



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

November 15, 2017

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on November 15, 2017 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 Hardin Coleman; Michael Loconto; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Jeri Robinson; and Regina Robinson.

School Committee Members Absent: Dr. Miren Uriarte; and student representative Keondré McClay.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Grants for Approval Totaling \$516,773:

Amount	FY	Grant Name	Status	Sites
\$140,000	2018	BPS Teaching Fellowship	New	Districtwide
\$2,951	2017-2018	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Increase	Districtwide
\$150,000	2018	Playball! Foundation- Boston, Middle School Athletics	New	~20 sites districtwide
\$10,000	2018	Teacher Feedback Based on Classroom Videos	New	Lyon, Eliot, Kennedy, Sumner
\$196,552	2017-2018	Title I	Increase	Districtwide
\$17,270	2017-2018	Title II-A – Improving Educator Quality	Increase	Districtwide

Adjusting School Start Times Power Point and Equity Impact Statement

Opportunity Index Update Power Point and Equity Impact Statement

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CALL TO ORDER

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

He then recognized and congratulated Boston City Councilor-Elect Kim Janey, who formerly served as a senior project coordinator for Massachusetts Advocates for Children.

MEETING MINUTES

The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the November 1, 2017 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

**As prepared for delivery.*

Good evening, everybody. We have a lot of important updates I'd like to share with you this evening, but first, here are some bright spots.

On November 4th, BPS held its annual College and Career Fair at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center in Roxbury. Hundreds of middle- and high-school students attended. We had representatives from more than 100 different colleges and universities who spoke with students and families about admissions criteria, financial aid, scholarships, and other important factors that students should know about getting into competitive institutions. It's so important to reinforce a college-going culture. This is a valuable event for students. I would like to thank the BPS Office of Secondary Schools and the Guidance Department for all of their hard work to make this event possible.

Last Wednesday, I had the privilege of honoring 10 students at the Lyndon K-8 School in West Roxbury, whose artwork is now on the cover of the 2017-18 Guide to BPS for Students and Families. For the first time in many years, the BPS Communications Office asked schools to submit student artwork for the cover. The students in art teacher Amy Sullen's class provided pencil portraits that they drew of other students at the school. Some drew self-portraits as well. This was a great way to highlight student creativity, and affirm the students' diversity and sense of self. They are all very talented; and they all did an amazing job.

Another bright spot comes from Food and Nutrition Services. They would like me to announce that the "Hub and Spoke" program in East Boston is now up and running five days a week. Thanks to a partnership with the Shah Family Foundation, the Bradley School, P.J. Kennedy School, and East Boston Early Education Center are able to prepare and serve fresh, delicious food on-site. The student feedback has been tremendous. Along with fresh salads, we are now serving dishes like chicken-and-bean burritos, pasta with choice of sauce and pick-your-own-toppings pizza.

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There are a lot of logistics involved in this; and we are taking a close look at these three schools to see how well this program will work and if it can be replicated. I'd like to thank the Food and Nutrition staff and the Shah Family Foundation for working closely together to serve the healthiest, freshest food we possibly can to our young people.

Today the Massachusetts House and Senate passed the LOOK bilingual education bill, which allows local schools to tailor bilingual lesson plans for students who are English language learners.

Mr. O'Neill congratulated the district for its expansion of the hub and spoke food services program. He noted that food is prepped at East Boston High School and cooked on-site at other schools in East Boston.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The following people testified in favor of expanding the Joseph P. Manning Elementary School beyond its current K-5 structure:

- Ethan d'Ablemont-Burnes, principal, Manning Elementary School
- Portia Charles, parent, Manning Elementary School
- Malikka Williams, parent, Manning Elementary School
- Victor Joyner, teacher, Manning Elementary School
- Amanda Lapham, parent, Manning Elementary School

Debbie O'Shea, teacher, Gardner Pilot Academy, testified in favor of maintaining the school's 8:30 a.m. school start time and moving up the start time at the Harvard-Kent School, where she is a parent.

Deborah Putnam, parent, Boston Latin Academy, and Boston Chapter Leader of Start School Later, testified in favor of later school start times for middle and high school students.

Bilal Wahid, alumnus, Brighton High School, testified in favor of restoring Ellie May O'Toole's position as a science teacher at Brighton High School.

Faridat Dangbe, alumna, Brighton High School, testified in favor of restoring Ellie May O'Toole's position as a science teacher at Brighton High School.

Chris Leonard, teacher, O'Donnell Elementary School, testified in favor of an earlier start time for the school.

Ruth Ayuso, student, Fenway High School, and member, Sociedad Latina, testified in favor of personalized learning and the expansion of dual enrollment and internship opportunities.

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John Mudd, advocate, testified in favor of testing the Opportunity Index and advocated for an analysis of the home base student assignment system.

Eugene Roundtree, headmaster, Snowden International School at Copley, testified in favor of testing the Opportunity Index.

Marc Draisen, parent, Boston Latin Academy, and director, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, testified in favor of later school start times for high schools and advocated for urged the district to apply the Opportunity Index.

ACTION ITEM

Mr. Loconto asked clarifying questions about the about Play Ball! grant, which were answered by BPS Athletics Director Avery Esdaile. He also requested that the district present a report on BPS athletics at a future School Committee meeting.

Ms. Jeri Robinson asked clarifying questions about the eligibility requirement for the BPS Teaching Fellowship grant, which were answered by Ceronne Daly, managing director of recruitment, cultivation, and diversity programs for the Office of Human Capital.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila strongly encouraged the district to raise its target for hiring Latino teachers through the Teaching Fellowship grant. The Superintendent said he will address her concerns in writing.

Ms. Regina Robinson expressed support for the Teaching Fellowship grant.

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent grants for approval totaling \$516,773.

REPORTS

Adjusting School Start Times – Chief of Operations John Hanlon presented a policy proposal on school day start-and end-times. For more than a year, district leaders have been closely examining the effects of start-and end-times at all schools across the district as part of an effort to build equity and coherence in order to produce the best possible outcomes for families and staff. Mr. Hanlon explained that the Superintendent is not asking the Committee to consider start-and end-times for specific schools; but rather, to consider a policy that would prioritize certain factors for how BPS structures its start- and end-times districtwide moving forward.

Research shows that middle and high school students benefit from later school start-times. The Superintendent proposed a policy that would increase the number of secondary school students starting after 8 a.m., increase the number of elementary school students dismissing before 4 p.m., and assign schools with higher concentrations of medically fragile students, or students with autism or emotional impairment, to bell times reflective of the needs of their student body, all while maximizing reinvestments in schools. If approved by the Committee, the start-time

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changes would go into effect in School Year 2018-19. The policy will be reviewed every five years.

The district has gathered significant feedback from the community over the last year, including a community survey that gathered 10,000 responses, stakeholder groups, and a highly-attended community meeting earlier this month. An online survey will be available for the next 10 days. Those results will be shared with the Committee.

Mr. Hanlon thanked Will Eger, strategic projects manager in the BPS Office of Finance, Dimitris Bertsimas, co-director of the Operations Research Center and the director of the Master of Business Analytics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and MIT PhD students Arthur Delarue and Sebastien Martin for providing technical support. He also thanked Mr. Loconto and Ms. Regina Robinson who served on the district working group.

Mr. Loconto praised the policy proposal, saying it reflects the needs of students and research.

Ms. Regina Robinson thanked the district for including students and parents in the engagement process.

Mr. O'Neill noted that BPS is currently in violation of its current policy to rotate school start-times every five years.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila said she would like the district to receive feedback from more stakeholders and encouraged more families to take the survey. She advised the district to consider how external partners may be impacted by the proposed changes, noting that external partners were not represented on the district's working group.

Ms. Jeri Robinson said that rethinking school start-times should be a call for the district to rethink how it structures the school day, as many families need child care coverage from morning until evening. She added that she supports minimizing transitions for children.

Dr. Coleman expressed his support for the proposal because it promises to optimize district performance. He said that if the policy is approved, he would like the Committee to receive an annual report on the district's progress, tracking savings and showing where it is reallocated.

Mr. O'Neill thanked MIT for providing pro bono services and invited Dr. Bertsimas to comment. Dr. Bertsimas described the proposal as the highest level quality of work with impressive results. Mr. O'Neill also asked about the potential impact on after school athletics as well as charter schools. BPS Athletics Director Avery Esdaile explained that his department is working with City officials to will extend BPS permits to fields and minimize the impact on student athletics. Mr. Hanlon said that some charter schools might see changes to their start times through this process and clarified that charter schools do not receive preference when it comes to school start-times.

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Mr. O'Neill questioned the proposed policy language calling for the district to "increase the number" of students starting later or dismissing earlier, describing it as very open ended. He suggested that the district consider using more explicit language. He also thanked the operations team for their engagement efforts, noting that the online survey had a relatively high response rate compared to other district surveys. He echoed the concerns of other members about the potential impact on before and after school programs and partnerships. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the policy proposal on December 6th.

Opportunity Index Update – Assistant Superintendent of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Dr. Colin Rose presented an update to his November 1st Opportunity Index presentation to the School Committee. He was joined by Assistant Superintendent of Equity Becky Shuster and Executive Director of Data and Accountability Nicole Wagner Lam.

The Opportunity Index is an innovative new tool that integrates data from students' home neighborhoods, along with individual-and family-level data, as a means for measuring opportunity gaps throughout the district. Progressive and equity-driven, the Index could be used to make decisions on matters such as resource allocation, program evaluation, and other prospective and retrospective assessments. It's also a dynamic tool that can be updated regularly to ensure that the most predictive factors and recent information are used while making important decisions. The Opportunity Index is the collective work of the BPS Office of Finance, Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps, and the Boston Area Research Initiative (BARI).

At the School Committee's November 1st meeting, Committee members praised the innovative tool and provided constructive feedback. Dr. Uriarte and Ms. Oliver-Dávila raised concerns about messaging an unintended consequences. During tonight's update, the presenters affirmed the district's commitment to using the Opportunity Index as a data-driven, strategic approach to closing achievement and opportunity gaps. They also clarified that Opportunity Index data will be used in the aggregate; individual student scores will not be shared with any audience.

Committee members asked questions about how the Opportunity Index will be evaluated, for effectiveness and equity, all of which were answered by the presenters.

Ms. Jeri Robinson asked for a discussion to determine the foundation of resources that all schools need to be effective. The Superintendent responded that he is committed to having that conversation, adding that the budget equity working group is examining this issue.

Mr. Loconto requested an example of the application of the Index. The Superintendent said he will present the Committee with more information applying the Opportunity Index to BPS partnership funding.

Dr. Coleman described the opportunity index as a tool that support's the district's existing policy to eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps policy. He questioned whether or not the Committee should vote on the Index itself as a policy.

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Mr. O'Neill said he is intrigued by the Opportunity Index but wants to see a more robust public engagement process. Noting that the School Quality Framework had a multi-year roll out, Mr. O'Neill encouraged district leaders to reflect upon the lessons learned from the implementation of the School Quality Framework and Weighted Student Funding (WSF).

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Peggy Wiesenberg advocated for expanding the Mattapan Early Elementary School starting in September 2018.

Laryssa Doherty, principal, Edwards Middle School, encouraged the district to apply the Opportunity Index as a strategy to increase equity. She also read a statement from Megan Webb, principal of Orchard Gardens K-8 School, who also expressed support for the application of the Opportunity Index.

Matt Cregor, education project director, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice, testified in support of the Opportunity Index.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

At approximately 10:42 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary