



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MA SCHOOL CHOICE HEARING AND MEETING

May 9, 2018

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on May 9, 2018 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 Loconto; Vice Chairperson Hardin Coleman; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Michael O’Neill; Jeri Robinson; Regina Robinson; Dr. Miren Uriarte; and student representative Keondré McClay.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

Superintendent’s Memo: School Choice: 2018-2019 School Year, dated May 4, 2018

Grants for Approval Totaling \$75,000:

- Innovation Schools Enhancement Grant – Muñiz Academy- \$30,000
- i3 Scale Up Grant – Edward M Kennedy, Henderson Upper, New Mission - \$45,000

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School - Montreal and Quebec, Canada, May 25-28, 2018

International Travel Request: Department of Global Education and TechBoston Academy - Ottawa, Canada, May 26- June 2, 2018

Dorchester Academy Update and Equity Impact Statement

BPS Performance Meter Update and Equity Impact Statement

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MA SCHOOL CHOICE PLAN HEARING: SCHOOL YEAR 2018-2019

There were no speakers for the hearing.

Approved – By roll call, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the Massachusetts School Choice Hearing.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Loconto led the pledge of allegiance and called the meeting to order.

MEETING MINUTES

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the April 25, 2018 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

**As prepared for delivery.*

Good evening, and happy Teacher Appreciation Week! It's a great time to reflect on all of the life-changing work our teachers, administrators, and school nurses do every day. Many of our school leaders have held small celebrations for their teachers and staff over the past few days, and some of them are sharing their photos on social media. Here are some teachers and paraprofessionals at the Baldwin Early Learning Pilot Academy in Brighton, as well as the Margarita Muniz Academy in Jamaica Plain. Thank you, to all of our teachers, for making life-lasting impacts on our students every single day.

Speaking of teachers, in the Boston Public Schools, we are always looking for different strategies to hire the most qualified, effective, and diverse teachers possible. That's why I am announcing that we have formed a program with City Year and UMass Boston called the TeachBoston/City Year Teacher Pathway, which focuses on BPS students who are considering becoming educators. The Teacher Pathway provides a clear path to BPS students who are enrolled in the BPS High School to Teacher Program, which exposes high schoolers to the field of education and gives them experience as tutors. Upon graduation from high school, the students will spend a year as a City Year Corps member before attending college. The Pathway will provide our students access to a low-cost undergraduate degree and a debt-free graduate education. It also allows BPS to recruit locally, regionally and nationally for recent college graduates who are interested in teaching as a City Year Corp member. The Pathway members who complete the program will be dual certified, experience a year of teaching in BPS schools with a highly qualified mentor teacher, and will earn a master's degree from UMass Boston.

As we continue to embrace culturally and linguistically sustaining practices in the classroom, we need educators in BPS who reflect the racial, cultural and linguistic identities of our students. Because there is a limited pool of diverse applicants in Massachusetts, the Pathway is another

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tool to increase the percentage of effective teachers of color into BPS. BPS employs just 6% of teachers in Massachusetts, yet we account for:

- 49% of the state's Black educators;
- 25% of the state's Latino educators;
- And, 25% of the state's Asian educators.

Overall, BPS has 38% educators of color, compared to 7% statewide. While BPS has worked diligently to maintain a considerably more diverse workforce compared to other districts, we know we still have much work to do. With the Pathway, our goal is to begin with a cohort of 15 scholars and have at least 60% of the cohort reflect the racial, cultural and linguistic diversity of BPS students.

Another method we are using is MTEL Prep Support — and we have very good news to report here. For the past several years, we have noticed a trend that some of our most promising provisional teachers of color were unable to pass the Massachusetts Test of Educator Licensure (MTEL). Although we have offered a variety of programs to support educators, this year the Office of Human Capital completely redesigned the MTEL Prep Support Program and we are excited to share very exciting preliminary results with significant outcomes for our educators of color:

- 80% of the fall cohort participants who took their ESL MTEL passed versus the state ESL MTEL pass rate of 52%.
- 88% of teachers of color who took the ESL MTEL passed versus the state ESL MTEL pass rate for Blacks of just 19%.

