.
- Collaborated with Middle School Team about assessment, instruction, and student progress.
- Instructed middle school students in reading (Boys Town Reading Program) & math (Connected Math)
- Participated in year-long EDC workshop series re: reform-based mathematics.

Learning Disabilities/Resource Specialist
Cambridge Public Schools (9/94-9/97)
- Taught middle school students in individual, small group, and whole class settings.
- Administered standardized tests, wrote formal reports, and created Individual Education Programs.
- Participated in various professional development trainings: Orton-Gillingham, Algebra Project, Connected Math Program, and helped develop appropriate accommodations in the general ed. setting.
- Co-directed the Learning Center, an afterschool program for students needing academic support.
- Designed the Middle School Monitor, a family newsletter about middle school activities/events.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant
Sherlock Center, Rhode Island College (10/02-5/03)
- Gathered and analyzed data re: Assistive Technology (AT) for people with disabilities.
- Conducted interviews & surveys of various constituents to understand benefits/challenges of access to AT devices and services in RI.
- Maintained Sphinx database and collaborated on final report.

Research Associate/Consultant
Program Evaluation & Research Group, Lesley College (9/97-1/00)
- Evaluated national & local math, science, technology initiatives, e.g., Algebra Project, K-12 NASA Space Science program.
- Conducted observations, interviews, document reviews, and helped write formative & summative evaluative reports.
- Gathered data re: Special Education Centers to help design Lesley’s Special Education Center.
- Created Filemaker database system for various programs.
• Evaluated goals of Ludke Library and helped design new objectives with staff.
• Collaborated with Senior Associates & Principal Investigators to ensure evaluation completion.

**Administrative Assistant/Research Assistant**
Program Evaluation & Research Group, Lesley College (12/91-8/94)
• Managed budgets for numerous evaluative projects.
• Maintained MacIntosh computers/software. Competency in Word, Excel, Filemaker.
• Conducted observations, documented & analyzed data.

**Administrative Assistant/Tutor**
Learning Center, Lesley College (12/90-11/91)
• Coordinated 600-student survey to determine prevalence of learning disability needs on campus.
• Tabulated data; collaborated in writing final report: *A Self-Perception Survey of Learning Disabilities Among College Students*
• Tutored college students with learning disabilities in content areas
• Facilitated Prejudice Reduction Workshops on campus to promote awareness of equity, access, and understanding of diversity.

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**SCHOLARSHIP:**

**Accepted/In Progress Publications**

Lynch, M.A. (in progress) *You, where from?: A memoir of growing up culturally deaf.*


Scholarly Presentations


**Professional Membership**
- American Educational Research Association
- Council for Exceptional Children
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- Rhode Island Association of School & Curriculum Development

**Certifications/Skills/Honors/Experiences**
- RI Special Education Administrator (K-12); RI Special Educator (5-12)
- MA Middle School (5-9); MA Moderate Special Needs (5-12)
- State Appointment to RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees, Vice Chair (Winter, 2010)
- Grew up culturally deaf as the daughter of deaf parents