

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

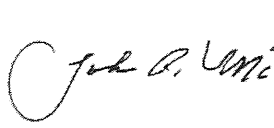


BSC 16JUL'14 PM 5:02

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairperson and Members
Boston School Committee

FROM: John P. McDonough
Interim Superintendent 

DATE: July 16, 2014

SUBJECT: Horace Mann In-District Charter Application

This evening, we will begin a discussion on our proposal to submit a Horace Mann in-district charter application in partnership with the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School/Boston Plan for Excellence to serve the students currently attending the Dearborn starting in the 2015-16 school year.

Our goal is to ensure that we have no more Level 5 schools in the City of Boston. To accomplish this we are leveraging a portfolio of intervention strategies, including increasing the district's internal capacity to intervene in underperforming schools, as well as establishing external partnerships to increase access to opportunities and achievement for students.

We have a sense of urgency for the success of the students at the Dearborn and are looking to both short and long term strategies on behalf of the Dearborn students. As a Level 4 school entering its fifth year of turnaround status, we are concerned that the school is not demonstrating sufficient academic improvement. By expanding our existing and successful, partnership with Dudley, and harnessing the expertise in the BPS, we have an opportunity to build a K-12 STEM pathway for students in Roxbury.

Last week, we shared with you that we appointed Mweusi Willingham as the acting Headmaster of the Dearborn next year. He will replace Jose Duarte, who is joining us at central office. Mr. Willingham is the former Headmaster of the BPS Engineering School and current district STEM Director.

As you know, the Dearborn will be in a temporary location at the Burke for the next three years as construction on the new facility gets underway this fall. Our in-district charter application would not change the planned grade span or academic focus of the Dearborn and the current construction plans will remain the same as the project the MSBA Board of Directors has already approved. We have informed the MSBA of our proposal.

We are working with the school community and community partners on this proposal. We have also established a community meeting on the evening of August 19 hosted by the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization at Roxbury Presbyterian Church.

As part of the Horace Mann application process, Dudley would submit a prospectus to DESE by its deadline of July 24. A full prospectus will be forthcoming. We respectfully request your consideration of a vote on the prospectus at a September meeting. Upon your approval, a final application would be submitted to DESE by November 5, 2014. If approved by the School Committee and DESE, the in-district charter would go into effect for 2015-16.

Jesse Solomon, Executive Director of the Boston Plan for Excellence, will be at tonight's meeting to discuss preliminary planning with you.