



## **OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE FY19 BUDGET HEARING AND MEETING**

**March 14, 2018**

On March 14, 2018 at 5 p.m., the Boston School Committee held a Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 budget hearing, followed by a School Committee meeting at 6 p.m. Both events took place 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 Loconto; Vice Chairperson Hardin Coleman; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Michael O'Neill; Jeri Robinson; Regina Robinson; and Dr. Miren Uriarte.

School Committee Member Absent: Student representative Keondré McClay.

### **DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Agenda

Memo from Superintendent Chang to School Committee Members Re: FY19 Budget Vote dated March 14, 2018

Grants for Approval Totaling \$7,038:

Community Adult Learning Centers - Madison Park Adult Education Center- \$4,983

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education - Madison Park Adult Education Center - \$1,803

National Institute of Justice Comprehensive School Safety - 30 Sites districtwide- \$252

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School – China – April 11-21, 2018

International Travel Request: English High School – Greece – April 13-23, 2018

International Travel Request: New Mission High School – China – April 12-19, 2018

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International Travel Request: Snowden International School at Copley – Japan – April 11-22, 2018

Office of External Affairs In-Kind Donations – Total Estimated Value \$204,829:

Fidelity Investments - Framed Objects of Artwork - BPS Schools (TBD) - \$70,295

General Electric - Succulent terrariums - Boston Green Academy, Brighton HS, East Boston HS, and Roxbury Welcome Center - \$6,534.38

Reebok International Ltd. - MacBook Pros, Dell Computer Screens, Viewsonic com screens, Thunderbolt Displays with keyboards and mice - Excel High School - \$128,000

Draft Boston School Committee Resolution on School Safety

Update on Transdev Contract

Transdev Contract Extension Equity Impact Statement

Creating Safe, Healthy, and Welcoming Schools: Supporting the Whole Child through Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Wellness

Creating Safe, Healthy, and Welcoming Schools: Supporting the Whole Child through SEL and Wellness Equity Impact Statement

BPS Office of Social Emotional Learning & Wellness Menu of Supports

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Loconto called the FY 19 budget hearing to order.

BPS Chief Financial Officer Eleanor Laurans and Deputy CFO Nate Kuder presented a brief update on the Superintendent’s FY19 budget proposal. The Superintendent is proposing additional investments in English Learners, transition of partnership funding approach, social emotional learning and student wellbeing, allocation of soft landings for Level 3, 4, and 5 schools, changes to school budgets, and changes to central budgets, bringing the total general fund budget proposal to \$1,108,701,869.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following people offered public testimony on the Superintendent’s FY19 budget proposal:

- Boston City Councilor Kim Janey

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- Michael Paulemon, student, Boston Latin School, and member, Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC)
- Stanley Aneke, student, Boston Latin Academy, and member, BSAC
- Leanne Allen, BPS alumna
- Matt Hodge, parent, Winship Elementary School
- Maryann Aden, BPS alumna
- Sharon Thomas, student, Urban Science Academy
- Nyah Jacobs, student, Another Course to College
- Jonathan Haines, school nurse, re: staffing
- Brandy Fluker-Oakley, executive director, Educators for Excellence
- Matt Clark, teacher, West Roxbury Academy, and member, Educators for Excellence
- Katie Mallon, teacher, Tobin School, and member, Educators for Excellence
- Michael Heichman, educational advocate

### CALL TO ORDER

At 6 p.m. Chairperson Loconto led the pledge of allegiance, and opened the floor to questions from Committee members.

Ms. Regina Robinson requested a list of schools that do not have school psychologists. Ms. Laurans agreed to follow up.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila requested additional information about SEL staff through a resource map of schools, qualified student counselors, and bilingual staff. Khita Pottinger-Johnson, executive director of SEL instruction and Supports, agreed to follow up, noting that 75 BPS schools have three behavioral health touch points.

Dr. Uriarte requested the following data for FY18 and FY19 (proposed): the number of schools where Behavioral Health Services staff are present and available to all students, with a clear explanation of responsibilities, the number of middle and high schools with a guidance counselors, detailing the capacity and availability of services in multiple languages.

Mr. Kuder responded that there are 241 full time employees in SEL in FY18 and FY19. He agreed to follow up with additional information.

Ms. Jeri Robinson encouraged the district to reflect on SEL investments over time and take into consideration nationally recommended ratios.

Mr. O'Neill reiterated his previous request for an analysis of the impact of the Opportunity Index approach to partnership funding in East Boston.

Ms. Laurans closed by saying that all updated FY19 budget documents, including revised budget tables, will be publicly posted at [www.bostonpublicschools.org](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org) on March 21<sup>st</sup>, one week prior to the Committee' budget vote.

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At 6:35 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the budget hearing. Mr. Loconto immediately moved into the regular Committee meeting.

## MEETING MINUTES

*Approved* – The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the February 28, 2018 Committee meeting.

## SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

*\*As prepared for delivery.*

It’s certainly felt like we’ve been living in a snow globe here in Boston the last couple of weeks. I’d like to thank all of you who were able to shovel out and make it here this evening. Spring is right around the corner, and hopefully this was the last blast of snow we’ll have until next year. Fingers crossed.

I’d like to first and foremost thank all of the BPS Facilities employees who worked tirelessly to remove snow over the past two days — and during the past three nor’easters.

The employees in BPS Facilities Department — along with our colleagues from the Boston Public Works Department, Emergency Management Office, Police and Fire — have all done an amazing job monitoring the conditions, and keeping our sidewalks, stairways, and parking lots clear. Thank you all very much for everything that you do.

As you know, we cancelled school on Tuesday and Wednesday this week due to the snowstorm, pushing our last day of school to Wednesday, June 27. We have had five snow days so far this year. As I mentioned, we will keep our fingers crossed that this is all the snow we are going to get for the season. If we are to get any more snow days, we would have to look at a variety of options for making up that time.

Even though school was cancelled today, many of our students marched through the streets to the State House to advocate for changes to our nation’s gun laws. I joined the students this morning to support them. This is the way we should honor the victims of school shootings: By demanding change instead of merely offering thoughts and prayers.

As the days and weeks move on from the Parkland, Florida, shooting and the political rhetoric takes shape... it’s important that we keep the conversation focused on what this epidemic is all about: access to guns. We should be proud that we live in a state where we have some of the strictest gun laws in the country. But, as many of us know all too well, one gun death is one too many. There are too many loopholes in our nation’s gun laws. And, sadly, too few politicians have the courage to stand up for common sense measures... like raising the minimum age for purchase, expanding background checks, banning assault rifles, and closing the “gun show loophole.”

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Our students and teachers should *never* go to school and fear that a gunman is going to open fire inside a school building. Our teachers should be focused on teaching, and our students should be focused on learning. Let me make something absolutely clear: The idea of arming teachers to prevent gun violence is utterly illogical, and will reduce safety in our schools.

I would like to, again, publicly thank our students who so bravely marched to the State House today demanding change, and common-sense measures to keep students across America safe. It's humbling to see our very own students living out their democratic and civic values to advocate for what they believe in.

As I share our Bright Spots, let me begin by saying... that we are incredibly lucky to live in a city as vibrant as Boston. Last weekend, I was marveling at how much was happening in the BPS community — from sports to family engagement and the summer job fair. I shared some of these observations on Workplace over the weekend.

First, I want to give a shout-out to three student basketball teams that made it into the MIAA tournaments: Fenway girls (Div. 4), TechBoston boys (Div. 2), and Burke boys (Div. 3). I'd like to give a huge congratulations on your recent victories. We know that athletics is a clear path to leadership in college, career, and life. After beating New Mission last week, the Fenway girls are unfortunately out of the tournament after putting up a strong fight against Coyle & Cassidy (55-47 final score) on Monday at TD Garden; but the Burke and TechBoston are playing tonight (Burke playing Watertown; TechBoston playing North Andover), and we are all cheering them on. Best of luck to all of you!

Last Saturday, I was delighted to see a strong turnout at Parent University here at the Bolling Building. For those who don't know, Parent University is a way for parents to come in and learn all about what their children are doing in school, and how they can work with school teachers and staff toward successful outcomes. Family engagement is key to creating a common vision for our students' futures — and it was so wonderful to see so many parents working together with us at Parent University.

Also last Saturday, more than 1,000 students attended the Summer Jobs Fair, sponsored by the Boston Center for Youth and Families (BCYF), at the Reggie Lewis Center. It's crucial that we provide real-world opportunities so students can see the connection between what they're learning and how that translates into career opportunities. I'd like to thank all the students who attended, and all the employers who graciously worked with the City to provide opportunities for our young people.

On Saturday, March 5th, BPS held the 72nd annual Citywide Science Fair at Northeastern University. About 250 exhibits were displayed. The winners were announced in a ceremony the following Monday here in the School Committee Chambers; and they were from Boston Latin School, Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, McCormack Middle School, Jackson-Mann K-8 School, and Dearborn STEM Academy. Congratulations to all of those students.

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Last Friday, Boston Marathon legend Kathrine Switzer visited the Dever School. She spoke about the importance of athletes in making societal changes. Ms. Switzer was the first woman to gain a registration number for to run in the Boston Marathon in 1967. At the time, women were not allowed to participate; and Switzer used her initials in order to register. Switzer’s actions are now legendary. In an iconic photo, a male race official tries to forcefully remove Switzer from the race. I would like to thank Kathrine for helping our students understand the impact of female leaders. And, I would like to thank all of our schools that are hosting visits from notable women as part of Women’s History Month.

Ms. Regina Robinson said that she attended the recent BPS Parent University session, and applauded the Office of Engagement for putting together the impressive panel on anxiety and depression.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila thanked students who participated in today’s Day of Observance. She also said that she looks forward to participating in conversations about school autonomy as it relates to central office monitoring. Dr. Coleman echoed her statements.

#### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Laine Banks, parent, Higginson K-2 School, advocated for a school playground.

Adam Rudow, BPS school psychologist, testified in favor of increased staffing of school psychologists.

Jessica Chen, BPS school psychologist, testified in favor of increased staffing of school psychologists.

Anna Banerjea, BPS school psychologist, testified in favor of increased of school psychologists.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

Managing Director and Senior Advisor of External Affairs Dr. Makeeba McCreary explained the process by which the district will periodically ask the School Committee to formally approve in-kind donations.

Mr. O’Neill praised the depth and range of international travel requests before the Committee. Ms. Jeri Robinson requested a future report on students’ international travel experiences.

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$7,038.

**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 11-21, 2018.

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**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international travel request for students and chaperones from The English High School to travel to Greece from April 13-23, 2018.

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international travel request for students and chaperones from New Mission High School to travel to China from April 12-19, 2018.

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international travel request for students and chaperones from Snowden International School at Copley to travel to Japan from April 11-22, 2018.

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved in-kind donations through the Office of External Affairs with an estimated total value of \$204,829.

At Mr. Loconto’s invitation, Evelyn Reyes, a member of the Boston Student Advisory Council, read her testimony on gun violence that she had presented at a State House hearing earlier that day.

Committee members lauded Ms. Reyes and offered support for the resolution on school safety. Mr. O’Neill noted that the Council of Great City Schools is also considering a resolution on school safety. Ms. Oliver-Dávila emphasized the importance of school safety protocols and adequate staffing of qualified counselors. Ms. Regina Robinson spoke about her personal experience with a school shooting as a middle school student. Ms. Regina Robinson then called for a moment of silence for 17 seconds in remembrance of the 17 victims of the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School shooting.

Mr. Loconto thanked the Schott Foundation for supporting BSAC. He read the draft school safety resolution aloud.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a resolution on school safety.

## REPORTS

**Update on Transdev Contract** – BPS Chief of Operations John Hanlon presented the Superintendent’s recommendation to grant a one-year contract extension to BPS transportation provider Transdev. BPS has been in a five-year contract with Transdev, formerly known as Veolia, since July 2013. The contract comes with five one-year options for renewal. Mr. Hanlon said that a one-year renewal is the best option for the district at this time. He noted that Transdev has improved its on-time performance and is a cost-effective option.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila asked what kind of customer feedback the district has received about Transdev’s performance from families. Me. Hanlon stated that the BPS Transportation Hotline has seen a sharp decrease in concerns and complaints since the beginning of the school year. Ms. Oliver-Dávila requested additional data, which Mr. Hanlon agreed to provide.

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Mr. O'Neill recalled the challenges of putting the BPS transportation contract out to bid in the past. He encouraged the district to explore innovative alternatives to a third-party transportation provider, such as bringing the operation in-house, or providing transportation vouchers to private and charter schools students. Mr. Hanlon said that while the district is somewhat constrained by collective bargaining, some innovative approaches are still worth exploring.

A School Committee vote on the Transdev contract extension is scheduled for March 28, 2018.

***Creating Safe, Healthy, and Welcoming Schools: Supporting the Whole Child through Social Emotional Learning and Wellness*** – Assistant Superintendent of Social Emotional Learning and Wellness Amalio Nieves, Senior Executive Director Jill Carter, and Executive Director Khita Pottinger, presented a thorough overview of how social-emotional learning and wellness is integrated into the work BPS schools do every day.

The district's strategic plan prioritizes the need for rigorous, culturally and linguistically sustaining instruction that serves the development of the whole child. Established in 2015, the Office of Social Emotional Learning and Wellness (SELWell) leads the districts' efforts to address the needs of the whole child through prevention, intervention and intensive response.

SELWELL is made up of various departments that include: Health & Wellness, Behavioral Health, Guidance, Opportunity Youth, and Athletics. These departments collaborate together to work alongside schools to build the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). SELWell departments provide consultation, professional development and team supports that equip BPS educators with high-quality explicit social-emotional learning instruction, professional development and integrated social-emotional learning programs and practices that enable them to support our students in a wraparound approach, across the school day and into out-of-school time.

While a focus on social-emotional learning in the classroom is important, research underscores that the most effective social and emotional learning requires a strategic, systemic approach that involves everyone, from district and school leaders to community partners to family members, working together to ensure students receive the support they need.

Craig Martin, principal of the Perkins Elementary School in South Boston, spoke about his approach to SELWell, highlighting the school's focus on partnerships, professional development, and psychical education.

Dr. Uriarte expressed concern about the availability of SELWell resources at the school level. She requested an update on the implementation of the BPS Wellness Policy. She also requested a SELWell project plan. Mr. Loconto agreed and said that a more comprehensive SELWell presentation will be scheduled.



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Ms. Jeri Robinson asked what percentage of schools are accessing Tier 2 and Tier 3 SELWell services. District leaders agreed to follow up. The Superintendent stated that BPS has a high SPED population compared with other urban districts of similar size.

Mr. O'Neill requested data on the number of student-facing psychologists and social workers, as well as the number of students served and resources bring provided at the school level. He encouraged the district to survey school leaders on how to improve SELWell improve.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila asked questions about the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Model, which is currently being used at 60 schools. She encouraged the expansion of CBHM using an equity lens.

Ms. Regina Robinson asked Principal Martin questions about the types of support offered at the Perkins School and questioned whether adequate resources are available. The Superintendent said that adding more resources would require difficult tradeoffs and said that additional data is needed.

Dr. Coleman praised the aspirations of the complex SELWell model. He encouraged the SELWell team to identify leading and lagging indicators to determine success at every step. He also suggested setting clear standards district for accountability, and called for a citywide public health strategy.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS**

None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

#### **ADJOURN**

At approximately 9:48 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan  
Executive Secretary