



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BUDGET HEARING AND MEETING**

March 16, 2016

The Boston School Committee held a budget hearing and meeting on March 16, 2016 at 5 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 O’Neill; Vice-Chair Dr. Hardin Coleman; Michael Loconto; 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: Special Education Program Improvement Grant (Fund Code 274) - \$173,784.

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School - Canada, May 27-30, 2016

International Travel Request: The Muriel Snowden International School at Copley – France and Spain, April 13-23, 2016.

FY2016 Supplemental Appropriation Request: United Steelworkers of America, Local 8751 (School Bus Drivers) - \$2,783,841.

Letter from Early Education Center and Early Learning Center School Leaders to EEC and ELC Communities, dated March 16, 2016

FY17 Budget Proposal

Updating School Year 2017 and 2018 Calendars

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The English High School Chapter 74 Admissions Policy

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. O'Neill called the budget hearing to order.

FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET HEARING

Seventy-five people testified regarding the Superintendent's FY17 budget recommendation.

CALL TO ORDER

Following a brief recess, Mr. O'Neill led the pledge of allegiance and called the School Committee meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approved – The Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the February 24, 2016 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Over the past week, 7,885 assignments for the 2016-2017 school year were mailed to families of students entering pre-k, kindergarten and grades 6 and 9. Students who received assignments in round 1 will receive letters with transportation eligibility this week. Round 2, which is open now and will continue until April 15, is for students in all grades. This round has been extended because of additional changes to K1 and Advanced Work Class (AWC) offerings. Exam school admissions results have been posted online and letters will be sent out this week.

The Superintendent congratulated the New Mission High School boys basketball team for moving on to the State Championships this weekend. Last night, New Mission defeated Whitman-Hanson with a final score of 62-50 in a game at the TD Garden. New Mission will play Concord-Carlisle on Saturday in Springfield.

The Superintendent also praised the New Mission girls basketball team. They won the Division 4 Championship last Friday against Pope John (66-61 final score). They went on to play at the TD Garden this week as well, but unfortunately they lost to Cathedral 51-41.

This morning, the Superintendent presented the work of his first 100 days at an event hosted by The Boston Foundation. Michael O'Neill and Jeri Robinson attended. The event also featured a panel discussion by the Mayor's Education Chief Rahn Dorsey, Liliana Mickle of UMass Boston, former City Councilor John Connolly and BPS parent Beliza Moriarty and Manning Elementary School teacher Audrey Jackson, who is the 2016 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year. Ms. Jackson was recently appointed to serve on a prestigious federal committee that will draft

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regulations for the Every Student Succeeds Act, which was passed by Congress and replaces No Child Left Behind.

Hundreds of BPS students presented their original science projects at the annual Citywide Science Fair at Northeastern University on March 5th. The students represented more than 40 BPS middle and high schools. Many of the winners plan to participate in the Massachusetts State Science and Engineering Fair at MIT in May.

The Superintendent participated in ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Lego headquarters on Boylston Street. For the past 35 years, Lego Education has worked with educators to deliver playful learning experiences that make learning more fun across disciplines — from language arts to science and technology. The district looks forward to building a relationship with Lego and seeing what they have to offer in terms of building educational opportunities for our students.

The Superintendent congratulated Lindsa McIntyre, headmaster of the Jeremiah E. Burke High School, who was recently named as a winner of the EXTRAordinary Women of Boston Project, which is led by the Mayor's Office of Women's Advancement. The campaign highlights women who do extraordinary work within the Boston community. Hundreds of women were nominated for this campaign, and 31 were selected to be recognized each day of March, which is Women's History Month. Ms. McIntyre led the school out of Turnaround status in 2014 - a first in the state.

Seven BPS schools (Boston Community Leadership Academy, Chittick Elementary, Haley K-8, Perkins Elementary, Murphy K-8, Mather Elementary and Perry K-8) have received grants from the United States Tennis Association (USTA) to partner with Sportsmen's Tennis Club to offer tennis instruction on-site this year. The USTA is the national tennis organization with chapters in every region of the country. Sportsmen's is a tennis and enrichment center in Dorchester serving hundreds of kids.

Ms. Regina Robinson announced that her youngest son was accepted to the Roosevelt K-8 School. She partnered with Boston Partners in Education to serve as a Big Cheese Reader at the Hernandez K-8 School today where she received a book of student poetry entitled, *I'm a Flame You Can't Put Out*.

Dr. Uriarte thanked the Superintendent for holding multilingual town hall meetings.

Ms. Jeri Robinson thanked the Superintendent for his presentation to the Boston Foundation, which she said was well received. Mr. O'Neill echoed Ms. Robinson's comments.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

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ACTION ITEMS

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved a grant in the amount of \$173,784.

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 Canada from May 27-30, 2016.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international travel request for students and chaperones from The Muriel Snowden International School at Copley to travel to France and Spain from April 13-23, 2016.

Kim Rice, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, provided brief overview of an agreement between Transdev and United Steelworkers of America, Local 8751 (School Bus Drivers).

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$2,783,841 to cover the Fiscal Year 2016 cost of the collective bargaining agreement between Transdev and the United Steelworkers of America, Local 8751 (School Bus Drivers).

REPORTS

FY17 Budget Proposal Update – The Superintendent provided a brief synopsis of the FY2017 budget process to date. He expressed optimism that the district will receive additional state and federal funding. The Superintendent said that he is taking a calculated risk by adjusting his FY17 budget proposal, explaining that funds for schools now allows schools to hire staff early, a key priority for the district.

With the anticipated new revenue, the Superintendent prioritized additional funding for high schools who shouldered a disproportionate share of the originally proposed cuts. Even with this change, high schools are still experiencing the across the board changes in special education, as are all schools. In fact, even after these changes, high school spending next year will be slightly below this year due to enrollment trends, while spending in special education will be level.

The Superintendent is putting several investments on hold until June.

The Superintendent's original budget proposed a cut of \$1.4 million cut from Early Education Centers. EEC and ELC school leaders, working alongside the budget team, worked throughout the weekend and today to create a budget that would "maintain a level of programming to ensure that all students have care from the time that students are dropped off for early care, when buses arrive, until the end of the extended day, when buses leave for dismissal."

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Although some of the substance of the programming will be reduced, these reductions are being made equitably across the five EECs/ELCs and represent reductions that are similar to those in other BPS schools.

The Superintendent thanked students for their civic engagement throughout the budget process.

Executive Director of School Finance Eleanor Laurans and Deputy Executive Director Nathan Kuder then presented an update on the Superintendent's FY17 budget proposal. The following updated information is available at www.bostonpublicschools.org/budget:

- Account Summary and Details
- Program Summary and Details
- Department Summary and Details

The Superintendent's Long-term Financial Plan Advisory Committee is working to address underlying structural challenges and will make recommendations by this summer. Also, the BPS 10-Year Facilities Master Planning Process is studying the size of the BPS footprint, collecting and publishing data and will engage in a public dialogue before developing proposals for consideration by the Committee.

Mr. O'Neill requested that the Committee receive a detailed enrollment and budget comparison and that the information be posted on the BPS website for public review as soon as possible.

Mr. Loconto asked for clarification to the suggestion by some public speakers that funds restored to high schools are being made at the expense of elementary schools. The Superintendent said that the assertion is not true. The Superintendent went on to say that the restoration of the Diploma Plus program at Charlestown High School will be a school site decision. The cost of MBTA student pass will increase by \$630,000, about half of what was estimated. If the district receives additional state and federal funding, the Superintendent plans to first fund priorities that were put on hold. He also expressed optimism that charter reimbursement funding could improve.

Dr. Uriarte encouraged the district to put a framework in place to see what effective partnerships look like.

Ms. Oliver-Davila requested an audit of BPS partnerships, adding that not all partnerships cost money. The district is in the process of publishing online all of the partners that work with BPS schools. Mr. O'Neill noted that the BOKS program by Reebok is doing great work providing students with one hour of exercise. He added that there is a huge opportunity for the district to substantially increase private revenue.

Ms. Jeri Robinson asked about the district's process for opening new classrooms and expressed concern about impact of cuts to ELCs and EECs on the achievement gap. Mr. O'Neill asked the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force, which is co-chaired by Ms. Robinson, to examine the issue of potential inequity of services.

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Dr. Uriate requested information on how enrollment projections are made, saying that data must be clear and transparent data. The Superintendent agreed to follow up. Dr. Frances Esparza, Assistant Superintendent for the Office of English Language Learners, said that the district is examining coding to avoid opening more hybrid classes.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila called for more funding for the Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps. She also expressed concern about the impact of cuts to alternative high school programs. She requested data on budget reductions to each high school. The Superintendent noted that the district has allocated \$250,000 for the Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps.

Ms. Regina Robinson asked about funding for special education services and expressed concern about a possible reduction in paraprofessionals and parents who may consider private placement. The Superintendent said that the district is reforming how it does projections. Ms. Robinson said she's concerned that teaching candidates will be deterred by BPS finances and uncertainty around job stability.

Mr. O'Neill explained that the School Committee controls its expenses but not its revenue. The Committee is working with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees to examine the state's foundation budget. The Committee will also partner with the Boston Delegation to advocate for more state funding. He noted that the City's FY17 appropriation to BPS reflects that collective bargaining with the Boston Teachers Unions takes place this year, which will likely necessitate additional City funding.

Dr. Uriarte encouraged the School Committee to take a position on the raising of the state charter school cap.

Dr. Coleman asked about the drivers behind the expenses of various early learning models. Mr. Kuder explained that the bulk of costs stems from staffing and supports. Dr. Coleman said that the district needs a coherent plan for generating new sources of income.

Updating School Year 2017 and 2018 Calendars – Mr. O'Neill announced that, due to the lateness of the hour, the Committee would postpone the school calendar presentation until the next School Committee meeting.

The English High School Chapter 74 Admissions Policy - The English High School Headmaster Ligia Noriega-Murphy and Assistant Headmaster Lisa Martinez presented an admissions policy proposal that will only be utilized when enrollment capacity is reached. Ms. Noriega-Murphy noted that the policy has been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Dr. Coleman cautioned that admissions policies carry the risk of creating inequity. He encouraged the school administration to track data and create an equity report.

Mr. O'Neill asked the school leaders to work with the Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPac) to make the policy as least restrictive as possible.

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PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Kenny Jervis, co-chair, Citywide Parents Council, and BPS parent, asked about the distribution of a line-by-line budget proposal.

Karen Kast-McBride, BPS parent, testified regarding the Alliance for Inclusion and Prevention.

Keith Magni, teacher, Boston Community Leadership Academy, asked about funding for future collective bargaining and encouraged the Committee to vote no on the budget or pass a resolution against it.

John Mudd, advocate, requested a program budget narrative and called for greater district support for the Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Tapia invited the School Committee and Superintendent to “Take the Test” on March 30. The event, sponsored by the Boston Student Advisory Council, Youth On Board and Boston Youth Organizing Project, invites officials to answer PARCC and MCAS questions in an exam setting. Rahn Dorsey, the Mayor’s Chief of Education, plans to participate.

ADJORN

At approximately 11:55 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary