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**TO:** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
**FROM:** EILEEN NASH, DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING  
**SUBJECT:** INCLUSION TASK FORCE: RECOMMENDATIONS  
**DATE:** JANUARY 14, 2015  
**CC:** JOHN P. MCDONOUGH, INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

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It is with pleasure that I submit this memo to the School Committee summarizing the Office of Special Education and Student Services (OSESS) participation on the Inclusion Task Force and our recommendations for the continuation of this important work to improve equity and access to high quality inclusive opportunities for all our City's children.

In June, 2013 the School Committee released the BPS report *"Increasing Inclusive Practices in the Boston Public Schools"* and committed to a five-year plan to increase the amount of inclusive opportunities available for students and families in our schools. And in this short time, we have made significant strides in increasing the amount of inclusive opportunities available as illustrated in the data presentation you will see tonight.

The work of the Inclusion Task Force is well-timed and bolsters the department's efforts to increase inclusive options and practices. Inclusion is not an educational setting, and is instead a fundamental mindset of how we educate *all* children. Both the Task Force and the department recognizes that in order for inclusion to be successful, we must ensure high quality inclusive options by partnering closely with our colleagues in Academics to provide training and support for our schools and educators in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), work collaboratively with related service providers and other school-based staff to create learning communities and student centered supports, and provide families and students with a range of appropriate services.

To measure the quality of the district's inclusive options, the Task Force has aligned their recommendations for ensuring quality inclusive options with the School Quality Working Group's (SQWG) Quality Framework. The Inclusion Task Force has worked on a set of outcomes and sample indicators (submitted in a separate document for School Committee review) that map back to the SQWG framework, focusing specifically on students with disabilities. The Task Force recommends these outcomes/indicators are adopted as a supplementary report for assessing the quality of inclusive opportunities in Boston schools, and included as part of a school quality assessment for every school.

There are challenges to measuring quality for inclusive options. We recognize that some of the measures may not yet exist. However, students with disabilities are an important population and it is the Task Force's charge to ensure quality inclusion in the district and our department's charge to ensure that we provide the programs for all our students. With this goal in mind, the Task Force recognizes that work remains to be done. The department has consulted with Kamal Chavda from the Office of Data and Accountability, and we have determined that the District will need approximately 12 months to identify, develop and test outcomes and indicators, and to create a supplementary report for each school.

The department supports the Inclusion Task Force's recommendation of next steps. These recommendations will move the district towards closing the achievement gap and provide high standards for the department, ensuring that all children have access to high quality inclusive options and rigorous, differentiated instruction. The district will continue implementation of the five year Inclusion Plan, and if approved by the School Committee, will begin work on a supplementary report that measures quality inclusion for students in every school.

I am honored to be part of the Inclusion Task Force and am grateful to its members for their hard work over the past two years, and especially grateful to Bill Henderson, Co-Chair and Michael Loconto, School Committee Liaison, for their leadership. Our students will benefit from your wisdom. And I look forward to reporting back to the School Committee and to our parents, families, and our community about our progress in expanding inclusion for all our students in this city.

