



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

October 26, 2016

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on October 26, 2016 at 6 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, School Committee chamber, Roxbury, Massachusetts. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael D. O'Neill; Vice-Chair Dr. Hardin Coleman; Michael Loconto; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Jeri Robinson; Regina Robinson; Dr. Miren Uriarte; and student representative Keondre McClay.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

School Redesign Grant – Cohort IV: Bridge Grant - \$228,000

Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers Chapter 74 Application: Required Charter Amendments

Office of Equity Update

Office of Engagement Update

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. O'Neill led the pledge of allegiance and called the meeting to order.

CITATIONS

The Superintendent joined Committee members in presenting citations to three Boston Public Schools (BPS) employees who were recently awarded the 2016 Henry L. Shattuck Public Service Award:

- Martha Boiselle, teacher, Brighton High School

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- Alicia Carey, teacher, Perry K-8 School
- Ted Loska, teacher and swim instructor, Hennigan K-8 School

MEETING MINUTES

The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the October 5, 2016 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The Superintendent led a moment of silence for two BPS students, one from Boston Community Leadership Academy, and one from Greater Egleston High School, who passed away in unrelated incidents in the past two weeks.

**Prepared for delivery.*

Yesterday, I was joined by a host of thought leaders in education, policy, and finance to discuss the release of the long-term financial planning report, which was called: 10 Big Ideas to Unlock Resources in Boston Public Schools. This report was not a set of recommendations, but rather a call-to-action for the community to come together to discuss these really large and complex concepts that could potentially unlock more than \$100 million in annual savings to reinvest in our classrooms and address rising costs.

The ideas presented in the report were developed by an advisory committee of key stakeholders over the course of the last year. We want nothing more than this process to provide transparency, accountability, and efficiency to the BPS long-term financial planning process. Continuing to do right by our students requires that we tackle the hard questions and begin to make harder choices that provide fiscal strength for the future of BPS. It requires that we deeply understand the causes for our fiscal challenges, which by the way, are serious but still places us in a better financial situation than most large urban districts across the country.

I would like to thank Laura Perille of EdVestors for hosting the breakfast and panel, and I would like to thank all of the members of the advisory committee for taking on this really important work. I would like to acknowledge the members of this committee:

- Maria Dominguez Gray, BPS parent and Executive Director of the Phillips Brooks House Association
- Rahn Dorsey, Chief of Education for the City of Boston
- Erika Giampietro, Special Assistant to the Superintendent of Boston Public Schools
- Katie Hammer, City of Boston Budget Director
- Carolyn Kain, Chair of the Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council
- Eleanor Laurans, Chief Financial Officer of Boston Public Schools
- John McDonough, retired Interim Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer of Boston Public Schools
- Michael O'Neill, Chair of the Boston School Committee

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- Richard Stutman, President of the Boston Teachers Union
- Will Thomas, Headmaster of Charlestown High School
- Sam Tyler, President of the Boston Municipal Research Bureau

The ideas generated by this group in this report are a starting point for a critical community discussion to develop a long-term sustainable financial plan together as a team. We've got a docket of engagement opportunities set up, and you can find them on our website: www.bostonpublicschools.org/financial-plan. The BPS team will provide an interim update to the School Committee on what we're learning from these community conversations on February 1st, which is the start of the FY18 budget planning process. These are not easy or straightforward topics. We'll continue discussing them for months, and maybe years, to come. We are committing to getting this right and we will be guided by our values of equity, coherence and innovation every step of the way in doing that, in addition to being guided by community input.

Adam Crellin-Sazama, a Boston Latin School student, is creating a better future for the planet and inspiring his fellow teenagers to make a difference. He created a movement called Youth United for Animals and the Planet and advocates on the important role zoos play in animal conservation. While volunteering at the zoo, he cares for animals and educates visitors on conservation and climate change issues. His nonprofit of choice is Zoo New England.

Michael R. Bloomberg, the three-term mayor of New York and billionaire philanthropist, donated \$50 million to the Museum of Science - the largest in its 186-year history. The money will be used to support and rename the museum's education center after his parents, William and Charlotte Bloomberg. In addition, the gift will go toward the education center's computer and food-science programs. I am certain that many of our BPS students will benefit, and so we are thankful to Michael Bloomberg for that extremely generous contribution.

The Phineas Bates Elementary School in Roslindale is the winner of this year's \$100,000 Thomas W. Payzant School on the Move Prize. Finalist schools Joseph P. Manning Elementary of Jamaica Plain and UP Academy Boston of South Boston each received \$10,000 prizes. Now in its 11th year, the School on the Move Prize was created by nonprofit EdVestors to recognize rapidly improving schools that have made exemplary progress in advancing the academic achievement of all students. The prize spotlights the daunting, yet less publicized, achievements of these and other Boston Public Schools making significant strides in improving educational outcomes for students.

VH1, Charlie Puth, and Ernie Boch, Jr., visited the Josiah Quincy Upper School (JQUS) to officially present the keyboards and piano that were donated to the music department. The featured performances by JQUS students and Charlie Puth, in addition to speeches by VH1 and Ernie Boch, Jr. The music department has grown tremendously over the past four years and students have participated in the all-Eastern Massachusetts honor band, New England Conservatory programs, Berklee College of Music All-Star Ensembles, and high school music programs, which makes this a tremendous growth opportunity for Boston Public Schools.

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The GE Foundation launched the GE Brilliant Career Lab, a first-of-its-kind interactive mobile technology lab designed to prepare students for innovative digital industrial jobs of the future. The Brilliant Career Lab focuses on enhancing access to skills training in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) through hands on experiences and mentoring, as well as a website that offers access to similar experiences and career information. We had a kick-off at Excel High School with the Mayor, School Committee Chairman O'Neill and Ann Klee, President of the GE Foundation.

Continuing its efforts to drive STEM education in Boston and other cities, GE Foundation recently hosted more than 120 STEM educators from throughout the Northeast to discuss preparing today's students for the STEM jobs of the future. Designed to provide educators with tools and resources for STEM, computer science, and college and career readiness, the summit brought together world-class education experts and leaders. The partnership between Boston Public Schools and the GE Foundation is rooted in collaboration, where BPS' strategic vision of equity, coherence, and innovation across the district can be achieved for all students. BPS is able to expand our reach and impact because of this new alliance, and we look forward to achieving great things with GE for the children of Boston.

The BPS Athletic Department hosted Boston Latin Academy at White Stadium for their match against Everett. They wore pink to show support and raise awareness for those battling breast cancer. They were able to raise \$2,000 for the American Cancer Society through their Coaches vs. Cancer program.

Students from West Roxbury Academy and Charlestown High School were able to visit the Menino Playground at Spaulding Rehab as a result of a grant from Liberty Mutual. Thank you, Liberty Mutual!

Students at the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers took Mayor Walsh on a tour of their school site, which services 9th and 10th graders in Brigham Circle. Students also sat with the mayor to share their views on what would help support their learning. Many students attending EMK are on a pathway to STEM careers.

Tim Green, a former NFL defensive end and linebacker that spent his entire 8-year career with the Atlanta Falcons, participated in a "Play 60/ Read 20" event at the Joyce Kilmer K-8 School in West Roxbury. Upon retiring from football, Green became a lawyer and a best-selling author. He has written a series of novels for young readers with a sports-theme and has been touring the country to speak to students about the importance of education and character, in addition to the importance of reading.

This week, the Murphy School and Leahy-Holloran Community Center celebrated with Mayor Walsh its new, \$695,000 playground. This renovation of the play space at the Richard J. Murphy K-8 School provides upgrades to an existing play area. The scope of work includes installation of handicap accessible play equipment, fitness stations, and a synthetic turf running field. This project will provide an inclusive play area that will serve the needs of the Murphy School's diverse student population.

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Students of the Charles Sumner Elementary School in Roslindale can begin using their playground that had been destroyed by an arson fire last spring. Thanks to donations from community members, local businesses and City Councilors, a temporary playground structure from PlayCubes will be used while the school's playground undergoes a comprehensive redesign and rebuild.

The Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building was deemed as a winner in this year's Boston Preservation Alliance Preservation Achievement contest. The Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building was competing with 10 other diverse infrastructure projects representing a range of exciting contributions to Boston's architectural environment.

