



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

June 22, 2016

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on June 22, 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, 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; Jeri Robinson; and Dr. Miren Uriarte.

School Committee Members Absent: Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; and Regina Robinson.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

School Committee Meeting Minutes: June 8, 2016 and June 17, 2016

Grants for Approval Totaling \$53,090,543:

- 21st Century Community Learning Centers Continuation (647-B1 & B2) -\$15,757
- Adult Career Pathways - \$104,826
- Adult Education Family Literacy - \$185,951
- Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) Grant - \$837,700
- Early Childhood Special Education Program Improvement (Fund Code 298) - \$7,000
- English for New Bostonians - \$25,000
- ESOL Family Literacy Program - \$103,000
- Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments Grant (Fund Code 391) -\$334,837
- Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp (JROTC) - \$845,000
- Preschool Expansion Grant (Fund Code 518) - \$3,879,987
- Reimbursable Grant - \$9,195,431
- School Lunch -\$37,000,000
- Secondary Transition Systemic Improvement Grant (Fund Code 243) - \$40,000
- Skills Capital Grant - \$451,054
- Title III Summer - \$65,000

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International Travel Request: Boston Arts Academy: Rwanda, August 12-21, 2016

International Travel Request: Josiah Quincy Upper School: Switzerland, July 3-9, 2016

Superintendent's Strategic Implementation Plan – Draft, June 22, 2016

Policy Recommendation to Eliminate Opportunity and Achievement Gaps for Students of Color and Other Marginalized Groups and Power Point Presentation

Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPAC) Update

Office of Special Education and Student Support Services Report

Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School's Charter Renewal Application

Background Check Policy and Implementation Update

CALL TO ORDER

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

MEETING MINUTES

The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the June 8, 2016 and June 17, 2016 School Committee meetings.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Yesterday, Boston Latin School Headmaster Lynne Mooney Teta announced that she will be resigning from Boston Latin School after nine years of serving as the leader of the first public school in America. During her tenure as headmaster, Boston Latin significantly expanded Advanced Placement courses by increasing participation by 50 percent; while also raising the passing rates from 80 percent to a nationally-recognized 90 percent. This year, the schools' 411 seniors gained admission to the most selective colleges in the country and abroad, and earned more than \$25 million in scholarships. The district has worked with Dr. Mooney Teta to build a more inclusive and supportive environment at the school. She loves BLS and is a graduate of the school herself. An interim leader will be appointed and a national search will be conducted to find the next headmaster for this nationally recognized public school. The Superintendent thanked Dr. Mooney Teta for her dedication to the young people of Boston.

On June 21st and 22nd, Boston Public Schools (BPS), in collaboration with The Opportunity Youth Collaborative and the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, hosted three forums for 1) BPS Cabinet, Principals, Headmasters, support staff, and students, 2) the advocacy and youth service communities; and 3) policymakers and institutional leaders. The events were aimed at elevating the conversation around eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline. The forums

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featured national speakers Arnold Chandler and Tia Martinez of San Francisco's Forward Change, who provided a compelling presentation that described the school-to-prison pipeline issue nationally and through a life course framework. They identified key data that districts and communities can leverage to change the patterns. They also provided insight on what Boston and cities like it could do to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. The Superintendent participated on both days and shared with how the District is thinking about this issue and invited input from attendees for addressing it.

The Superintendent thanked Kathy Hamilton from Boston Private Industry Council, Kristin McSwain from the Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative, the Hyams Foundation, the Rennie Center, Dr. Karla Estrada, deputy superintendent for Academics and Student Support Services, Nicole Wagner Lam, executive director for the Office of Data Accountability and her team, and the Office of Social Emotional Learning and Wellness for furthering this critical discussion in BPS and for making this event possible.

The Superintendent announced the following school leadership appointments:

- Cynthia Soo Hoo, principal, Josiah Quincy Elementary School
- Claire Rheaume, principal, Bradley Elementary School
- Romaine Mills-Teque, principal, Nathan Hale Elementary School

The Superintendent congratulated all of the Boston Public Schools seniors who have graduated from high school this month. Nearly 3,300 students received diplomas in recent weeks, and roughly another 250 will be obtaining their diplomas in August. We need to celebrate our accomplishments, acts of courage, and acts of kindness, because it is up to us to demonstrate the power of positive behavior.

Information about BPS summer programming can be found online www.bostonpublicschools.org/summer. BPS summer programs integrate academics and learning into fun summer activities, such as visiting places like Thompson Island or Hale Reservation, as one example. Many partners, including Boston After School and Beyond, Outward Bound, the Wallace Foundation, the Bell Foundation, and Sportsmen's Tennis Club, play a crucial role in this programming, which helps prevent the so-called "summer slide" in students.

All four BPS schools applying for the FY17 renewal of the School Redesign Grant in Cohort V and Cohort VI funds have been approved by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. That includes the Channing School, the Winthrop School, the Grew School, and Dorchester Academy, amounting to a total of \$1.5 million. Madison Park Technical Vocational High School has been awarded a School Redesign Grant in the amount of \$1.6 million, pending Massachusetts receipt of federal School Improvement Grant funds.

On June 7th, Gardner Pilot Academy's 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool program was visited by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) to learn about the services provided to the teachers and project coordinators using 21st Century funds. The purpose

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of the visit was to gather information for a report to Congress on the effectiveness of using 21st Century funds.

The Superintendent congratulated the Mendell Elementary School for receiving a \$65,000 grant from the Timothy Smith Network for new school technology and curricular opportunities. A primary mission of the Timothy Smith Network is to increase access to technology for Boston students to help better prepare them for academic success. The Mendell will work with the Timothy Smith Network and the BPS Office of Instructional and Information Technology (OIIT) on a one-to-one computer-to-student program for kids in grades K through 5. They will also help with professional development around technology.

The Superintendent then presented a draft of his Strategic Implementation Plan, which is available for public review and feedback at www.bostonpublicschools.org. The Superintendent's lauded the plan as courageous, explaining that its density allows district leaders to hold themselves accountable.

The plan is guided by three values that the Superintendent has discussed in depth at the last several School Committee meetings: equity, coherence and innovation.

Equity: If we truly believe every BPS student can and must achieve at high levels, we must

- End predictable cycles of success or failure based on any racial, social or cultural factor.
- We must interrupt inequitable practices that perpetuate opportunity and achievement gaps.
- Cultivate the cultural and linguistic strengths of our students and our staff.

Coherence: We will build a business model whose primary focus must be on teaching and learning.

- Bring together a framework for curriculum, instruction and assessment that is grounded in culturally and linguistically sustaining practices as well as social emotional learning and wellness.
- It must leverage best practices for the support of all learners, the building of essential literacy, and the building of effective Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs).
- And we must bring more structural coherence to our system through fewer and predictable transitions for students K-12.

Innovation: We will become an organization that generates new solutions, not one that struggles to support current operations.

- Build an innovation culture in central office
- Encourage entrepreneurial initiative and support strategic risk taking
- And simultaneously focus on continuous improvement and innovation through transformative initiatives

The Superintendent invited members of the public to send their feedback on the plan to superintendent@bostonpublicschools.org. Over the next month, the leadership team will take more feedback and make more edits and refinements. The goal is to bring to the School

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Committee in July a finalized list of initiatives that will take multiple years to fully accomplish, as well as milestones for next year.

A strategic implementation plan must be ever evolving, a living document, so there will be changes over the next three-to-five years. The strategic implementation plan will guide the district's work, its investments, and conversations with the School Committee. The Superintendent thanked School Committee members for sharing their thinking and expertise to the plan.

The plan consists of five key focus areas:

1. Implement an inclusive, rigorous, and culturally/linguistically sustaining Pre K-12 instructional program that serves the development of the whole child.
2. Attract, develop, and retain a highly effective team that is responsive to the diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic needs of Boston youth.
3. Engage families and community organizations as advocates and partners for equity, access and results for all students.
4. Deliver a coordinated system of high-quality support, customer service, and communications centrally and at schools.
5. Build a sustainable financial system that invests resources equitably and strategically.

The Superintendent closed by emphasizing his commitment to culturally and linguistically sustaining practices.

Dr. Uriarte expressed concern about strength #3 in the plan, which states that the district is diligently working to diversify its staff. The Superintendent said he will clarify that the district is putting tremendous effort into teacher diversity.

Mr. O'Neill extended his congratulations to the Margarita Muniz Academy and Henderson Inclusion K-12 School, which both celebrated first graduating classes this year. He then thanked Sandy Mitchell-Woods who is retiring after 27 years as principal of the Nathan Hale Elementary School. He also thanked Dr. Mooney Teta for her leadership, calling her a national leader in education. He praised her for serving as a mentor to many school leaders.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Lisa Martin, parent, Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (DSNCS), testified regarding the school's charter renewal application.
- Hakim Harris, parent, DSNCS, testified regarding the school's charter renewal application.
- Valerie Gumes, board member, DSNCS, and former BPS principal, testified regarding the school's charter renewal application.

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- Ros Everdell, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, testified regarding the school's charter renewal application.
- David Russell, teacher, McKinley South End Academy (MSEA), testified regarding the possible relocation of the school.
- Jason Samaha, teacher, McKinley Prep High School, testified regarding the possible relocation of MSEA.
- Marcia Cruz, McKinley Middle School, testified regarding the possible relocation of MSEA.
- James Quaglia, superintendent, Blue Hills Regional Technical School, testified regarding Madison Park Technical Vocational High School.
- Joseph Toussaint, parent, DSNCS, testified regarding the school's charter renewal application.
- John Mudd, advocate, testified regarding the Policy Recommendation to Eliminate Opportunity and Achievement Gaps for Students of Color and Other Marginalized Groups
- Peggy Wiesenberg, advocate, testified regarding DSNCS's charter renewal application.
- Kim Janey, Massachusetts Advocates for Children and member, Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force, testified regarding the Policy Recommendation to Eliminate Opportunity and Achievement Gaps for Students of Color and Other Marginalized Groups

ACTION ITEMS

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, Committee unanimously approved grants totaling \$53,090,543.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international field trip for students and chaperones from Boston Arts Academy to travel to Rwanda from August 12-21, 2016.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an international field trip for students and chaperones from Josiah Quincy Upper School to travel to Switzerland from July 3-9, 2016.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the renewal of the English Language Learners Task Force as a monitoring body until June 30, 2017.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the addition of Samuel Hurtado and Dr. Claudia Rinaldi to the English Language Learners Task Force.

REPORTS

2016 Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Policy Recommendation – Jeri Robinson, Ayele Shakur and Sam Acevedo, co-chairs of the School Committee's Opportunity and Achievement

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Gaps Task Force, presented a recommended Policy to Eliminate Opportunity and Achievement Gaps for Students of Color and Other Marginalized Groups. The co-chairs were joined by Dr. Colin Rose, Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps, who is working closely with the Task Force.

The 19-member Task Force has been meeting since September 2015 to update the district's current Achievement Gap policy, which has not been updated since it was established in 2006.

The proposed policy consists of six goals:

1. District-wide Implementation and Oversight
2. District-wide Focus on Cultural Proficiency as Central to the Work of the Boston Public Schools
3. Diversity and Cultural Proficiency in Leadership and Human Capital
4. Holistic, Culturally Affirming Approach to School and Teacher Quality
5. Dismantling Structural Barriers and Providing Greater Access to Opportunities
6. Students, Family, and Community as Authentic Partners

The goals are accompanied by objectives detailing the work that's expected of the District. The Task Force will continue as a monitoring body to help oversee implementation of the policy once it is approved.

Mr. Loconto encouraged the district to provide current as well as forecasted achievement gap impact data. He also suggested adding a category which demonstrates whether the gap is closing or widening. He emphasized that BPS must work with city and state partners to address challenges that contribute to inequities, such as housing and public health.

Dr. Uriarte, who co-chairs the English Language Learners Task Force, explained that serving as a monitoring body means being a critical friend. She said the District needs a clear system for reporting allegations of racism. She also suggested that the policy should have more specificity with regards to cultural proficiency.

Dr. Coleman called the policy recommendation a huge measurement opportunity. He praised the creation of an ongoing data dashboard, as well as annual reports to the Committee.

Mr. O'Neill said he is deeply sensitive to the concerns of the Task Force regarding policy implementation. He questioned whether the district would be able to accompany all reports to the Committee with an achievement gap impact statement, including data, as outlined in the proposed policy. He noted that the Committee does not take action on all reports.

The Superintendent said he needs to think through how the policy would be integrated into the strategic plan and establish realistic milestones for each year. He also expressed concern about building up the district's IT infrastructure to carry out the policy.

Ms. Shakur responded that it's important for the district to reflect on the data and examine unintended consequences of BPS policies and procedures.

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The School Committee is expected to take action on the policy recommendation at its July 20th meeting.

Special Education Parents Advisory Council Update – Carolyn Kain, chair of the Boston Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPAC), presented an update on the organization’s work over the past year. SpedPAC is a legally mandated organization that advises the district on matters pertaining to the education and safety of students with disabilities. Ms. Kain was joined by SpedPAC executive board members Diane Lescinskas and Latoya Gayle.

Ms. Kain began with a few points of clarification, stating that SpedPAC will only support the relocation of the McKinley South End Academy if the school community is in favor of the move. She also requested SpedPAC representation on the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force, and clarified that SpedPAC never endorsed changes to the weighted student funding formula for students with autism.

Ms. Kain then continued with the presentation, explaining that SpedPAC has a strong partnership with the district and works closely with BPS leaders on critical issues such as inclusion expansion and transition services. She said the district needs to be more intentional about establishing inclusive pathways after elementary school. She added that inclusion is an experience, not a location. She also expressed support for the district’s software upgrade for managing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Ms. Jeri Robinson and Dr. Uriarte asked questions about parent outreach and involvement. Ms. Kain explained that meeting videos and resource materials are available online, adding that SpedPAC is willing to do more outreach to immigrant parents and provide more translated information.

Mr. Loconto thanked John St. Amand, who is stepping down as vice-chair of SpedPAC.

Mr. O’Neill asked Ms. Kain for guidance on how to expand inclusive practice. Ms. Kain advised the district to be intentional and thoughtful with planning, calling the facilities master plan a critical tool. The Superintendent agreed with Mr. O’Neill that SpedPAC should have a stronger voice in the facilities master plan process.

Office of Special Education (OSE) Update – Assistant Superintendent of Special Education Cindie Neilson presented an update on district’s work in the area of special education. Students with disabilities comprise nearly 20 percent of the district’s student population. One third of BPS students with disabilities are also English Language Learners (ELLs).

In school year 2015-16, OSE held its first districtwide conferences in the areas of transition and autism awareness, opened 38 new inclusion classrooms, and provided 300 hours of professional development. In school year 2016-17, OSE will continue its efforts to expand transition services, strengthen the quality of instructional supports and services, and improve identification, placement and reporting.

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Mr. Loconto asked for more information about the district's plans to increase inclusion districtwide and reduce out of district placements. Dr. Uriarte requested data about the number of ELL students in full inclusion vs. substantially separate by disability type. Ms. Neilson agreed to follow up on both requests.

Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (DSNCS) Charter Renewal Proposal – Jesse Solomon, executive director of BPE, and DSNCS principal Dawn Lewis presented a proposal to renew the school's charter for five years. DSNCS is a Horace-Mann In-District charter school that opened in 2012. The school currently serves 265 students in grades K1-4 and will expand to its full size in the fall, serving 308 students in grades K1-5. More than 800 students are currently on the school's wait-list. The presenters highlighted the school's academic success, embedded teacher preparation, and service to the Dudley Square community as factors supporting the school's charter renewal.

Dr. Coleman encouraged the presenters to think about how their school model can be replicated.

Mr. O'Neill requested more information on the school's attrition rates and asked school leaders to consider adopting the district's Code of Conduct, which the presenters agreed to consider.

The Committee is scheduled to take action on the DSNCS charter renewal proposal on July 20th.

Background Check Policy and Implementation Update – Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital Emily Kalejs Qazilbash and Labor Relations Director Karen Glasgow presented a brief update on the implementation of the BPS Criminal History Screening Policy. In accordance with federal and state laws, the policy calls for those who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children to undergo Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks, including fingerprinting, and Sex Offender Registry Information (SORI) checks no less than every three years.

BPS employment for potential new hires is contingent upon satisfactory results of criminal background checks and fingerprinting. Existing employees undergo CORI/SORI checks every three years and must be fingerprinted before the start of the 2016-17 school year.

Mr. O'Neill noted that School Committee members will also be CORI/SORI checked and fingerprinted. Ms. Qazilbash said that she will present the Committee with a report about professional licensure in September.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Loconto thanked Mark Racine, BPS Director of Technology, for managing the instillation of a much needed new microphone system in the School Committee chamber.

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Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building
School Committee Chamber

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ADJOURN

At approximately 10:45 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:

Elizabeth Sullivan

Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary