

# BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

November 2, 2010

Dear BPS Staff,

On October 6, we shared our initial "Redesign and Reinvest" proposal with the School Committee. These recommendations were based on our desire to offer programs of the highest quality to all of our students. We know that many in our school communities, including some of you, have questions about how schools were selected and which schools students will be enrolled in next fall. We also heard from families and students that if we believe these schools are not making accelerated progress, then we should commit to investing more resources in these programs. It became clear that the community views our school closure recommendations in isolation from our significant fiscal challenges.

We originally planned to ask the School Committee to vote on our entire redesign proposal this Wednesday, November 3 at English High School. Instead, we will be providing to the School Committee a broader understanding of the full scope of the challenges we face, including our budget realities. While we will still request that the School Committee vote to approve our in-district charter applications to the state (UP Academy and Boston Green Academy) on Wednesday, we will return to the Committee with a larger set of recommendations in December.

We appreciate and acknowledge the many students, families, and staff who have attended our hearings and we have been updating our website to address questions that have been raised ([www.bostonpublicschools.org/redesign](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/redesign)). The decisions before us are critical to our overall success as a district, not just today, but for years to come. That's why it is important that the School Committee and our stakeholders see the comprehensive picture of the Redesign and Reinvest Plan in context, and understand that these decisions will be difficult and necessary.

You know more than anyone the challenge that lies ahead for all 135 schools if we can not make strategic decisions that not only address our Acceleration Agenda goals but that also speak to our fiscal reality. We already know that with the loss of stimulus / ARRA dollars, the increased costs of compensation, health insurance, and current programs, we face a \$63 million dollar budget shortfall. We also know that we have excess capacity, more seats than we need, and that it is not possible to reconcile our revenue and expenditure gaps without being as efficient with all of our resources, most of which are invested in buildings and people.

We are sending you this message as a small first step in communicating more effectively with all of you about our district's plans. We can no longer afford to view any recommendation as a proposal that affects some and not all of us. And we will not be successful as a BPS family without uniting and creatively addressing complex issues. We look forward to involving you in this decision making and utilizing your expertise and passion to create world-class educational options for students. Thank you for your continued service to the children of Boston.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol R. Johnson".

Carol R. Johnson  
Superintendent