This weekend, we will host here at the Bruce C. Bolling Building our first ever open house for Build BPS Open House on Saturday, October 29th and Sunday, October 30th. This is an exciting time in the history of Boston Public Schools. As many of you know, Build BPS is a ten year educational and facilities master plan that provides a strategic framework for facilities investments, as well as curricular and instructional innovations that are aligned with the district's educational vision. Through an interactive exhibition hosted by staff and teachers, BPS will showcase how its projects and initiatives are working to solve persistent issues within our school system and seek community input. In addition to panels, exhibits, and round-table discussions, there will be food trucks, chess and math tournaments, interactive exhibits created by Lego, kids fitness innovators from Reimagine Play, and digital literacy games presented by the Emerson Engagement Lab. We will provide play areas for all ages, Read Boston will have a reading corner, and teens can meet with Teens in Print and members of the BSAC (Boston Student Advisory Council). It's from 9am-5pm on both Saturday and Sunday.

As the School Committee requested, we have reopened the community survey for BuildBPS in order to generate additional responses from a wide cross-section of the school district. The community can access that link at www.bostonpublicschools.org/buildbps. The survey has been shortened significantly and should take respondents only about 5 minutes to complete. It is also now formatted for mobile devices, too. English and Spanish versions are already posted on the BuildBPS website, and other languages will be posted in the coming days. The closing date for this round of the survey is Wednesday, November 30. Everyone who participates will be entered into a drawing to win a Nook electronic reader.

Today, we had hoped to present the demographics report, however, we want to ensure that we provide the School Committee and community with a report that we feel is thorough and speaks to the specific needs of our Boston neighborhoods and its residents. We do not feel as though it is there, currently. We anticipate that by the November 2nd School Committee meeting, we will be able to share.

The Office of the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps will begin a speaker series focused on issues pertinent to and pressing for "urban education" and the sound instruction of African-American and Latino students. The series will kick-off with Dr. Steve Suitts, author of *Hugo Black of Alabama* which earned him the "Georgia Author of the Year" for biography award- the

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founding director of the Alabama Civil Liberties Union and Vice President of the Southern Education Foundation for nearly 20 years. Dr. Suitts is among the premier thinkers in the country on poverty's impact on students' academics performances as well as the practice and policy shifts necessary to build equitable schools for all.

Other speakers will include Tim Wise, world renowned anti-racism activist and writer, Dr. Joy DeGruy, author of the groundbreaking classic Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome, and Dr. Linda Tropp, a nationally renowned researcher on Implicit Bias. Other additions to the roster of speakers will be announced soon. The OAG Speakers Series will serve as professional development opportunities for Boston Public Schools' staff as well as serve as open-dialogue and/or information sessions for parents, families and other key stakeholders from the Boston-area. Our goal is to have members of the community involved in shaping our direction and mission to sustain an equitable district. The first event is at the Jeremiah Burke High School at 6:00pm on November 3, 2016. Please join us!

Mr. O'Neill said that BPS is considered a national leader among urban school districts. He thanked the Council of Great City Schools, of which BPS is a proud and active member, for its valuable support.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila extended her condolences to the families and school communities of the students who passed away, noting that one was a member of Sociedad Latina. She suggested allowing students to take the engagement survey on their phones during class.

Dr. Uriarte raised questions about the "10 big ideas" of the Long-term Financial Plan and the School Committee's role, saying that the Committee has not endorsed the ideas. Mr. O'Neill and the Superintendent explained that the ideas presented are only ideas, not formal recommendations, and that this is the start of a community-wide conversation. Mr. O'Neill reminded the Committee that only the School Committee can set the budget and policy for the district and that any formal recommendations would have to be approved by the Committee. The Committee will receive a formal presentation on the Long-term Financial Plan at its November 2 meeting.

Dean Coleman said that cost savings are critical and he appreciates the district's efforts to make the most of its current resources while identifying new sources of revenue. He also expressed concerned about the language used in the Long-term Financial Plan regarding wages and benefits.

Ms. Regina Robinson thanked BPS students for supporting Breast Cancer Awareness and noted that October is also Down Syndrome Awareness Month. She thanked athletes who serve as role models for young people.

The School Committee approved the Superintendent's Report by unanimous consent.

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GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Boston City Councilor Annissa Essaibi George testified regarding high school start times, Ballot Question 2, student residency and Extended Learning Time.

The follow people testified regarding Brighton High School's recent Level 4 designation by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

- Brighton High School Student Leadership Team led by Hebo Moallim.
- Karen Aylward, teacher, Brighton High School
- Martha Boisselle, teacher, Brighton High School
- Ashot Gheridian, teacher, Brighton High School

The follow people testified regarding Excel High School's recent Level 4 designation by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

- Rajeeve Martyn, teacher, Excel High School
- Julie Fouhy, teacher, Excel High School
- Ian Herrick, teacher, Excel High School
- Wendy Lam, teacher, Excel High School
- Gina Nota, teacher, Excel High School
- Jennifer Garay, teacher, Excel High School

Deirdre Lydon, parent, Perry K-8 School, proposed changes to the home-based student assignment plan.

Shellina Semexant, parent, Haley School, testified regarding special education services.

Peggy Wiesenberg, Access to Justice Fellow, testified regarding the public engagement phase of the Long-term Financial Plan.

ACTION ITEMS

Liza Veto, director of Turnaround, explained how the proposed School Redesign grant will support Brighton and Excel high school, which are both newly designated Level 4 schools. The grant funds the convening of local stakeholder groups and jump start activities to support school turnaround. The Superintendent will present Turnaround plans for Excel and Brighton high schools to the School Committee for input.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila requested data on the distribution of English Language Learners (ELL) and special education students across schools. Mr. O'Neill requested that the Superintendent present a report on Level 4 schools at the November 16th Committee meeting which includes the Superintendent's thought process for deciding the type of approach: transformation, turnaround,

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restart, or consolidate/close. Dr. Uriarte requested data about the ELL population at Brighton and Excel in recent years. Mr. O'Neill asked the ELL Task Force to also examine the issue.

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent a School Redesign – Cohort IV: Bridge grant in the amount of \$228,000.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a charter amendment for the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers in support of the school's Chapter 74 Application.

REPORTS

Office of Equity Update – Becky Shuster, assistant superintendent of the Office of Equity, provided an overview of her work to ensure that BPS is an educational and working environment unimpeded by bias or discrimination and where all people are welcomed and included. The primary work of the Office of Equity is to (1) partner with school and central office leaders to respond to reports of bias-based conduct; (2) provide disability and religious accommodations to employees and students; (3) ensure every key decision made by school and central office leaders is considered through a lens of equity; (4) inform students, parents, and employees of their rights and responsibilities to prevent and address bias. Ms. Shuster has updated and streamlined the district's Equity circulars, including a new circular on transgender and gender non-conforming students which was recognized as a national model by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The Office of Equity's current focus is working with other BPS departments to develop protocols for responding to reports of bias-based conduct.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila encouraged the district to looking at equity issues that may not be related to bias such as library resources and college fairs.

Committee members asked questions about family and student engagement, the Student Rights App, and interpretation and translation, all of which were answered by Ms. Shuster.

The Superintendent announced that going forward, he will accompany each School Committee policy proposal with a policy statement, equity statement, and fiscal statement.

Office of Engagement Update – Monica Roberts, assistant superintendent of the Office of Engagement (OOE), and her team presented an update. Bright spots include Parent University, Countdown to Kindergarten, partnering with the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC), and the launch of several school capacity building initiatives. OOE is also playing a major role in the implementation and monitoring of the School Quality Framework and the Build BPS Master Facilities Plan, in addition to holding monthly town halls. Ms. Roberts said the biggest challenge is measuring the office's work.

Committee members commended the Engagement team's efforts, calling it critical to boosting student achievement and closing opportunity and engagement gaps. Members asked questions about home visits, resources, capacity building, and accountability, all of which were answered

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by the presenters and Superintendent. Dr. Uriarte expressed concern that only 27 percent of BPS schools are fully functioning in terms of having the five core elements of engagement, which is considered the baseline expectations for school. She urged the district to be more aggressive in its outreach to ELL families and community organizations.

Ms. Regina asked that the next OOE presentation to the Committee include a deeper examination into engagement.

Mr. O'Neill congratulated Eric Gordon, chief executive officer of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, who was recently named Urban Educator of the Year by the Council of Great City Schools.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Megan Wolf, member, Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), testified regarding the Long-term Financial Plan.

John Mudd, advocate, testified regarding the Office of Equity Update.

Gina Nota, teacher, Excel High School, testified regarding the baseline for determining Level 4 status.

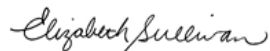
NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

At approximately 10:31p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary