



Equity Impact Statement for School Committee Proposals and Presentations

Title: Exam Schools Admissions Policy Recommendation

Date: July 14, 2021

Was the [Racial Equity Planning Tool](#) used? Yes No

If yes, insert date(s) of REPT meetings and link to completed REPT here: _____

Did a member of the Division of Equity, Strategy and Opportunity Gaps review this statement? Yes No

BPS Racial Equity Planning Tool Sections	Summary/Rationale
<p>1. Proposal/Presentation & Impact <i>What are the proposal's/effort's desired outcomes, including in eliminating disparities? Who led this work/planning, and do they reflect BPS students' and families' group identities (key groups include individuals who are Black, Latinx, Asian, indigenous, immigrant, multilingual, and have Special Education experience)?</i></p>	<p>The Exam Schools Admissions Policy Recommendation is intended to create an admissions process for Boston's three exam schools that will support student enrollment such that rigor is maintained and all three student bodies better reflect the racial, socioeconomic, and geographic diversity of all students (K-12) in the city of Boston.</p> <p>An initial set of recommendations was developed by the Boston School Committee's Exam Schools Admissions Task Force, and presented to the School Committee on June 30, 2021 for consideration. Task Force membership is 23% Asian, 31% Black, 15% Latinx and 31% white. It includes individuals who work with and educate students with disabilities and English learners, and bring that expertise to the Task Force's work. The task force also had two student representatives and 4 individuals are current BPS parents.</p> <p>The proposed policy was informed by the work of the Task Force as well as public feedback to the interim admissions policy and during the listening sessions held by the Task Force and the School Committee. The proposal seeks to center public voice while putting equity at the center.</p>
<p>2. Alignment with the Strategic Plan <i>How does the proposal/effort align with the district's strategic plan?</i></p>	<p>This proposal will advance Strategic Plan priority 1.1 (<i>Ensure that BPS policies, plans, and budgets advance the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Policy so that our schools are equitably funded to provide robust academic programming and social-emotional supports, giving every child what they need.</i>), as it addresses entrance to the district's highest performing schools. An improved admissions policy will allow for more equitable access for students by increasing geographic, programmatic, socioeconomic and racial representation.</p>
<p>3. Analysis of Data <i>What data was analyzed? Was it disaggregated by race and other key groups? What did it show regarding disparities?</i></p>	<p>The Exam Schools Admissions Task Force reviewed data on the results of the implementation of the interim admissions policy approved in October 2020 for the SY21-22 admissions cycle. This data was disaggregated by economic, disability, and English learner status; race; and sending school type.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Socioeconomic Status: The percentage of invitations sent to economically disadvantaged students increased from 33% to 48% overall. ● Students Experiencing Homelessness: Students experiencing homelessness and students in the care of DCF also received more invitations, increasing from 29 invites last year to 73 this year. ● Race: The percentage of Black and Latinx students receiving an invitation increased between SY20-21 and SY21-22 by 6 and 4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> percentage points, respectively. • Sending School Type: Students from BPS schools make up 75% of invitations, which is an increase from 65% last year. Students from charter, private, parochial, and METCO schools comprise 25% of invitations. • English Learners and Students with Disabilities: Students who are English learners and students in special education programs also received more invitations than in previous years. Students who are English learners received 109 invitations, up from 41 last year. Students in special education programs received 66 invitations this year, up from 34 last year. • Zip Code: In some zip codes, there was little to no change in the number of invitations received this year. However, zip codes with the lowest median family income (with children under 18) received more invitations than last year, including zip codes in Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan. <p>The Task Force was also provided with previous reports on disparities in exam school admissions and research related to selective school admissions. Additionally, the Task Force reviewed simulations that projected the outcomes of various admissions options under consideration. These simulations included data by socioeconomic status, zip code and race.</p> <p>Modeled after the Chicago Public Schools’ selective admissions process, the Task Force reviewed options for admissions based on socioeconomic tiers. Tiers are groupings of census tracts, which are smaller geographic areas than zip codes. Each of Boston’s approximately 170 census tracts is assigned a tier designation based on specific socioeconomic factors using data from the American Community Survey. The simulations were shared and presented to the Task Force.</p> <p>The Task Force also reviewed admissions policies in other school districts, and considered a number of potential criteria, including course grades, assessments, essays, educator recommendation, student portfolios, and other qualitative factors.</p>
<p>4. Stakeholder Engagement <i>Who was engaged (quantity, key groups, and roles) and how, and what did that yield? What did students/families most impacted by this proposal/effort say?</i></p>	<p>Stakeholder engagement has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meetings (February to June 2021): 24 task force meetings and 5 public listening sessions, including a student-led session. Attendance ranged from 40 to 126 per meeting (average 62). All meetings included a public comment section. • Presentations to School Committee: The Task Force made a presentation on initial options on 6/16, and a final recommendation on 6/30. • Accessibility: All meetings were hosted on Zoom and simultaneously interpreted in 10 languages: Spanish, Cabo Verdean, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Arabic, Somali, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Cantonese, and American Sign Language. All materials are translated and posted on the BPS website. • Equity Roundtable: An update was presented at the Community Equity Roundtable on June 11. • Expert Presentations: The public meetings included

	<p>presentations by 6 experts regarding best practices, how other cities have approached admissions, and important factors for consideration (see PowerPoint appendix).</p> <p>Themes heard from stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students expressed that the district should look beyond the numbers, and apply a more holistic approach to admissions. • Parent feedback has been mixed. Some support the measures taken in the interim policy. Others believe there needs to be a continued focus on grades and tests as the sole criteria. • Some stakeholders were concerned that the interim policy using zip codes may have negatively impacted access for lower income residents.
<p>5. Racial Equity Strategies <i>How does this proposal/effort mitigate disparities and increase racial and other equity? What are possible unintended consequences? What complementary strategies will further advance equity?</i></p>	<p>The recommended admissions policy allocates 100% of invitations to exam schools using straight rank within socioeconomic tiers. This strategy helps to ensure geographic, socioeconomic and racial diversity. Additionally, students may qualify for additional points on their composite score (ranging from 1-100) if they meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students experiencing homelessness, in the care of the Department of Children and Families, or living in Boston Housing Authority housing will receive 15 additional points. • Students attending a school that has 40% or more economically disadvantaged students will receive 10 additional points. <p>BPS students will continue to be able to take the required test during the school day, as was initiated in the fall of 2019.</p> <p>The three exam school leaders will offer differentiated opportunities to support incoming students.</p>
<p>6 Budget & Implementation <i>What are the budget impacts? How will implementation ensure all objectives, particularly equity-related objectives, are met? What are the group identities of the implementation team, and will they bring an equity lens?</i></p>	<p>Additional staff support may be needed in the first years of a new admissions policy to ensure effective implementation.</p> <p>The recommended programming under racial equity strategies section above will also require budgetary investments to implement.</p>
<p>7. Accountability & Communication <i>How will impacts be assessed, documented and communicated to stakeholders? Who will be responsible?</i></p>	<p>The proposed policy includes an annual report to the School Committee by district staff, as well as a full policy review every five years. Once a new policy has been approved by the Boston School Committee, extensive community engagement will be needed to communicate the new admissions process to all stakeholders.</p>