



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REMOTE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

January 13, 2021

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on January 13, 2021 at 5 p.m. on Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Vice Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Lorna Rivera; Jeri Robinson; and student representative Khymani James.

School Committee Member Absent: Quoc Tran.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

Boston School Committee Meeting Minutes: December 12, 2020 Retreat; December 16, 2020 Meeting; and January 4, 2021 Annual Organizational Meeting

Reopening and Remote Learning Update PowerPoint

Reopening and Remote Learning Update Equity Impact Statement

Superintendent's School Year (SY) 2020-21 Performance Goals

Memo from Hardin Coleman to Boston School Committee re: Superintendent's School Year (SY) 2020-21 Performance Goals, January 13, 2021

Memo from Chair Oliver-Dávila to Boston School Committee re: Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Membership and Charge, January 13, 2021

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Office of Equity Update PowerPoint

Office of Equity Update Equity Impact Statement

Grants for Approval Totaling \$355,867:

Amount	FY	Grant Name	Status	Fund Manager	Representative Relationship to Grant	Focus Area(s)	Sites
\$77,000	2021	BOKS	New	Ali Ettis	Assistant Director of Operations	Health & Wellness	35 Sites
\$3,750	2021	Leading Educational Access Project	New	Victoria Thompson	Principal	Educator Effectiveness	Up Holland Academy
\$265,000	2021	Comprehensive Preschool Partnership Initiative	Increase	David McAuley	Universal Pre-K Project Manager	Early Childhood	Districtwide
\$10,117	2021	OpenSciEd Field Test	Increase	Marianne Dunne	Senior Project Coordinator	Curriculum and Instruction	12 Sites

Chairperson Oliver-Dávila called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. Mr. Tran was absent; all other members were present. She said that tonight’s meeting was being streamed live on Zoom. It will be rebroadcast on Boston City TV. It will also be posted at bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee and on YouTube. She announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and American Sign Language (ASL); the interpreters introduced themselves and gave instructions in their native language on how to access simultaneous interpretation by changing the Zoom channel. Meeting documents were translated into all of the official BPS languages and publicly posted at www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee prior to the start of the meeting.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila asked speakers who had signed up for public comment to begin their testimony by stating the neighborhood where they live. She explained that this is a common practice among other city departments during their public meetings, and will allow the Committee to ensure that all voices are heard and all parts of the city are included.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: DECEMBER 12, 2020; DECEMBER 16, 2020;
JANUARY 4, 2021**

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the following School Committee meetings: December 12, 2020 Retreat; December 16, 2020 Meeting; January 4, 2021 Annual Organizational Meeting.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila offered her personal reflections on the violence at the U.S. Capitol that took place on January 6, 2021. She spoke about finding hope and inspiration in teachers and students, such as Mariella Murillo, a senior at Boston Arts Academy, who wrote a moving piece in this week's *The Boston Globe* about her struggles with remote learning.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

As prepared for delivery.

Thank you for joining us this evening for our first School Committee meeting of 2021. And it's already a memorable one. I'd like to begin by speaking about the unfathomable violence and insurrection in our nation's capital last Wednesday. In my check-in with staff the following morning, and in communication to families the following day, I noted that this was yet another difficult day in what has been a very dark period in our nation's history. It is heartbreaking that our students experienced this strife and additional pain during this pandemic. The fear, confusion and anxiety that this incident undoubtedly caused only adds to the burden and worry that children are already unfairly carrying. It not only makes me sad, but it makes me angry that our children are growing up in this divided country, seeing these horrific images, learning, through repeated injustices, that hatred exists in our nation today. What happened at the US Capitol was a planned and intentional threat to our democracy and cannot be tolerated or normalized in any way. We have to teach our children that violence in any form is not ok and this is not who we want to be for our children - for our country we love. Our educators have done such tremendous work this school year, ensuring that we cultivate safe, welcoming, inclusive environments for our students to express their feelings and share their concerns. And unfortunately, there have been countless injustices and acts of violence in recent months and years that our students have heard and seen. We, as adults, need to be better for our children. We must come together, work together, and rebuild together. There is so much hurt, pain, and suffering in this country, and within our own community. We need to turn the page, heal, and support one another, in spite of our differences. Last Wednesday may have been a dark day for our nation. But every single day we can have hope as we look to our amazing students and know that they are our future. Let's continue to nurture these bright young minds to ensure they do not repeat our mistakes.

On Monday we announced a revised timeline for welcoming students back to our school buildings for in-person learning. We also reached a new agreement with the Boston Teachers Union, codifying our commitment to the health and safety of our community. We will be implementing the same health and safety protocols in place at our 32 schools currently open, across all school buildings when the remainder open on February 1st. My team and I will go into greater detail during our reopening update, but I wanted to acknowledge and appreciate the leadership and collaboration of BTU President Jessica Tang and our new collaboration in this

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new year which will create stability and certainty for our educators and parents for the remainder of the school year. I am also very grateful to the Mayor and our Chief of Health and Human Services, Marty Martinez, and everyone at the BPHC for all their help and guidance as we plan for reopening. We will cover this in greater detail later this evening.

Speaking of the Mayor, last night Mayor Walsh delivered his final State of the City address, as he is leaving City Hall to accept a position on President-Elect Biden's Cabinet as Secretary of Labor. Mayor Walsh is a close colleague and a friend, and I am so proud of him. I am also incredibly grateful to him for all that he has taught me and all of the work that we have accomplished together. He has been so welcoming and so supportive since I came to Boston. From his \$100 million commitment last year, to leading this City through this unprecedented pandemic, I am so thankful for his leadership. I am so happy for him, and I am proud to have worked alongside him, particularly throughout this City's incredible response to the pandemic. Mayor Walsh outlined all the work that we have done as a City, and he is right that we will make it through this crisis a stronger city. And we are stronger because of his leadership. Mayor Walsh loves the City of Boston and I know that it is difficult for him to leave the City. But it is an incredible opportunity, and he is the right person for the Secretary of Labor position. I work very closely with my Cabinet colleagues and with all of our city leaders, and I know we will all continue to work together and get the job done for our students and families through this transition to a new Mayor. I am laser focused on opening all of our schools next month and beginning the planning for a strong summer program and an even stronger return this fall. This has been a challenging year and as we look towards Mayor Walsh's transition and welcoming City Council President Janey into her new role, we remain more committed than ever to the work ahead and the work of our five-year strategic plan.

School registration season is upon us! From now through Friday, January 29th, families can register students entering grades K0, K1, 6, 7, and 9 for the 2021-22 school year. Beginning Monday, February 8th, families of students entering K2 and all other grades may begin registering for the 2021-22 school year. In the meantime, prospective BPS families are encouraged to check out BPS School Preview Times. While we aren't able to open up our schools for visits, each BPS school is hosting virtual School Preview Times between now and the end of January. These virtual sessions are a great opportunity for families to learn more about each school community, meet the school leader, and ask questions about the school and the various programs they offer. A list of School Preview Times is available at bostonpublicschools.org/schoolpreview. We are also hosting general info sessions about the school registration process. Our next info session is scheduled for Wednesday, January 20, at 4:00 pm. This info session will feature interpretation services in Arabic, Somali and Spanish. Additional details on the school registration process are available at bostonpublicschools.org/register.

Finally, tomorrow is the district's 39th Annual Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. While I wish we could all be together at the Strand Theatre as we normally are for this event, I think we all could use the joy that will be on full display tomorrow night. The performances will celebrate and reflect on Dr. King's words and legacy as we live it today and will connect to a passage from one of Dr. King's speeches or his overarching themes of non-violence, justice, hope, community, and equality.

Highlights from this year's celebration include:

- spoken word from Boston's first-ever Youth Poet Laureate, Fenway senior Alondra Bobadilla
- the Boston Latin School Gospel Choir (Arts Executive Director Tony Beatrice told me to have tissues on hand!)
- dance from the Boston Arts Academy
- theatre from the Trotter K-8 School
- and so much more.

I can't wait to see the music, dance, theatre, and visual arts performances from over 15 BPS schools. Please join us for the virtual event tomorrow, January 14, at 7:00 pm, streaming at bpsarts.org.

One last thing. I want to thank Vice Chair O'Neill for sharing this picture of the new, state-of-the-art Boston Arts Academy complex in the Fenway, slated to open for the 2022-23 school year. This building speaks to me as a symbol of our recovery and resilience. And it's a testament to Mayor Walsh's commitment to BuildBPS and creating 21st century learning environments. That is work that we will continue to push forward. Thank you, Mayor. And that is my Superintendent's Report for the evening.

Ms. Robinson thanked the Superintendent for sharing resources with students, teachers, and families offering guidance on how to talk about recent events at the U.S. Capitol.

Dr. Rivera thanked the Chair and Superintendent for their powerful opening remarks. She thanked teachers for leading healing circles with students to process the violence at the U.S. Capitol. She spoke about teachers continuously going above and beyond to support students.

Dr. Coleman spoke about the importance of creating high quality civics learning opportunities. He spoke about COVID infection rates differing in Boston's neighborhoods and encouraged the district to effectively communicate with families. The Superintendent spoke about the district's communication with families by email, text, and in various languages. She said that BPS is also working with the faith-based community to connect with families. She said that she will follow up with the communications team with his suggestion..

Mr. O'Neill praised Mariella Murillo, a senior at Boston Arts Academy, who wrote a moving piece in this week's *The Boston Globe* about her struggles with remote learning. He offered Mariella his support and well wishes.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila congratulated Mayor Walsh for his appointment to President-Elect Biden's Cabinet as Secretary of Labor. She also congratulated Boston City Council President Kim Janey who will serve as Acting Mayor.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

As prepared for delivery.

Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) Subcommittee Updates

Environmental Justice and Sustainability

Overview: Improving our environment, taking on climate change

- Hosted a MA Renews Coalition meeting with youth organizations across Boston in preparation for MA Green New Deal Proposals Launch
- For the Georgia Runoff:
Young people made over 3,000 phone calls to POC voters
Sent over 13,000 texts to POC voters about voting by mail.

School Climate, Culture and Improvement

Overview: Improving school climate/culture, positively impacting instruction, improving school relationships and overall school improvement

- Working with the Boston Education Justice Alliance to put on a “Dignity in Schools” town hall to provide a forum for students to share their experiences and concerns about the virtual learning experience and school reopening. This will take the place of BSAC’s annual listening project.
- Participating in restorative justice circles (RJs) with Boston School Police officers to improve relationships between School Resource Officers (SROs) and the students they serve. Hope to have the sessions launch this month.
- Participating in both district and state level coalitions/working groups on issues of data privacy and school safety, working to ensure that student voices and experiences are centered. Two BSAC members will serve on the BPS Data Privacy Working Group

Student Rights and Student Voice

Overview: Building opportunities and increasing student voice in decision making

- City Councilor [Annessa Essaibi-George](#) will refile the home rule petition for student vote for the new legislative cycle.
- Committees/Task Forces
 - 2 students will join the District Wellness Council
 - 2 students will serve on the English Language Learners Task Force
 - 2 students are currently being onboarded by Monica Roberts to join the Exam Schools Task Force

Mental Health Support

BSAC members have expressed their concerns about mental health support. Staff members of BSAC discussed the concerns with Andria Amador and her team. Looking to have her meet with

BSAC to explore jointly hosting a town hall. Need to determine if it will be primarily student focused to share resources and/or for BPS staff and families to hear from students on the challenges they are currently facing.

Food and Nutrition

BSAC Staff met with Nancy Fisher and her team and discussed ways to bring in more student voices. Working to secure a time for her team to present to BSAC to explore ways to engage students and gather feedback

BPS Grading Policy

BSAC Coordinators met with Andrea Zayas to discuss how to incorporate student voice in the recommendations for new grading policy. Andrea and her team will be presenting to BSAC sometime in February and a second time in the Spring. We are excited to be working with her.

Dr. Rivera thanked Mr. James for his report and said that the School Committee will soon hold community listening sessions. She asked about BSAC's anticipated timeline for adding elementary and middle school components. Mr. James said hopefully this spring.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila said that the School Committee will hold community listening sessions in February.

REPORT

School Reopening and Remote Learning Update - The Superintendent presented an update on the district's school reopening plans and on remote learning. She was joined by co-presenters Mary Dillman, Chief of Staff; Corey Harris, Chief Accountability Officer; Mark Racine, Chief Information Officer; Suzanne Salter-Bennett, Director, Nursing Program; Sam DePina, Chief of Operations; Monica Hogan, Interim Executive Director of Data and Accountability; and Jonathan Palumbo, Superintendent of Communications and Public Affairs.

BPS has released a new timeline for returning students to in-person learning, starting in February. The hybrid learning model remains an opt-in for parents and caregivers. The tentative timeline for returning students whose families have selected hybrid learning is as follows:

- Monday, February 1: All students who have qualified for high in-person priority*
- Monday, March 1 & Thursday, March 4: Students in K0 - Grade 3 (Group A & B)
- Monday, March 15 & Thursday, March 18: Students in Grades 4 - 8 (Group A & B)
- Monday, March 29 & Thursday, April 1: Students in Grades 9 - 12 (Group A & B)

5,254 students have an average daily attendance (ADA) of less than 70% as of early December 2020:

- 154 students: ADA 25% or less
- 5,100 students: ADA between 26-70%

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District staff are utilizing multi-pronged strategies to re-engage these students, as well as the 975 students with 1 or more “No Credit” grades in SY 2020-21.

79% of students access instruction using a BPS-provided device, while 19% are using a personal device. Any student can opt in to receive a BPS device if needed.

BPS is conducting surveillance testing for school staff working in-person and piloting student testing in schools serving students in grades 9-12. The district has significantly increased testing access from one test site in October to four test sites in November and now 19 sites citywide.

BPS is committed to reporting to the public a weekly update on confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in schools. This information reports the combined number of confirmed positive cases for students and staff who have been inside our schools for in-person teaching and learning. To date, there have been 109 positive cases this school year: 15 students and 94 staff.

The district has made numerous facilities enhancements, including window repairs, indoor air quality testing, delivering air purifiers to all schools, and bathroom renovations.

On December 15, the MA Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted additional amendments to the Student Learning Time (SLT) regulations on an emergency basis. Effective January 19, 2021, over a 10-school day period:

- Districts and schools in a hybrid learning model must provide at least 35 hours of “live instruction”
- Districts and schools in a remote learning model must provide at least 40 hours of synchronous instruction.
- Districts and schools in a remote learning model may not have any fully asynchronous days; and Students must minimally have a required “live” daily check-in each day with educators.

Reopening updates are posted online at www.bostonpublicschools.org/reopening. The district is continuously striving to improve its communication with families through texts, emails, newsletters, media, and expanded language access.

Ms. Robinson asked how many families are represented in the 154 students with the lowest attendance. Mr. Harris said that district staff did not identify any significant family issues in the data. He noted that 68 of the students attend a Horace Mann In-District Charter School that uses a different reporting system. He said that the district is working to bring alignment to these systems.

Dr. Rivera asked when BPS will post the live link to positive COVID cases in school buildings. Mr. Palumbo said that the district will post it this week. Dr. Rivera asked if the district has tried tracking whether students who do not use cameras during remote learning have lower academic outcomes. Mr. Racine said that the district respects student privacy and noted that many people have suggested that Zoom enhance its capabilities to allow students’ cameras to be visible to teachers but not other students. He said that many devices cannot support virtual backgrounds.

Mr. James thanked the district and the Boston Teachers Union for reaching a reopening agreement this week. He shared data on COVID positivity rates. He asked what is the timeline to ensure that students are being sent back to schools safely. The Superintendent spoke about the many safety measures that the district has put in place to mitigate risks, including installing air purifiers, and expanding COVID testing. She said that the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) has approved the reopening of schools, which will be phased-in. BPS the BPHC will continue to closely watch metrics.

Mr. O'Neill asked about the use of Panorama at autonomous schools. Mr. Harris said that approximately half of the district's autonomous schools are using the Panorama platform. He said that central office staff need to use the platform and provide support. He expressed optimism that all schools will begin using it. Mr. O'Neill encouraged the district to think about what systems all schools should be using while still respecting autonomy.

Mr. James asked if the district is using a threshold of COVID positivity rates in its decision-making. The Superintendent responded that there is no threshold but the district is abiding by a side letter agreement with the BTU. BPHC signs off on all school reopening plans. If COVID positivity rates exceed 10 percent for two consecutive weeks, the parties can engage in impact bargaining.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila thanked the BPS communications team for its efforts. She expressed concern about the disproportionately high rates of "no credit" grades among black students. She encouraged the district to conduct outreach to families about early warning indicators. Mr. Harris said that BPS needs an investment in its systems.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Boston City Councilor At-Large Annissa Essaibi-George testified regarding a variety of education issues.
- Cady Malkemes, student, Boston Arts Academy, testified regarding voting rights for the student representative to the School Committee.
- Jada Saint Louis, student, Boston Arts Academy, testified regarding voting rights for the student representative to the School Committee.
- Damian Durgin, BPS student, testified regarding the safe reopening of schools.
- Simon Chernow, student, Boston Latin Academy, testified regarding voting rights for the student representative to the School Committee.
- Charlie Adames-Pimentel, BPS student, testified regarding the safe reopening of schools.
- Erica Haydock, member, Voices for BPS Families, testified regarding school reopening.
- Sandy Lavellee, BPS parent, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Bruce McKinnon, BPS parent, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Alyssa Anderson, BPS parent, testified regarding school reopening and exam school admissions.
- Dima Barash, member, Boston Parents Coalition for Academic Excellence, testified regarding exam school admissions.

- Alan Tien, member, Boston Parents Coalition for Academic Excellence, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Mike Heichman, member, Boston Education Justice Alliance, testified regarding the budget.
- Darragh Murphy, community advocate, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Ting Yi, parent, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Kathleen Chardavoyne, BPS parent, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Sharon Hinton, teacher, and member, Black Teachers Matter, testified regarding Boston School Committee appointments.
- Ruby Reyes, executive director, Boston Education Justice Alliance, testified regarding the budget.
- Jody Fink, parent, Eliot K-8 Innovation School, testified regarding school reopening.
- Corey Zehngebot, member, Voices for BPS Families, testified regarding school reopening.
- Go Sasaki, teacher, BPS, testified regarding language access.
- Carl Hall, parent, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Steven Van Dyke, member, Voices for BPS Families, testified regarding school reopening.
- Jessica Tahiraj, parent, Kilmer K-8 School, testified regarding school reopening.
- Marcie Carmody, member, Voices for BPS Families, testified regarding school reopening.
- Shery Keleher, parent, Warren-Prescott K-8 and Boston Latin, testified regarding remote learning.
- Jessica McGovern, parent, Eliot K-8 Innovation School, testified regarding school reopening.
- Megan Castro, parent of a special education student, testified regarding school reopening.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved - On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$355,867.

Dr. Coleman briefly reviewed the Superintendent's performance goals as part of her School Year (SY) 2020-21 Performance Evaluation. The goals cover four main areas: English Learners; special education students; central office; and COVID response. Each of the four goals is accompanied by interim goals and strategies, as well as specific targets for measurement.

Dr. Coleman praised the Superintendent for her commitment to being evaluated by goals related to student performance rather than the implementation of strategies to achieve those goals. He noted that due the pandemic, the district can anticipate a drop in student performance as a result of lost learning time. Also due to the pandemic, BPS may not be able to complete traditional

assessments of student learning. The Superintendent and School Committee are committed to exploring the use of alternate metrics.

Ms. Robinson requested that the Committee receive updates on the district's progress on goals in future presentations. Dr. Coleman suggested that the Committee conduct a self evaluation. Ms. Oliver-Dávila agreed.

Mr. O'Neill spoke about balancing aspirational goals with realistic goals. He said that it's important to have a shared understanding of goals and expectations. Dr. Coleman spoke about the importance of using both leading and lagging indicators.

Approved - On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent's School Year (SY) 2020-21 performance evaluation goals as part of the Superintendent's SY 2020-21 Performance Evaluation Process.

REPORTS

Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Membership and Charge - Ms. Oliver-Dávila presented for the Committee's consideration the membership and charge of the Exam Schools Admissions Task Force.

In October 2020, the Committee approved the Exam Schools Admissions Criteria for SY 2021-22, as well as a resolution supporting the additional recommendations put forth by the Superintendent's Exam School Admissions Working Group. Among those recommendations was the establishment of a School Committee Task Force to continue the work initiated by the Working Group to advise on permanent efforts to expand the exam school applicant pool and an exam school admissions criteria for future years. As a Task Force of the School Committee, this group will be subject to MA Open Meeting Laws, ensuring transparency and providing opportunities for community engagement and input throughout the process.

The proposed 13 members represent a broad and diverse set of constituencies that is reflective of the Committee's commitment to racial, ethnic, and gender diversity:

- Co-Chair, Michael Contompasis, former Boston Latin School Head of School and former BPS Superintendent
- Co-Chair, Tanisha Sullivan, President, NAACP Boston Branch and former BPS Chief Equity Officer
- Pastor Samuel Acevedo, Co-Chair, Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force
- Acacia Aguirre, parent, John D. O'Bryant School of Math and Science
- Matt Cregor, Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee, Supreme Judicial Court
- Tanya Freeman-Wisdom, Head of School, John D. O'Bryant School of Math and Science
- Katherine Grassa, Principal, Curley K-8 School
- Zena Lum, parent, Boston Latin Academy
- Danyael Morales, student, Boston Latin Academy
- Zoe Nagasawa, student, Boston Latin School
- Rachel Skerritt, Head of School, Boston Latin School
- Rosann Tung, Independent Researcher; and
- Tamara Waite, parent, Philbrick Elementary School

Ms. Oliver-Dávila read the proposed charge aloud for the record:

Building upon the work initiated by the Superintendent's Exam Schools Admissions Criteria Working Group, the Boston School Committee Exam Schools Admissions Task Force shall develop a set of recommendations for the admissions policy for Boston Public Schools exam schools. The desired outcome is to expand the applicant pool, and create an admissions process that will support student enrollment at each of the exam schools such that rigor is maintained and the student body better reflects the racial, socioeconomic, and geographic diversity of all students (K-12) in the city of Boston. The Task Force shall consider use of the new NWEA assessment and other factors and leverage learning from a full review of the implementation of the SY 21-22 admissions criteria, as well as a thorough review of practices in other districts.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila recommended that the Task Force report back to the School Committee by May 26, 2021 to allow for the Committee to take action prior to the start of the next admissions cycle.

Mr. Contompasis said that the Task Force is eager to receive feedback from the community and explore admissions criteria in other districts.

Mr. O'Neill asked Mr. Contompasis about the Task Force's planned review of the implementation of the exam school entrance criteria for SY 21-22. Mr. Contompasis said that the Task Force will take a thorough review at this year's process to better understand the impact of the median family income and zip code aspects of the exam school entrance criteria for SY 21-22.

The Committee is scheduled to vote on the Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Membership and Charge on January 27th.

Office of Equity Update - Assistant Superintendent of Equity Becky Shuster presented the district's annual update from the Office of Equity to the Committee.

In School Year (SY) 2019-20, the Office of Equity:

- Conducted and administered 46 training sessions for BPS employees:
 - 20 Equity Protocols open enrollment, school or department specific, and remedial sessions
 - 10 Racial Equity Planning Tool sessions in partnership with Office of Opportunity Gaps
 - 8 Welcoming Schools sessions
 - 6 Racial Equity and Hiring sessions in partnership with Office of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity
 - 2 LGBTQ+ Student Support sessions

- Expanded affinity group work and resources districtwide, including:
 - Facilitated two monthly White anti-racist affinity groups for Central Office staff, and a pilot series for Mendell School staff and parents

- Provided equity training and education for BPS students:
 - 13 Saturday remedial training sessions in partnership with Counseling & Intervention Center at Succeed Boston
 - 24/7 Respect program to educate students how to prevent and address bias-based and sexual misconduct in person, by text, and on social media
 - Production of new video, “24/7 Respect,” winner of Communicator Award and Telly Award
 - Second annual BPS rollout for 6th grade students
 - Year one of national rollout with grants from Novo Foundation, Teaching Tolerance, and Eversource

Responded to over 1,200 formal employee, student, and family concerns, including:

- 107 investigations and investigative reviews conducted by the Office of Equity
- 557 investigations conducted by school administrators designated by Equity
- 208 responses to disability and religious accommodation requests
- 363 consultations to school and Central Office administrators and other employees

Seventy-six percent of incident reports were student-to-student. Employee misconduct reports and violations are declining. Fifty-two percent of reports of bias-based incidents by employees were related to race. Forty-four percent of reports of bias-based incidents by students were related to race; thirty-one percent were related to sexual-orientation.

The Office of Equity is applying an equity lens to decision-making by:

- In partnership with Office of Opportunity Gaps, provided internal consultancy to numerous departments and working groups, particularly related to operations
- Built capacity for equity impact analysis and strategy across the district, including reviewing all School Committee Equity Impact Statements
- Partnered with Offices of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity and Opportunity Gaps to hire and retain educators, school leaders, and Central Office leaders of Color through training, hiring protocols, innovation, and accountability
- Completed district-wide assessment of gender equity in athletics

In SY 2020-21, the Office of Equity:

- Responded to 650 COVID-related disability- and pregnancy-related accommodation requests to date
- Conducted equity analysis of school reopening options in partnership with Office of Opportunity Gaps and others
- Supporting Equity Roundtables and other equity analyses, particularly in operations
- Preventing and addressing incidents on Zoom and other remote platforms with Office of Information and Instructional Technology, school administrators, and Counseling and Intervention Center

Other key goals for SY20-21:

- Establishing standards for BPS Equity Champions and Equity Seal of Excellence in partnership with Division
 - Student and staff equity champions
 - Equity seal of excellence for schools/departments
 - Arc of learning on Equity protocols, anti-racism and cultural proficiency for individuals and teams
- Launching new LGBTQ+ Student Support Manager, and developing and implementing work plan
- Holding 3rd annual 24/7 Respect program for all BPS middle/high schoolers, and continuing national rollout
- Expanding White anti-racist affinity groups in Central Office and schools
- Piloting and replicating BPS Dialogues on Race

Dr. Coleman praised the work of Ms. Shuster and her team in the Office of Equity.

Dr. Rivera asked for the total number of bias-based incidents reported last year. Ms. Shuster said that 100 allegations were made among employees, less than half of which resulted in a finding. She said that her office conducted 557 investigations among students. Dr. Rivera asked about the district's response to Zoom bombing incidents. Ms. Shuster said that the Office of Equity works with the Office of Information and Technology to respond to inappropriate Zoom incidents. She noted that incidents involving non-BPS students are reflective of security problems. The Office of Equity works with teachers and students to process the impact of those incidents.

Mr. James asked how the Office of Equity supports students' sense of safety. Ms. Shuster spoke about how the district ensures confidentiality and provides protection from retaliation. She said

that the “24/7 Respect” video is an important tool for teaching students about bias-based incidents.

Ms. Robinson asked how the district assesses the impact of equity training. Ms. Shuster said some people are learning that the district takes this seriously and have improved their behavior.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila praised the Office of Equity for its work. She asked about training for younger students about bullying and social media. Mrs. Shuster said that the Welcoming Schools program serves elementary schools. The Office of Instructional and Informational Technology provides students with digital citizenship programming. The Counseling and Intervention Center teaches bullying prevention starting from the youngest grades. Ms. Oliver-Dávila encouraged parents to volunteer to support the digital citizenship program.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. James requested a review of the district’s grading policy in light of the COVID pandemic. Ms. Oliver-Dávila said that the Superintendent is looking at flexibilities and will follow up. The Superintendent spoke about the value of meaningful work vs. busy work. Ms. Robinson said that grading should be examined at all grade levels.

ADJOURN

At approximately 10:02 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary