



## **OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**February 3, 2016**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on February 3, 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](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org), email [feedback@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:feedback@bostonpublicschools.org) or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

### **ATTENDANCE**

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O’Neill; Vice-Chair Dr. Hardin Coleman; Michael Loonto; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Jeri Robinson; Regina Robinson; Dr. Miren Uriarte; and student representative Savina Tapia.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

### **DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Grant for Approval: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Special Education Enhancement (Fund Code 245-B) - \$10,000

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School: China, April 14-23, 2016

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School: Ireland, April 14-22, 2016

Code of Student Conduct 2016: Summary of Changes

Memo from Superintendent to Boston School Committee re: MSBA Statements of Interest for the Accelerated Repair Program

FY17 Budget Proposal

Superintendent’s Evaluation Process Update

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## **CALL TO ORDER**

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

## **STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

First graders from the Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School recited a rendition of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. The students were accompanied by Principal Megan Webb and led by teacher Darlene Dottin, who is retiring after 30 years of service with the district.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The Superintendent thanked Boston Latin School students Kylie Webster-Cazeau and Meggie Noel, who shared some profound remarks at the January 27 School Committee meeting. An investigation is underway by the BPS Office of Equity. The Superintendent will publicly report the findings, as appropriate, when the investigation is complete. In the meantime, the Superintendent is putting stronger systems in place and building the capacity of school staff and students to have important and courageous conversations and guarantee that every BLS student feels safe at school so they can focus on learning.

Recent events have heightened the urgency of ensuring that all students in BPS have emotionally safe environments so they can best be able to learn. School leaders, along with central office leaders, acknowledge that we must accelerate this conversation. Tomorrow morning, school leaders throughout Boston Public Schools will gather along with central office leaders for a professional development summer focused on the topics of diversity, equity and inclusion. The Superintendent shared his own personal and professional identity tree during the August Leadership Institute. Throughout the year, principals and central office leaders have shared their identity trees. Tomorrow, school leaders and central office leaders will offer individual remarks, and participate in a town hall format and small group discussions. The Kingston Bay Group, which specializes in coaching and consulting with educational organizations around diversity and inclusion, leadership development, and community building, will help facilitate the session.

The Superintendent led a moment of silence in memory of Sgt. Willie Matthews, a 27-year veteran of the Boston School Police, who recently passed away. He was assigned to a Citywide Mobile Unit, where he was able to support many schools within the City. He earned numerous awards and commendations recognizing his outstanding contributions to the City of Boston School Department. Sgt. Matthews was highly respected and admired for his uncompromising love and dedication to his fellow members of the Boston School Police. He will be greatly missed.

As of February 2, the World Health Organization has declared the Zika virus a global health emergency. Central office staff members are aware of BPS global trips that are being planned to affected areas. Based on the potential risk of devastating consequences and the concern about transmission of the disease, district leaders are consulting with schools to cancel trips to affected

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areas in order to safeguard students and the greater Boston community. The district will also continue to closely monitor the situation in countries in the region that are not yet affected.

The Superintendent congratulated Brighton High School, which just announced that Daly Field will be home to the school's athletic teams starting in August. There is currently a \$10 million renovation of the field underway after a decade of advocacy, and a public-private partnership between Simmons College and Brighton High School. The Superintendent thanked the Friends of Daly Field for making this inspiring project a reality.

Boston Day and Evening Academy (BDEA) students will host the first of their monthly youth poetry slams on February 4 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Haley House Cafe in Roxbury. The students will also perform on February 8 at 7 p.m. in the August Wilson Monologue Project's regional competition. BDEA has participated in the regional competition for the past four years, and has represented New England in the finals for two of the past three years. The Superintendent congratulated the students for finding their voice and wished them luck in the competitions.

As part of the 2016 School Solutions Seed Fund Learning Grant, EdVestors recently awarded \$10,000 each to eight school-based programs to pilot innovative practices. The programs include social emotional learning and support; inclusion practices; trauma-informed classrooms; paths to post-secondary success; and new approaches to teaching and learning. The schools that received the awards are Dorchester Academy, Bates Elementary, Haley K-8, Mattahunt Elementary, Margarita Muniz Academy, English High School, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, Murphy K-8, and the Quincy Elementary. The Superintendent thanked EdVestors for once again providing generous support to Boston Public Schools.

The Superintendent congratulated Curley K-8 School Principal Katie Grassa for being honored by the Federation for Children with Special Needs with a Community Partnership Award for her work as a school administrator. The Federation assists families and providers who support children and youth to address their educational, medical, and social needs. The Community Partnership Awards are an important part of the Federation's mentoring program, and Ms. Grassa will be honored at its annual conference at the World Trade Center in Boston on March 5.

The first BPS English Language Learners (ELL) Advisory Committee Conference was successfully held on January 30. More than 90 parents had the opportunity to discuss issues that impact ELL students in their native languages. The Superintendent thanked the OELL Parent Team for organizing the event, as well as the many families who attended.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila requested quarterly updates on the district's diversity efforts in light of the situation at Boston Latin School, which the Superintendent agreed to provide.

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

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**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following people testified regarding the Superintendent's preliminary FY17 budget proposal:

Meg Laughnane, teacher, Young Achievers Math and Science K-8 School

Julia Xu and Barbara Peterlin, co-chairs, Boston Latin School Site Council

Glenola Mitchell, board chair and founder, Young Achievers Math and Science K-8 School

Fania Joseph, student, Boston Community Leadership Academy (BCLA)

Maya Ochea-Blanco, student, BCLA

Sarah Hussein, student, BCLA

Taina Gonzales, student, BCLA

Aliyah Jackson, student, BCLA

Bilal Lafta, student, BCLA

Mancela Aguilar Monroy, mentor, BCLA

Erik Lazo, student, Snowden International High School at Copley

Tommy Hayes, teacher, Charlestown High School

Jennifer Potter, parent and governing board member, Haley Pilot School

Celestine Payne, parent, Diploma Plus program

Sung-Joon Pai, director, Diploma Plus program

Christopher Hoeh, parent, Boston Latin School

Grace Evans, teacher, BCLA

Susan Naimark, former School Committee member

Nicole Pelletier, teacher, BCLA

Keith Magni, teacher, BCLA, and BPS parent

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Luis Aponte, alumnus, Diploma Plus program

Paul Holmes, alumnus, Diploma Plus program

Nora Lacasse, teacher, BCLA

Carolyn Kain, chair, Boston Special Education Parents Advisory Council

Brittany Wheaton Calloway, director, leadership program, BCLA

Maria Christina Blanco, parent, BCLA

## **ACTION ITEMS**

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Special Education Enhancement (Fund Code: 245-B) grant in the amount of \$10,000.

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international travel request for students and chaperones from Boston Latin School to travel to China from April 14-23, 2016.

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international travel request for students and chaperones from Boston Latin School to travel to Ireland from April 12-22, 2016.

Ms. Jeri Robinson referenced a WBUR report about young children being expelled from school at high rates. The Superintendent said that UP Academy Holland is immediately ending their practice of expelling kindergarteners. Committee members requested data on suspensions and expulsions by grade level and school type. Mr. O’Neill said that the Committee would add the topic as an agenda item at upcoming meeting. He also asked the Code of Conduct Advisory Committee to reconvene and examine suspensions and social media behavior. Administrator of Operations Sam Depina clarified that the Code of Conduct supersedes school-based rules.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved updates to the Code of Conduct.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a statement of interest for Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Accelerated Repair Program for the West Roxbury Education Complex.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a statement of interest for Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Accelerated Repair Program for the Jackson/Mann K-8 School.

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**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a statement of interest for Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Accelerated Repair Program for the John W. McCormack Middle School.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a statement of interest for Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Accelerated Repair Program for the Paul A. Dever Elementary School.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a statement of interest for Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Accelerated Repair Program for Boston Latin School.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a statement of interest for Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Accelerated Repair Program for the William E. Channing Elementary School.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a statement of interest for Massachusetts School Building Authority’s Accelerated Repair Program for the James F. Condon Elementary School.

## REPORTS

**Superintendent’s Preliminary FY17 Budget Proposal** – Director of School Finance School Eleanor Laurans and Deputy Executive Director Nathan Kuder presented the Superintendent’s preliminary Fiscal Year 2017 budget recommendation. Ms. Laurans explained that declining state and federal revenue, together with rising costs and strategic investments have the district facing a deficit of approximately \$38 million. The proposed budget recommends reductions in central office, transportation, school services budgeted centrally and schools. Two significant changes to school budgets in FY17 are changes in high school staffing assumptions and changes in special education staffing assumptions that result in changes in the weighted student funding formula. Ms. Laurans noted the decrease in funding for the Office of the Achievement Gap, explaining that funding for academic response teams in FY17 has shifted from the achievement gap office budget to the turnaround office budget.

All FY17 materials are available online at [www.bostonpublicschools.org/budget](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/budget). Comments and questions related to the budget process can be emailed to [budget@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:budget@bostonpublicschools.org)

Mr. Loconto requested information about cost reductions that the district considered but chose not to pursue and why.

Ms. Jeri Robison requested an analysis of the impact of FY16 budget cuts. She also requested feedback on changes to the student assignment process, and asked about the impact of k-1 expansion on community-based organizations and families in need of surround care.

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Dr. Uriarte encouraged the district to demonstrate its commitment to closing the opportunity and achievement gaps in the budget proposal, adding that she does not support making policy through the budget process.

Mr. O'Neill said that earlier that week he testified against proposed fare increases at an MBTA hearing. He stated that the proposed 23 percent increase in the costs of student T passes would cost the district an additional, \$1.3 million. He noted that the MBTA is required to do an equity analysis on the impact of proposed budget increases. He also thanked the Citywide Parent Council for voicing their opposition to the fare hike.

Ms. Tapia asked about the equitable distribution of new K-1 seats. A district analysis is underway.

Ms. Oliver-Davila expressed concern about funding for the Office of the Achievement Gap and the expansion of K-1 seats vs. cuts at the high school level. The Superintendent said high schools represent a large footprint of BPS, explaining that he made a decision not to consider school closures until the BPS facilities master planning process is complete in order to make more informed decisions.

Ms. Jeri Robinson expressed concern about high schools being at risk of losing accreditation.

Ms. Regina Robinson expressed concern that the district is proposing base-level funding to meet compliance, saying that students deserve excellence. She's also concerned about the impact of special education staffing reductions on the most vulnerable students.

Dr. Coleman encouraged the district to find creative ways to diversify its sources of income and called for reinventing the BPS development office to boost philanthropy. He also suggested making strategic investments in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

Mr. O'Neill summarized the discussion, saying that clearly all Committee members share concerns about the budget proposal. He expressed some hope that when there is more clarity about the amount of state funding coming to BPS, the City may be able to increase its allocation to the district.

***Update on Superintendent's Evaluation Process*** – Ms. Regina Robinson, who is managing the Superintendent's evaluation process along with Mr. O'Neill and Dr. Coleman, presented a brief update on the process to date. After receiving professional development training from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, the three members met with Superintendent Chang and Chief McCreary to identify specific indicators and elements in the Model Rubric that would be most applicable to evaluate during the 2015-2016 school year. They also determined that the evaluation cycle will run from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

In accordance with MASC guidance, the planning team narrowed the rubric to 10 indicators and 18 elements to discuss with Committee members at tonight's meeting. The 2015-2016 recommended list includes the following:

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1. Standard I: Instructional Leadership
  - a. Instruction
    - i. Instructional Practices
    - ii. Diverse Learners' Needs
  - b. Data Informed Decision Making
    - i. Knowledge and Use of Data
    - ii. School and District Goals
  
2. Standard II: Management and Operations
  - a. Environment
    - i. Plans, Procedures and Routines
    - ii. Student Safety, Health, Social and Emotional Needs
  - b. Scheduling and MIS
    - i. Time for Collaboration
  - c. Fiscal Systems
    - i. Fiscal Systems
  
3. Standard III: Family and Community Engagement
  - a. Engagement
    - i. Family Engagement
    - ii. Community and Business Engagement
  - b. Communication
    - i. Two-Way Communication
    - ii. Culturally Proficient Communication
  
4. Standard IV: Professional Culture
  - a. Commitment to High Standards
    - i. Commitment to High Standards
    - ii. Mission and Core Values
    - iii. Meetings
  - b. Continuous Learning
    - i. Continuous Learning of Staff
    - ii. Continuous Learning of Administrator
  - c. Shared Vision
    - i. Shared Vision Development

The Committee agreed that the standards and elements presented are acceptable. As a next step, the Committee and Superintendent will draft four specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals in the areas of Professional Practice, District Improvement, and Student Learning.



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**PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS**

The following people testified regarding the Superintendent's preliminary FY17 budget proposal:

Peggy Wiesenberg, former BPS parent

Karen Kast-McBride, BPS parent

Kenny Jervis, BPS parent and co-chair, Citywide Parents Council

John Mudd, advocate, asked how the achievement gap, early hiring and staff diversity will be incorporated into the superintendent's evaluation.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURN**

At approximately 10:30 p.m., the Committee unanimously approved a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary