



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL  
BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**March 22, 2023**

The Boston School Committee held a virtual meeting on March 22, 2023 at 5 p.m. on Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit [www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee), email [feedback@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:feedback@bostonpublicschools.org) or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

**ATTENDANCE**

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Jeri Robinson; Vice Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Dr. Stephen Alkins; Brandon Cardet-Hernandez; Rafaela Polanco Garcia; Quoc Tran; and Student Representative Diego Mehta.

School Committee Member Absent: Lorena Lopera.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Agenda

Minutes for Approval: March 15, 2023

Grants for Approval Totaling \$238,350

Superintendent's Revised FY24 Budget Proposal Memo, March 15, 2023

Superintendent's Revised FY24 Budget Proposal Presentation

Superintendents Revised FY24 Budget Proposal Equity Impact Statement

Additional FY24 Budget Documents (including translations)

Capital Planning Update: 2023 MSBA Statement of Interest Presentation

Transportation Yellow Bus Vendor Contract Presentation

Attendance Presentation Memo, March 22, 2023

Chronic Absenteeism and District Improvement Strategies Equity Impact Statement

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Chronic Absenteeism and District Improvement Strategies Presentation

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreements: Boston School Police Superior Officers Federation and the Boston School Committee Memo, March 22, 2023

Superior Officers Federation Memorandum of Agreement 2020 2024

Lunch Hour Monitors Association and the Boston School Committee Collective Bargaining Agreement Memo, March 22, 2023

Lunch Monitors Memorandum of Agreement 2020-2023

## CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. Ms Lopera was absent. Mr. Mehta was absent at roll call but joined the regular meeting at 6 p.m. All other members were present.

Ms. Robinson announced that the Committee would adjourn to executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Boston School Police Superior Officers Federation and the Lunch Hour Monitors Association. To have this discussion in an open meeting could have a negative impact on the Committee's bargaining strategy. She said that the Committee would return to public session at 6 p.m.

**Approved** - At approximately 5:05 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn to executive session.

At approximately 6 p.m., the Committee returned to public session. Ms. Robinson said that tonight's meeting was being streamed live on Zoom. It will be rebroadcast on Boston City TV. It will also be posted at [bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](http://bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee) and on YouTube. She announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cabo Verdean, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin and American Sign Language (ASL) and provided instructions on how to access simultaneous interpretation by changing the Zoom channel. Translated meeting documents were posted at [www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee) prior to the start of the meeting.

## APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the March 15, 2023 School Committee FY24 budget hearing and meeting.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

*As prepared for delivery.*

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Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening, everyone. Even though we are only in March, we've already begun to think about and plan for next school year. I am happy to share with you our BPS 2023-2024 Calendar. We have finalized the dates for all of our August Training Meetings along with the beginning of school which starts on September 7, 2023. The Calendar will be posted on our website and as we think about ending this school year we're also preparing for our 5th quarter, also known as our summer programing.

I'm thrilled to share with you that today we officially opened registration for our 5th Quarter summer programs! As you may know, 5th Quarter Summer Learning programs are 5-week, full-day elective programs for students, some of which take place in our schools while others are run by community-based organizations, either in a school or at a community location. Our goal this summer is to deliver not just more seats for students, but also to expand partners, locations and opportunities to intentionally be fun for students! Our programs are designed to build knowledge, expose our kids to new opportunities, and increase the JOY factor!

As always, our fifth quarter accepts students of all abilities, including students with IEPs. Registration is open to all and students with disabilities are one of our priority groups along with economically disadvantaged, Multilingual Learners (MLLs) and homeless (HERN) students. We're also piloting more inclusion in the 5th Quarter programs. Building off of last year's success, where we integrated many English Learners into these programs, we'll be expanding inclusion to include more program offerings that can meet the needs of students with a wide range of abilities, including students with disabilities.

These expanded opportunities are in addition to our more traditional Expanded School Year (ESY) programming, for students whose IEPs require specially designed instruction or related services learning time. We will offer 1,300 seats in the 5th quarter for inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities . BPS will offer academic and related services during the 5th Quarter for students attending these programs to provide a continuum of options for SWD during the summer. Our projection is to provide ELD 1-5 to approximately 40% (~6,800 students) of the multilingual learner population among the 17,000 total enrolled students, including former multilingual learners. We anticipate that the enrollment of multilingual learners for the 5th Quarter summer programming will be proportionate to the overall number of multilingual learners enrolled in the district. We partner with Boston After School & Beyond to strengthen and expand on our partnership portfolio for Summer programs, in and out of BPS sites. For example, Hale Reservation and Courageous Sailing have been long standing partners that hold their programs off-site. This Summer, we've added World Ocean, League GROW Program and Dreamcatchers.

Our students, whether they are coming into our buildings or attending a partner site, will be choosing experiences. Some will sail, some will make films, others will explore STEM, or deepen their writing or consider career paths. Others will bolster math and reading skills through project based learning and, of course, lots and lots of field trips! To do all of this, we are increasing 5th Quarter by 25%, offering 127 programs in a combination of schools and community based settings. We're welcoming 12 new community partners, including World Ocean, Fresh Film and Springboard. These programs will be able to serve roughly 9,000 students, which is an increase from just under 7,100 last year. 5th Quarter is joined by a menu of

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other summer programming, too. As usual, we'll be offering ESY, Extended School Year, for students whose IEPs call for additional time, and High School Credit Recovery among others. We've aligned schedules so all programs will run across the same five weeks, from July 10 through August 11, better serving families' needs. In total, our learning programs will be able to serve more than 17,000 students. All summer learning programs will continue to provide meals and in our six larger school sites, where multiple programs share facilities, hub stop transportation will be provided. These sites are spread across the city and include: the Blackstone, Boston Latin School, Charlestown High School, Mattahunt, Mildred Ave and Orchard Gardens.

Of course, I can't talk about summer opportunities, without talking about summer jobs for our youth! In partnership with the Mayor's Office, Private Industry Council, ABCD and other key partners, we aim to connect a record number, nearly 3,000 youth with summer jobs and internships. I have always thought about Summer as a unique opportunity for our students to learn, explore and develop in ways beyond the traditional school year. Our summer budget and programming represent a huge investment, roughly 17 million dollars in our students. Let me tell you why it matters. We know, and research by the Rand Corporation backs this up, that up to two-thirds of the achievement gap between low-income students and their higher income peers is connected to unequal access to high quality summer learning opportunities. This research further informs us that students who attend summer learning programs at least 80% of the time see the strongest outcomes. So it's on us to not just offer opportunities, but to ensure they are engaging, productive and fun. This ensures students keep coming back! When we do this, our kids get to see what it feels like to be scientists, engineers, writers, film makers, dancers, artists, police officers and more.

Building programs is only the half of it. While the five-week learning programs will all officially kick off July 10, families can start registering for opportunities today – which is the earliest we've ever opened registration! Families can visit our BPS website: [bostonpublicschools.org/summer](https://bostonpublicschools.org/summer). On this page families can learn more about all of our programs as well as research external programs offered in and around Boston. We've made registering for 5th Quarter programs easier than ever with a more user-friendly platform available in nine languages. But families don't have to go this alone, though. The Summer team has done great work to train Family Liaisons, HUB School Coordinators and several partners to help our families with registration. Over the coming weeks, you'll see our billboards and you'll find our 5th Quarter teams at Registration Pop Ups at community events such as the Kite Festival in Franklin Park, Wake Up the Earth in Jamaica Plain, Family STEM Day at DSNI, Grove Hall Library, East Boston Library, Harvard Kent Housing Development and more.

Our summer jobs crew will also be visible, helping to sign our youth up for jobs with the Private Industry Council, ABCD, and the Mayor's Success Link program. They'll be hosting information stations and summer job fairs in high schools, sharing fliers with schools to share with students and families, and working with our school liaisons, social workers and guidance counselors to get the word out and help students complete applications. We're looking forward to a really fun and productive summer of learning and growing. Please visit our website [BostonPublicSchools.org/Summer](https://BostonPublicSchools.org/Summer) to learn more and sign up today!

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Switching gears to my favorite part of my superintendent's report: our bright spots. Congratulations to Isabella Kim, a student at the Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, who received the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) Massachusetts Student Achievement Award. Commissioner Riley wrote to Isabella expressing his pride in her work. We are proud of you too! Congratulations are also in order for Winship Elementary's Tanoshi Inomata who won the Spelling Bee over the weekend. He will move on to compete in Nationals. This weekend students at the Boston Arts Academy performed Shrek the Musical. They had the whole audience on their feet, including chairperson Robinson, Mayor Wu and her two sons, who loved the show. Finally, ESL students from the Boston Adult Technical Academy showcased their art in an exhibit held at the Revolution Hotel. The project is a creative exploration of the themes of identity and home. Their students hail from all across the world and bring a vibrant and diverse understanding of the world and what is important to them. The "I Am..." Project asked students to use written and visual arts by creating self portraits and poetry to explore and convey the essential components that make up their identity and sense of home.

I know we have three votes with discussion ahead of us so with that, I will close.

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Ms. Polanco Garcia spoke about the importance of summer and after school opportunities. She encouraged the district team to provide information to the families of students with disabilities as early as possible. Deputy Superintendent of Equity, Family and Community Advancement Dr. Ana Tavares agreed and highlighted a STEM summer program that will serve students with multiple abilities in multiple languages. Executive Director of Expanded Learning Opportunities and Partnerships Alba Cruz Davis said that BPS will provide Extended School Year programming at 13 locations for across the city and is working with partners to provide a range of activities, Any child that receives door-to-door transportation during the school year will receive door-to-door transportation during the summer.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez said he has heard concerns from some families about the Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was administered to students. The Superintendent explained that the health survey is given annually both nationally and statewide to collect information about youth behavior and inform strategies to address areas of concern. She said that some parents expressed concern about the wording of the questions and communication with families. The district is reviewing that feedback. Families can also opt-out of the survey. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez suggested that the district provide families with guided questions to promote healthy conversations following the survey.

Dr. Alkins requested five years of data on the demographics of summer program participants. Ms. Cruz-Davis said that in 2022, 38% of the students self-identified as Black and 42% identified as Latinx. She agreed to follow up with data from the past five years. Dr. Alkins requested information about the stages of health education in BPS. The Superintendent said that she would have Jill Carter, Senior Executive Director of the Office of Health & Wellness, follow up.

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Mr. O'Neill asked about the district's outreach to families regarding summer programming opportunities. The Superintendent explained that family engagement specialists at the school level are supporting families with access and registration. Mr. O'Neill spoke about the importance of communicating with families and partners.

Ms. Robinson asked about summer opportunities by age. The Superintendent said that summer programs begin at age three, while summer job opportunities begin at age 14. Ms. Robinson asked if any non-exam high schools offer summer orientations. The Superintendent agreed that orientations should be offered to all incoming 7th and 9th graders districtwide. Ms. Cruz-Davis agreed to follow up with more information.

*Approved* - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent's Report.

### GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Heichman, Dorchester resident and Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA) member, testified regarding the FY24 budget proposal and the Superintendent's organizational structure.

Ruby Reyes, Dorchester resident and BEJA executive director, testified regarding the FY budget proposal.

Ymaris Matias, South End resident and Orchard Gardens K-8 School parent, testified about her experience with BPS.

Maria Mejia, Roxbury resident and Blackstone Elementary School parent, testified regarding the proposed budget for special education and staffing.

Amada Ravelo, South Boston resident and Hurley K-8 School parent, testified regarding transportation for special education students.

Paula Ortiz, Dorchester resident and Fenway High School parent, testified regarding the suspension process and transportation.

Piedad Muñoz, Mattapan resident and St. Stephen's Youth Programs member, testified regarding emotional support for students.

Maria Moura, Roxbury resident and Blackstone Elementary School parent, testified regarding transportation concerns.

### ACTION ITEM

Dr. Alkins asked for more information about the Early College Support Grant in the amount of \$84,000. Director of Early College Programs Lydia Emmons explained that the grant is an increase in funding from the last round specifically to support services for multilingual learners

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at the Dearborn and Charlestown High School. About 270 students are enrolled in early college programs and BPS is on track to double that enrollment for the upcoming year through these investments. She agreed to provide an update on grant outcomes at the end of the school year.

Mr. Mehta asked about the OST Strategic Support Grant in the amount of \$100,000. Chief Equity and Strategy Officer Dr. Charles Grandson spoke about the district's recruitment, retention, and cultivation strategies.

Ms. Robinson recommended that the Committee separate the grants for approval and vote on a future date on the SEL Mental Health Grant because the details need to be finalized before they are ready to be brought forth to the Committee. She proposed that the Committee take two votes related to the grants: first a vote to separate the grants, removing the SEL Mental Health Grant in the amount of \$39,350, and a second vote to approve the revised grants package now totaling \$199,000.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a motion to separate the SEL Mental Health Grant in the amount of \$39,350 2023 from the grants for approval package.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the revised grants for approval totaling \$199,000.

The Superintendent requested the Committee's support for her revised general fund budget recommendation in the amount of \$1,445,729,446. Committee members thanked the Superintendent's team for their work on the FY24 budget proposal.

Dr. Alkins encouraged private industries to invest in the educational development of their future workforce. He expressed concern about the proposed budget creating fiscal cliffs that will negatively impact students of color, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners. He suggested that the district take a more radical approach to the budget.

Ms. Polanco Garcia praised the additional funding for multilingual learners, inclusion, bus monitors, technology, and emergency management. She said that families need to know how the FY24 budget supports expanding native language access beyond the \$750,000 for the costs of expanding dual language programs. She asked for the total number of students impacted by the \$750,000 investment in School Year 2023-24. Ms. Polanco Garcia said that many families are unhappy with the district's transportation performance and are concerned about the end of ESSER funds. She encouraged the Committee to continue important budget conversations by creating a budget task force.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez thanked the Superintendent for her leadership and transparency but said that he cannot support the FY24 budget proposal, which he described as fiscally irresponsible given enrollment data and the need for consolidations and reductions in programs. He encouraged the Committee to delay the budget vote and spend the next few weeks revising the budget proposal before it is sent to the Boston City Council for consideration.

Mr. Mehta echoed Mr. Cardet-Hernandez's comments.

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Mr. Tran disagreed with Mr. Cardet-Hernandez and encouraged the Committee to move forward with the budget vote.

Mr. O'Neill expressed support for the budget proposal, which he described as transitional. He said that he has received positive feedback about the budget for school leaders.

Ms. Robinson said that while she shares some of the concerns raised by Committee members, she supports the budget proposal and the Superintendent. She suggested that the Committee establish a budget task force. She noted that the City Charter calls for the School Committee to vote on the budget on the fourth Wednesday of March.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez, Dr. Alkins, and Mr. Mehta questioned the potential impact if the Committee did not vote on the budget this evening or if it voted to reject the proposal. Legal Advisor Lisa Maki stated that the School Committee is required under the City's Charter to take a definitive action on the proposed budget recommended by the superintendent. She said the Charter does not contain any language indicating that if the School Committee were to reject the budget, it would still go to the City Council. She said that she would need to further research the implications of a no vote from the Committee. Mr. O'Neill noted that Ms. Maki's guidance differs from a previous legal interpretation that was provided to the Committee, adding that he respects the current guidance. He spoke about the complexities of potentially presenting an alternative budget to the City Council in short order and the potential disruption to schools that have planned their budgets on assumptions that were presented to them last December.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Committee approved the Superintendent's FY24 general fund budget recommendation totaling \$1,445,729,446. Dr. Alkins and Mr. Cardet-Hernandez voted no. All other members voted yes.

Dr. Alkins asked about best practices and lessons learned related to school mergers. The Superintendent spoke about the work of the newly formed Capital Planning Office and the Green New Deal and the importance of engaging a broad range of stakeholders in strategic facilities planning.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked about the district's commitment to the Shaw/Taylor proposal. The Superintendent said that the district is committed to revisiting projects that have not been funded through the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). She expressed confidence in the strength of the Shaw/Taylor application, noting that fewer BPS projects are actively being funded by MSBA at this time.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the 2023 Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Core Projects Statements of Interest Submission for the P.A. Shaw and Charles H. Taylor schools.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Committee approved a Yellow Bus Transportation Contract with Transdev from 2023-2028. Ms. Polanco Garcia abstained. All other members voted yes.



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## REPORTS

***Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreements: Boston School Police Superior Officers Federation and the Boston School Committee, 2020-2021 and 2021-2024; and Lunch Hour Monitors Association and the Boston School Committee, 2020-2023*** - Labor Relations Director Jeremiah Hasson presented highlights of the Committee's tentative collective bargaining agreements with Boston School Police Superior Officers Federation and the Lunch Hour Monitors Association.

Successor collective bargaining agreement with the Boston School Police Superior Officers Federation Contract 1 Highlights:

Duration: July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 (wages only-retroactive)

Wages: FY21: 2%

Successor collective bargaining agreement with the Boston School Police Superior Officers Federation Contract 2 Highlights:

Duration: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024

Wages:

- FY22: 2.5%, plus a one-time lump sum payment of \$1,000
- FY23: 2.5%
- FY24: 2.5%
- Increased CPR Certification stipends from \$600 per year to \$750

Language Changes:

- Clarified and codified a shared definition of employee uniforms
- Updated holiday language adding Juneteenth, changing Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day, and making religious observance days more inclusive of different forms of religion
- Revised Military and Parental Leave language to be consistent with the City of Boston policies

Successor collective bargaining agreement with the Boston Public Schools Lunch Hour Monitors, AFSCME, Council 93 Highlights:

Duration: September 1, 2020 – August 31, 2023 (wages only-retroactive)

Wages:

- FY21: 2%
- FY22: 2.5%, plus a one-time lump sum payment of \$1,000
- FY23: 2%

The Committee is scheduled to vote on the tentative collective bargaining agreements on April 12, 2023.

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***Chronic Absenteeism and District Improvement Strategies*** - The Superintendent made introductory remarks acknowledging the graduation and dropout data and their connection to the crucial work that BPS is doing to address chronic absenteeism. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) publicly released 2022 graduation and dropout rates earlier this month. Due to the cancellation of MCAS testing in the spring of 2020 as a result of COVID, most graduates in the 2022 graduation cohort did not receive their competency determination through MCAS testing only. They were instead certified for graduation through the modified competency determination process. As a result, Boston experienced a 2.2 percentage point increase in the four-year cohort graduation rate, from 78.8% for the 2021 graduation cohort to 81.0% for the 2022 graduation cohort. All student groups and 17 schools experienced a significant increase in the graduation rate in 2022.

Unfortunately, the district along with others across the state and nation continued to struggle with student engagement in the 2021-22 school and the annual dropout rate in BPS increased by 1.7 percentage points, from 2.0% to 3.7%. This increase was seen in all student groups, with the exception of students who identify as multi-race, non-Latinx. The increased dropout rate was most greatly experienced by our English Learner students, who had a dropout rate of 7.1%, which represented about 226 students.

As the district continues to implement increased controls on withdrawal documentation, we should expect to see an increase in the dropout rate and a decrease in the graduation rate until the systems are fully functioning and our re-engagement and support efforts have taken hold. These include the following:

- Change in Re-Engagement Center practice focusing more on visiting our larger high schools to meet students at their home school to start the referral process.
- First round of that in the fall yielded 41 new referrals to alternative schools (in addition to students who were referred and placed in our typical process)
- Another round is underway now
- Expansion of Alternative Education seats and new career training programming in Alternative Education schools to engage students

BPS is currently addressing this with a concerted effort of student support services, partners and constant communication.

Brian Marques, Senior Director of Opportunity Youth, and Apryl Clarkson, Director of Research, Office of Data and Accountability, presented an update on chronic absenteeism and district improvement strategies. Reducing chronic absenteeism is essential to ensuring that every student in BPS is able to learn, grow, and thrive. As the district continues to recover from the peak of the pandemic, focus is being placed on reestablishing the strength of school communities, while developing a renewed sense of belonging across all BPS students and families. Through a variety of strategic initiatives, BPS is providing schools with the tools, resources, and support structures that model a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) as the conduit for improved attendance, engagement, and intervention practices.

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Mr. Marques and Ms. Clarkson provided a comprehensive overview of district attendance data and improvement initiatives, particularly as it relates to evidence-based strategies to reduce chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism is defined as students who missed 10% or more school days for any given time period, including both excused and unexcused absences. While chronic absenteeism rates within BPS remain higher than the state, increased rates since 2020 are consistent nationwide. Compared to this time last year, chronic absenteeism rates have improved across the majority of schools and the district overall. Chronic absenteeism rates in SY22-23 are higher for transformation schools compared to the district overall. Among racial/ethnic groups, Latinx and Native students have the highest rates of chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism rates are highest for our oldest and youngest students. Chronic absenteeism rates are highest for economically disadvantaged students and students with IEPs.

### Improving School Attendance - Guiding Principles

- School Attendance Structure
  - Establishing effective school attendance teams
  - Building strong school-based prevention and intervention strategies by tier
  - Understanding the tiered systems that impact attendance beyond traditional interventions (Ex: culture and climate, health and wellbeing, attendance awareness)
- Importance of consistent attendance outreach and intervention practices
  - Relationship mapping - focus on student/family sense of belonging
  - Consistent follow-up creates a level of engagement and accountability (“nudge”)
- Quality School Plan (QSP) Implementation
  - Developing an action plan to achieve the school’s strategic vision

The 9 regional teams have an average of 15 schools they support. The teams work collaboratively to support, remove barriers, and build capacity of school leaders and their teams. A supervisor of attendance is being added to each region to support, elevate and monitor school based attendance systems and structures to ensure they are meeting the needs of students.

- School Superintendent
- Operational Leader
- Equity Specialists
- District Social Worker
- Special Education Assistant Director
- Human Capital Liaison
- Equitable Literacy Coach
- Accelerated Improvement & Inquiry Manager
- Budget Liaison
- Supervisor of Attendance
- Multilingual Compliance and Academic Supports

All students at or below 80% attendance (YTD) have a Tier 3 Plan in the Panorama Student Success Platform. At a baseline: any student with 80% or below attendance should have an intensive, collaborative plan with ongoing monitoring. The emphasis is quality over quantity.

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Consider plan updatedness, staff collaboration and how best to support your students. Support should be provided to all students who struggle with attendance, we suggest limiting plan creation to students that need a high touch, team based approach. Consider school capacity for ongoing work with Panorama. Any case filed in Truancy Court must have a detailed attendance success plan in Panorama for that student.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked if BPS is surveying students to better understand the root causes of chronic absenteeism. Mr. Marques explained that the district takes an organic approach through ongoing dialogues with students such as Attendance Forums and working with the Boston Student Advisory Council. The Superintendent said that the district must find more flexible solutions for multilingual learners.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez expressed concern about the data on chronic absenteeism for students aged 16 plus and requested recent school climate survey data. Ms. Clarkson said that last year's climate survey is available online at <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/survey>. BPS will launch its spring survey next month.

Mr. Mehta asked how the district intervenes when there are signs of chronic absenteeism. Mr. Marques said that staff use the Panorama platform to engage students and families early and often. Student Success Teams work collaboratively to address root causes, provide tiered supports and help students making up credits.

Ms. Polanco Garcia spoke about the importance of addressing root causes and communicating with families. Mr. Marques said that the BPS views truancy court as a last resort.

Mr. O'Neill spoke about the impact of chronic absenteeism on student outcomes. He praised the work of the Re-Engagement Center. He said it is critical to understand root causes and find solutions. He emphasized the importance of monitoring data and building relationships. Mr. Marques highlighted the Tobin Student Ambassador program as an exemplar. Chief of Student Support Jillian Kelton said that the core of the programming is relational, adding that she recently hired Corey McCarthy to serve as Assistant Superintendent of Student Development and Advancement. He will develop a peer mediation program and create opportunities for students to engage in meaningful relationships with adults.

Ms. Robinson spoke about the importance of parent engagement from a young age. The Superintendent agreed, saying that social workers are critical to educating parents about the importance of attendance and its relation to student outcomes.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS**

None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

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None.

**ADJOURN**

***Approved*** - At approximately 10:27 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn to the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan  
Executive Secretary