On the Foundations of Reading (FOR) MTEL, 100% of teachers of color passed compared to the state, which had a pass rate of 42% for Black educators, 53% for Hispanic educators, and 67% for White educators. I'd like to thank the many people from the BPS Office of Human Capital involved in these efforts, particularly Ceronne Daly, Managing Director of Recruitment, Cultivation and Diversity Programs.

I'd like to remind you of an important action item this evening: Our proposal to phase out Dorchester Academy as a school. I would like to thank the School Committee for having a very thoughtful discussion on this matter at our last meeting. Closing a school is always a difficult decision. As a reminder, Dorchester Academy was a comprehensive high school that was moved into Level 4 status in 2014. Because the school was serving primarily students who were off-track, Dorchester Academy became an alternative program, which was still bound to state accountability measures for traditional high schools. The size of the student body at Dorchester Academy was too small, and thus it was impossible for the school to exit Level 4 "Turnaround" status. Currently, Dorchester Academy has about 15 students, with nearly all of them on track to graduate this spring. The school has had an amazing year in terms of student progress, and we ask the Committee to support a vote to close Dorchester Academy as a standalone school, and to move the programming to Excel High School next school year. This proposal presents a great opportunity for students at Excel High School, where there is a strong need for programming to support off-track youth. As the School Committee expressed at the last meeting, BPS needs to

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continue building its support off-track youth in traditional school settings as well as alternative school settings — and I completely agree.

Now, onto some bright spots. We'll begin with some news that's hot off the presses today. U.S. News and World Report released its annual list of top-ranked schools and Boston Latin School is ranked as the #1 best high school in Massachusetts for the second year in a row. Boston Latin Academy is #6, and the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science is #10. Awesome job! The other BPS high schools on the Top 100 list were Boston Community Leadership Academy (BCLA) at #60; New Mission at #77; Edward M. Kennedy Academy of Health Careers at #90; Another Course to College at #99; and Boston Arts Academy at #100. It's great to see all three of our exam schools, and many of our other high schools, recognized for their high standards, rigor, and school climate. This is a testament to all the hard work our students, teachers, and families put in everyday to make sure our students are ready for college, career, and life. Congratulations to BLS, BLA, and the O'Bryant, and all the schools mentioned.

Boston Public Schools has received an award for being one of the most proactive districts in the state when it comes to testing drinking water in schools. Yesterday, the Department of Environmental Protection awarded BPS and the Boston Water and Sewer Commission the "Systems Taking Action to Reduce Lead" award for their work in our schools. Back in 2016, Mayor Walsh and I announced that all BPS schools with working water fountains would be tested for lead at least once per year, which is above and beyond the state requirements. This was adopted into a formal policy by the School Committee in June of 2016. Not only are we able to spot issues and respond to them more quickly, but through our enhanced monitoring and infrastructure, we have been able to turn more water fountains back online. We have reactivated water fountains in 11 schools over the past several months. Congratulations to our staff — particularly our Facilities Management and Health and Wellness departments — for being a statewide leader on this. The safety and well-being of our students, staff, and the public is always our #1 priority.

Also yesterday, I had the opportunity — along with Mayor Walsh, Councilor Tim McCarthy, and others — to visit Boston Community Leadership Academy (BCLA) in Hyde Park, where students unveiled a wonderful mural in the school cafeteria. The students created this mural in partnership with members of the Mayor's Mural Crew. This is truly a wonderful expression of student identity and — most importantly — affirming the diverse backgrounds of our students. Great job to everyone involved in this amazing work of art.

On Monday, I had the honor of participating in the seventh-annual Japanese cherry tree-planting ceremony at BPS. This took place at the Irving Middle School in Roslindale with members of the Fish Family Foundation. The Foundation began this tradition in 2012 to commemorate the centennial of the City of Tokyo's gift of more than 3,000 trees to Washington, D.C. Irving students performed a song in Japanese during the ceremony, which included a speech from Boston's Consul General of Japan, Rokuichiro Michii. Forty-two cherry trees have been planted at BPS schools since this partnership began. I'd like to thank the Fish Family Foundation, Irving Principal Carmen Davis, and all of the students and staff who made this a really nice event.

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On May 1st, the BPS Office of Safe and Welcoming Schools hosted the second-annual LGBTQ Student Summit at the Boston Teachers Union Hall. We had more than double the attendance of last year, with about 175 students from 25 high schools. I'm proud to say that nearly all of our 34 high schools now have a gay-straight alliance group. GSAs are safe and welcoming spaces for students; and they help affirm our students' identities. This is something they must have in order to be successful in college, career, and — most importantly — in life. I'd like to thank Danielle Murray, a Safe and Welcoming Schools Specialist, who organized this summit. Danielle has done a lot of work to support LGBTQ students for several years, dating back to when she helped launch a GSA at Brighton High School. I'd also like to thank Alex Kalamaroff, the director of outreach at Charlestown High School, who helped plan this event. He and Danielle gave a presentation on the summit to EdVestors, who provided sponsorship this year. I would also like to thank all of the students who participated. I hope they all know that all of them — gay, straight, bisexual, transgender, or gender fluid — are supported, welcomed, and celebrated in the Boston Public Schools.

I've got some really exciting news to share about one of our dynamic school leaders. Craig Martin, the principal of the Perkins Elementary School in South Boston, has been named Massachusetts Elementary Principal of the Year by the Massachusetts School Administrators Association (MSAA). Since Craig became the leader of the Perkins five years ago, suspensions and chronic absenteeism have plummeted, family engagement is up, and so are test scores — Students who are Latino or English Learners are outperforming their subgroups on MCAS statewide. Craig has truly embraced social-emotional learning practices. He's networked with Boston Children's Hospital to provide training for staff, he's utilized the My Brother's Keeper mentoring program, and he's instituted the "Morning Mile" so students get physical activity at the start of each school day. Craig is unable to join us here tonight. We plan to honor him at an upcoming School Committee meeting. But given that this news was just released, I would like to publicly recognize him now for his passion, dedication, and hard work. Congratulations, Craig, and the Perkins School community.

I recently had the honor of speaking at the Emerging Best Practices for Bias-Free Schools Conference, which was hosted by the BPS Office of Equity in partnership with the Boston Educational Development Fund. More than 200 educators from across southern New England attended. I had the opportunity to share my philosophy as an educational leader, and the importance of ensuring our students can learn in safe and welcoming environments, free of bias-based behavior. The Office of Equity shared best practices with the conference. The district's offices of the Opportunity and Achievement Gap, Human Capital, Succeed Boston, Safe and Welcoming Schools, Boston Student Advisory Council, and BLS BLACK were also featured. The event featured two keynote addresses, one by the director of Teaching Tolerance, Maureen Costello, and one by the founder of the national White Privilege Conference, Eddie Moore. Teaching Tolerance, the Nellie Mae Foundation, and the Hyams Foundation were among the conference sponsors. Senator Elizabeth Warren was unable to attend, but I'd like to share her videotaped opening remarks with you. I'd like to thank the Office of Equity for hosting this two-day conference, and for leading by example for educators across the region.

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Committee members offered high praise for the district's innovative new high school-to-teacher pipeline program, calling it critical work. Dr. Uriarte encouraged the district to partner with the schools of education at local colleges and universities to recruit more students of color as a means of diversifying the teaching pipeline.

Ms. Jeri Robinson expressed concern about the district's ability to retain teachers of color due to collective bargaining restraints. The Superintendent described the many supports that the district provides for teachers of color. Ms. Robinson requested data on excessed teachers of color, which the Superintendent agreed to provide. Mr. O'Neill praised the Superintendent and his team for their hard work and many notable accomplishments, particularly the district's award-winning water policy, top-ranked high schools, and TeachBoston/City Year Teacher Pathway. Ms. Regina Robinson encouraged BPS leaders to connect with deans of education and other higher education leaders as part of the district's efforts to increase teacher diversity.

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

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

**As prepared for delivery.*

Good evening. The last month for the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) has been pretty busy, both locally and nationally. We are honored to have the continued opportunities to travel and share the amazing work that we have been doing.

In April, one of our BSAC coordinators and two students traveled to Facebook headquarters in Menlo Park, California upon invite. Our team had the opportunity to present the Boston Student Rights app in its entirety to mega app developers.

Last week, we also had one BSAC Project Coordinator from Youth on Board (YOB) and two students travel to Minneapolis, Minnesota for the Dignity in Schools Annual Meeting. The students participated in discussions about identity, race, the school-to-prison pipeline, and many more. They were able to connect with like-minded youth from across the country. To top it all off, the students also got to visit The Mall of America.

On April 26th, I spoke at the Equity department's 2nd annual Emerging Best Practices Conference: Preventing and Addressing Bias-Based Incidents in Schools, where I sat on a panel with student leaders from the Undoing Racism program at Watertown Public Schools, the Boston Latin School Black Leaders Aspiring for Change and Knowledge, and YWCA Boston. We each spoke about how we are combating bias and hate in schools, and I touched on BSAC's work around discipline reform, the Boston Student Rights app, and our Listening Projects as examples of how BSAC members are on the front lines in the work to end bias-based incidents in schools through dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline.

At the Boston Educators for Social Justice Conference, BSAC members presented our work and facilitated action organizing sessions around our three subcommittees: Environmental Justice,

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Student Rights, and Youth-Empowered Learning. Each session was well-attended as BSAC members educated conference participants about their campaigns while leading them through activities where participants helped to plan and design next steps.

For the past several months, BSAC/YOB has served on a Dignity in Schools working group that oversaw the development of a national Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Toolkit for parents, students, administrators and organizers. Its purpose is to give these constituencies the tools and resources they need in order to exercise their right to be involved in conversations of school equity. BSAC played a huge role in shaping the student engagement portion of the toolkit and it was publicly launched at the end of April. We're excited that thousands of students across the nation will be better equipped to implement the changes they want to see in their schools.

BSAC has engaged in conversations regarding school safety and has participated in Boston City Council Hearings on the FY19 BPS budget.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Laine Banks, parent, Higginson K0-2 School, advocated for the creation of a playground at the school.

Tiffany Vassell, parent, P.A. Shaw Elementary School, advocated in favor of bringing the My Way Café program to her child's school.

John Mudd, advocate, shared concerns about persistent achievement gaps that are evident in the district's 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results.

Edward Parilla, member, Harbor Point Task Force board of directors, advocated for a robust engagement process as part of the district's proposal explore subdividing and potentially redeveloping a parcel of land on Columbia Point for community use.

ACTION ITEMS

Mr. O'Neill praised the depth and breadth of student international travel programs that have come before the Committee in recent months. The Superintendent noted that a full update from the BPS Department of Global Education will be brought to the Committee in the next few weeks.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee approved by unanimous consent grants for approval totaling \$75,000.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee approved by unanimous consent an international travel request for students and chaperones from Boston Latin School to travel to Montreal and Quebec, Canada from May 25-28, 2018.

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Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee approved by unanimous consent an international travel request for students from TechBoston Academy and their chaperones to travel to Ottawa, Canada from May 26-June 2, 2018.

Approved – The Committee unanimously approved, by roll call, the Superintendent’s recommendation to withdraw the district from the MA School Choice Plan for school year 2018-2019 based upon the lack of available space to accommodate non-resident students.

The Committee engaged in a robust discussion about the Superintendent’s proposal to close Dorchester Academy. Committee members expressed regret about the situation and offered strong support for alternative education programs, which support students with high needs.

The Superintendent said that he will present the Committee with a complete report on off-track youth in next few months. He noted that he does not foresee the need to close any of the district’s other alternative education schools.

Dr. Uriarte asked about lessons learned. Dr. Muncey spoke about issues with the state’s accountability system and said that the district will conduct an after-action review. The Committee requested an update on Excel and Brighton high schools before the start of the next school year.

Mr. Loconto said that he is glad that Dorchester Academy’s model will live and grow at Excel High School.

Approved – The Committee unanimously approved, by roll call, the Superintendent’s recommendation to close Dorchester Academy at the end of the 2017-2018 School Year.

REPORTS

BPS Performance Meter Update – Jacob Stern, director of performance management for the Office of Data and Accountability, presented an update on the BPS Performance Meter. The Performance Meter is a set core of 14 metrics designed to monitor student performance districtwide, and build coherence around common goals with a focus on achievement gaps. The metrics will increase transparency about the progress students are making, or lacking, in critical areas. The Performance Meter is a critical tool to build a culture of performance management, notice system-wide trends as they are occurring, and to ensure transparency and accountability. The Performance Meter is scheduled to go live on the BPS webpage in June.

The Superintendent announced that Executive Director of Data and Accountability Nicole Wagner Lam is transitioning out of BPS to live closer to her family in Michigan.

Committee members praised the Performance Meter as a valuable tool. Dr. Uriarte expressed concerns with the district’s target for English learner progression, which she said could be more aggressive.

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Ms. Jeri Robinson encouraged the district to explore alternative formative assessments for early childhood education. She also suggested tracking cohorts of students who attend BPS for their entire K-12 academic careers.

Mr. O'Neill said the Performance Meter should inform all of the district's policy and implementation decisions.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila encouraged district leaders to gather input from additional partners and advocated for the use of non-traditional family engagement measures.

Mr. Loconto talked about college career and life readiness definition. Mr. O'Neill thanked Kristin McSwain, executive director of the Boston Opportunity Agenda, for her strong partnership with BPS.

Update on Columbia Point School Properties – Mr. Loconto briefly recapped the district's April 11th proposal to potentially subdivide and redevelop a piece of land on Columbia Point for community use. Committee members requested legal guidance about the process for subdivision and had also asked questions about the community process. Mr. Loconto explained that a legal opinion had been provided to the Committee from city and district legal team. The opinion stated that the district does not need to surplus the property before issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) that is co-constructed with the Columbia Point community. The Superintendent wrote a letter to Dever and McCormack school communities informing them of the proposal. Mr. Loconto proposed that at the next School Committee meeting, the Committee take up a resolution declaring its intention to issue an RFP. If the RFP is satisfactory, the Committee would take a second vote to surplus the land. If the RFP is not satisfactory, BPS would retain care, custody, and control of the land.

Dr. Uriarte and Ms. Oliver-Dávila asked about the benefits of the proposal. Mr. Loconto reaffirmed the district's commitment to enhance the land for community use.

Mr. O'Neill said that he was happy to learn that BPS could retain control of the land and that the potential redevelopment would have no impact on Build BPS. He suggested that the resolution include language about enhancing the land for the benefit of the Dever and McCormack schools, students at nearby schools, and community residents.

The Committee is scheduled to vote on the resolution on May 23rd.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

John Mudd, advocate, testified regarding the BPS Performance Meter.

Peggy Wiesenberg, advocate, testified regarding the Update on Columbia Point School Properties.

School Committee Meeting
Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building
School Committee Chamber

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NEW BUSINESS

Mr. O'Neill congratulated BPS Instructional Superintendent Marice Edouard-Vincent who was recently approved as the next Superintendent of Medford Public Schools. He praised the Superintendent for developing talent leaders.

ADJOURN

At approximately 9:21 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary