



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE RETREAT

March 31, 2018

The Boston School Committee held a retreat on March 31, 2018 at 9 a.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, room 6-65, 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 Loconto; Vice Chairperson Hardin Coleman; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Jeri Robinson; Regina Robinson; and Dr. Miren Uriarte.

School Committee Members Absent: Michael O'Neill; and student representative Keondré McClay.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

BPS Equity Impact Analysis Tool

Drivers of Inequity Scenario

The BPS Racial Equity Impact Tool: Why and How?

2018 Meeting Schedule and Draft Proposed Agenda Items

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Loconto welcomed Committee members and thanked Superintendent Chang and his team for participating in the Saturday retreat. The Superintendent was joined by Chief of Staff Rob Consalvo, Assistant Superintendent of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Dr. Colin Rose, and Assistant Superintendent of Equity Rebecca Shuster.

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REPORTS

Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices – Dr. Rose reviewed the district’s progress in building capacity around culturally and linguistically sustaining practices (CLSP) that recognize biases and foster positive student identity. CLSP is the district’s form of cultural proficiency with an emphasis on creating environments that helps sustain the cultural assets that students, families and communities bring to BPS. Professional development for leadership has rolled out across the district, centering on the awareness of bias and bias based practices. This foundational work with leadership then moved to schools and district offices. The BPS Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps also partners with Wheelock College and their Culture, Self and Teaching Course, to support multiple customized school-based staff PDs, and created a mini-grant program that allows schools to start or continue targeted initiatives around marginalized populations. This program has been able to support work ranging from race dialogues within school communities to culturally responsive curriculum development. Cross-departmental efforts have begun to align priority standards from the teacher and principal evaluation rubric to reflect CLSP.

Dr. Uriarte asked how CLSP practices are being implemented and evaluated at the school level. Dr. Rose explained that CSLP is being incorporated into Quality School Improvement Plans, as well as the BPS School Climate Survey. The Superintendent added that the district is monitoring implementation and using guardrails for schools.

Mr. Loconto noted that he has participated in the Citywide Race Dialogues, which is engaging local organizations, businesses, agencies and communities in a conversation about racial justice and equity across Boston community, with a focus on areas such as housing, education, and jobs. Mr. Loconto also suggested that the Committee and the district should look for ways to further collaborate with these Dialogues.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila advocated for more professional development for school leaders.

Dr. Rose said that he uses as a primer the book *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students* by Zaretta Hammond.

Ms. Shuster explained, as one example of recent use, that last year the district used a racial equity tool last to distribute 21st Century Learning Funds to schools for the procurement of new furniture.

Ms. Jeri Robinson encouraged the district to ensure that CLSP is being implemented at the early childhood level with families and partners.

The BPS Racial Equity Impact Tool: Why and How? – Assistant Superintendent of Equity Rebecca Shuster presented an overview of the BPS Racial Equity Impact Tool, which is used when making budget, policy, and program decisions. The BPS Equity tool is based on the work

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of the Center for Social Inclusion. She explained the importance using an equity lens when making decisions, and talked about the difference between equity and equality.

Ms. Shuster then asked the Committee to review and discuss the Drivers of Inequity Scenario. Members discussed the importance of collaboration across city agencies to increase equity for students and the role of the district to advocate for marginalized students. The Committee also discussed inviting external presenters to meetings and possibly holding working session to dive deeper into important issues.

Dr. Coleman suggested that the district implement a data dashboard to monitor its progress around improving racial equity. The Committee also discussed the importance of strengthening and broadening the district's family and student engagement strategies. Dr. Uriarte suggested that the Committee identify a time to discuss the Opportunity Index and its evaluation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peggy Wiesenber, advocate, thanked the Committee for holding the retreat and making it open to the public. She emphasized the importance of cross-collaboration among city departments/agencies. She suggested that the district examine the racial equity impact on displaced Mattahunt students, work to retain top talent, rotate School Committee meeting locations, considering funding and staffing the Citywide Parent Council, and examine residency enforcement.

2018 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA PLANNING

Following a brief recess, the Committee reconvened discuss meeting agenda topics for the remainder of the calendar year. Chairperson Loconto led the discussion, expressing his desire to create a transparent schedule to share with members and, eventually, the public at-large. Members discussed balancing recurring/annual updates with pressing topics

Several members expressed a desire to receive draft School Committee documents earlier. Members also discussed creating template for School Committee presentations that could include the following information:

- Topic
- Policy impact
- Relevant strategic goal
- Objective being met within strategic plan
- Content with disaggregated data
- Equity impact
- Engagement
- School Improvement Plans with update on leading and lagging indicators
- Recommended next steps
- Appendix

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They also discussed possibly asking the district to accompany power point presentations with a narrative, when appropriate, to set the context.

The Committee discussed way to improve communication, planning, and organization.

Some members expressed a desire for more thoughtful equity analysis and clear, disaggregated data.

Ms. Jeri Robinson suggested developing a process by which each Committee member would be serve as a point person for a group of schools as a way to liaise with different schools and develop connections. She also proposed that the Committee, on issues of great impact, consider implementing a practice in which the Committee receives a policy recommendation at one meeting, uses a second meeting for reflection and discussion after the districts runs a rubric, then votes on the policy at a third meeting.

Chairperson Loconto suggested holding coffee hours and/or listening sessions.

Members talked about the importance of receiving implementation updates on approved policies.

Noting that the discussion thus far had been fruitful, the Committee discussed the possibility of scheduling another retreat before the end of 2017-2018 school year.

Dr. Coleman suggested eliminating School Committee approvals on grants and international travel to carve out more time to receive and discuss reports.

Members offered suggestions for upcoming agenda topics, including an enrollment update, MCAS results, infrastructure, Dearborn STEM Academy, Office of Human Capital update, Mattapan Early Elementary School, low performing schools, family engagement, high school redesign, college and career readiness, alternative education, and Bo STEM.

Dr. Uriarte expressed a desire to hearing more feedback from stakeholders such as the Citywide Parents Council, teachers, and Boston Student Advisory Council.

Dr. Coleman suggested creating an ad hoc group to explore how the district can provide adequate supports for every school.

Chairperson Loconto said that he would like the Committee to consider whether or not to reconstitute the Inclusion Task Force, which is currently a district advisory group, as well as how to better support the Code of Conduct Advisory Committee. Citing the previous suggestion of Ms. Oliver-Davila, Mr. Loconto suggested further exploration of an equity training supported by the Panasonic Foundation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peggy Wiesenberg, advocate, offered several suggestions, including posting the equity tool on the BPS website, inviting external experts present to the Committee, post meeting materials

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Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building
Room 6-65

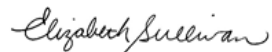
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online in advance, expanding translation and interpretation, creating subcommittees, and providing an update on the Boston Compact. She also offered support for advocacy by the Committee.

ADJOURN

At approximately 2:05 p.m., the Committee adjourned the retreat.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary