



## OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REMOTE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

January 26, 2022

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on January 26, 2022 at 5 p.m. on Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit [www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee), email [feedback@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:feedback@bostonpublicschools.org) or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

### ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Jeri Robinson; Vice Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Dr. Stephen Alkins; Brandon Cardet-Hernandez; Lorena Lopera; Rafaela Polanco Garcia; Quoc Tran; and Student Representative Xyra Mercer.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

### DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

[Agenda](#)

[Meeting Minutes: January 12, 2022](#)

[Grants for Approval Totaling \\$741,714](#)

[BPS Code of Conduct, Revised September 2021](#)

[Safety Services Update PowerPoint](#)

[Safety Services Update Memo](#)

[Safety Services Update Equity Impact Statement](#)

[High School Redesign Update PowerPoint](#)

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## CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. All members were present with the exception of Ms. Mercer, who joined the meeting during the Superintendent's report.

Ms. Robinson 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](https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee) and on YouTube. She announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cabo Verdean, 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. Translated meeting documents were posted at [www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee) prior to the start of the meeting.

Ms. Robinson introduced and welcomed Brandon Cardet-Hernandez who was appointed to the School Committee by Mayor Wu the previous day. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez is currently the Executive Director of The Ivy Street School, a residential and day school in Brookline that helps neurodiverse students transition into adulthood. He has devoted his career to advancing equity and access for young people. A life-long educator, Cardet-Hernandez has worked as a community organizer, college and career counselor, and special education teacher. Most recently, Cardet-Hernandez served as the Senior Education Advisor to Former New York City Mayor Bill DeBlasio, overseeing key initiatives, including the nation's largest expansion of early childhood education, the design and launch of a citywide Restorative Justice and Social-Emotional Learning program, and key elements of the Mayor's signature Equity and Excellence Agenda. Notably, he handled the COVID-19 emergency response in NYC public schools. He lives in South Boston with his husband and 4-year old son. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez joins Dr. Stephen Alkins, who was appointed to the Committee by Mayor Wu earlier this month.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez said that he is honored to serve on the School Committee and affirmed his support for students, families and educators. He said that due to a prior commitment, he would have to depart the meeting for a short period before rejoining, adding that he looks forward to hearing public comment. Committee members welcomed Mr. Cardet-Hernandez.

## APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

***Approved*** – On roll call, the Committee approved the minutes of the January 12, 2022 School Committee meeting. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez abstained. All other members voted yes.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

*As prepared for delivery.*

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Thank you, Madame Chair, and thank you all for joining us tonight. These past few weeks have been incredibly busy and challenging. And I just want to thank everyone as we - together do everything possible to ensure our kids are well served during this very difficult time. I also again want to thank our families for all of their help and patience. They have sacrificed and given so much during this time to support their children and our educators. This evening, I will share many district updates, but as usual, I will begin with some district highlights.

The first highlight will not be accompanied by my usual slideshow, so we are able to spotlight our incredible teachers on camera and so our interpreters can be seen. My slideshow will begin after this section. I am pleased to share with you that after an extended review and selection process which considered over 400 unique nominations, we are revealing the twelve finalists for the 2021 BPS Educator of the Year award. The selection process involved a stakeholder committee including representatives from BPS, BTU, and City Hall, who reviewed 400+ unique nominations across the following categories: Teacher, Related Service Provider, Nurse, Paraprofessionals and other support staff. Because the COVID-19 pandemic emergency interrupted this process in SY2020, there were no 2020 winners, however, nominations of educators who remained in the same roles in 2021 were included in this year's review. Compelling nominations substantiated with evidence such as student work samples or letters of support, and later, a confidential vetting process involving evaluation and conduct history helped us reach this finalist group, which I am happy to report is representative of the rich diversity of our community.

Without further ado, I am so proud to present the 2021 Educator Of The Year award to the following BPS staff:

Representing the category of Related Service Provider, congratulations to:

- Lucinda Mills, a district Social Worker providing behavioral health services, and
- Maria Monteiro- Roby, a Guidance Counselor at Brighton High School

Representing the category of Nurse, congratulations to:

- Nurse Marta Bausemer of Boston Green Academy and
- Nurse Adalis Henriquez of the Josiah Quincy Upper School.

Representing the category of Paraprofessional, congratulations to:

- Juan Diaz of the Edison K-8 and
- Amy Lucidnezein of the Philbrick School

And last but certainly not least, representing the category of Teacher, congratulations to:

- Langston Peace, a history teacher at the Excel Academy
- Amanda Khatcherian, a health teacher at the Edward M. Kennedy School of Health and Science
- Ta-Tanisha Curry, a K2-1st grade teacher at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School
- Kimberly Kulasekaran, a Special Education Lead Teacher at the Carter School
- Konstantinos Petmezis, a teacher at the Curley School, and

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- Cheralyn Pinchem, a history teacher at Boston Latin School

Your unwavering dedication and commitment to our students and school communities embodies the characteristics of a Boston Public Schools staff member. I know that the past two years have been especially challenging. Your will to persevere and bring your best to the district every day is admirable. BPS is much better for your service. Again, I am so #BPS Proud of you and happy to celebrate you all. Please give our Educators of The Year a virtual round of applause!

Now I'd like to give Erik Berg, Vice President of the BTU, an opportunity to say a few words. Thank you, Erik, and the entire leadership team at the BTU for your partnership - and congratulations again to this year's Educators of the Year!

I will now begin my slideshow with a final acknowledgement of our Educators of the Year.

It is also with great pleasure and pride we would like to announce that Dayanara Mendez Santana, a senior at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School in Dorchester, has been selected as a POSSE Scholar and will be attending Centre College in the fall on a full scholarship! Dayanara was selected from over 1,100 high school student leaders. She is one of ten students to win a full-tuition, four-year scholarship to Centre College, worth over \$200,000! We know how expensive college is right now, and this is an incredible opportunity. Dayanara is a very active and energetic student who loves sports, math and science, and considers her faith to be a big part of her life. In addition to being an exemplary student, she works part time at a pharmacy after school. She is interested in pursuing a career in medicine. Congratulations to you, Dayanara. You are an example of the bright and brilliant students produced by BPS. Make us proud at Centre College. I cannot wait to hear about your college experience.

The Burke High School also produced a large number of finalists for the POSSE scholarship. I would also like to recognize Anh Do, a POSSE scholarship finalist, and scholarship semi-finalists:

- Esmardin Sanchez
- Connor Lashley
- Kayla Duke Tull

This recognition as finalists is quite an accomplishment. I hope you are as proud of yourselves as I am of you and I know your families must be too. I too look forward to hearing from you about your college choices, scholarship opportunities and your plans for the future! I would also like to acknowledge Burke High School Head of School, Amilcar Silva, and Burke's Senior Academy Team Leader, Dr. Petra, for cultivating our students' drive and educational success. I am very proud of the both of you as well.

I will now move on to some district updates. At the last school committee meeting we had several testifiers regarding the Shaw Elementary School and I know that there are several here tonight as well, to speak in support of their school community. My team had a meeting scheduled with the Shaw prior to their testimony that occurred just after the meeting. I also met with the school site council to listen to their concerns. I shared with them that I was not aware of why

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they had come to the school committee. They informed me that their enrollment had declined in the 3rd grade and that they would be losing one-third grade class. Currently they have two second grade classrooms that have 11 kids each and next year's 3rd grade would have 22 which is within the class size limits. Historically, we have adjusted classrooms based on enrollment, however the past several years we have held schools harmless and this has been challenging. They also informed me that when they reopened, they were promised to extend their grades to K5. Another site council member said that Mildred Ave, to which they feed was not supposed to expand from 4-8 to K0-K8 and that Ellison EEC and Taylor K3 were to be the feeders.

Because of the pandemic and because we have had to pause much of the Build BPS planning, this information is new to me. I was unaware of such promises and I will follow up with the team and the school community to sort out the next steps for the Shaw School. As you know, the budget is not final until we have school committee approval, and city council sign off. We are very early in that process and schools have been given their preliminary budgets and are going through the budget collaboration process. The Shaw was scheduled for their budget review today and that begins their process. The overall budget has also not yet been presented to the School Committee which starts February 2 and a series of hearings will follow for schools to weigh in, and for the school committee to hear from the public and make any recommendations. I appreciate the Shaw families' love of their school community and their advocacy. I hope that they will be patient with us as we work through the budgeting process and we weigh all 125 schools equitably against the dollars we've been allocated by the city, to ensure that we treat all schools fairly and equitably during this budget process. I have promised the school community that I would stay engaged with them and their school leader.

I know there are several testifiers here about our exam school admission policy. I am in receipt of their concerns. As we continue to implement our new policy, I want to assure our families that we ensure equity and we are committed to a full evaluation of this first implementation. The first few weeks of the year presented a great challenge as the Omicron variant took hold in our City and our neighborhoods. Boston's citywide positivity rate hit almost 33% at its height, and our BPS community logged growing absences amongst teachers, staff and students. The BPS community does what we have always done, which is to rally the support of the whole team and get the work done. I am happy to report that while we still have students and staff who are battling COVID-19, the COVID-19 numbers are beginning to trend in the right direction. BPHC is still reporting a decline in COVID-19 cases and test positivity rates, and we have been able to resume our athletic activities, singing and the use of wind instruments. This week we reported 886 COVID cases to DESE, which is approximately half the number of cases that were reported two weeks ago. As COVID cases go down, we are also seeing an increase in student and staff attendance. Numbers continue to move in the right direction and as long as they do, we hope to progressively remove the additional surge mitigation we have put in place.

As previously mentioned, the City of Boston enacted a new COVID-19 vaccine requirement on January 15. The Mayor's team announced this past weekend that they are delaying full implementation by one week. All City employees, including BPS staff have to show proof of at least the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or they could be placed on unpaid administrative leave on Monday January 31st. We remain in negotiations with our union partners regarding the

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Vaccine Policy and will notify the community should there be any changes. We've done a lot of work to support our employees coming into compliance. Last year, once vaccines became available, we lifted up a vaccine clinic for BPS employees, vaccinating thousands in just a few weeks. Since then we've hosted over 80 vaccine clinics at our schools for both staff, students and their families. We've also hosted dozens of vaccine clinics at our bus yards and recently added more vaccine clinics at some of our administrative buildings. Our central office team has been meeting with school leadership at schools where we anticipate impacts on staffing. They've been developing targeted, collaborative plans to cover any potential staff shortages in schools, and we have been in steady communications with our school leaders.

We will continue to deploy substitute teachers, temporary staff, and central office team members to cover any staffing shortages in schools. We know that this has the potential to cause difficulty, and we are working around the clock to identify solutions. I am grateful for our central office colleagues who have stepped up and supported our school-based teams. With over 11,600 employees, I am thankful to the 94% of our workforce who have received their vaccine. We know that this is an important step to ensuring the health and safety for our students and staff. We will continue to work with any employee who needs more information or support accessing a vaccine. We value our workforce and recognize that for some, there are historical reasons for hesitation or further questions. We are also working with school leaders to communicate any specific updates to their families on the potential impact of staffing challenges on their students' learning teams.

The Massachusetts Departments of Public Health and Elementary and Secondary Education announced on Tuesday, January 18 an alternative testing option to the Test and Stay protocol that school districts can opt into. The state will provide at-home rapid tests for distribution to the students and staff who would like to receive them. This testing option would be in lieu of Test and Stay, and would allow staff and students, regardless of their vaccination status, to receive a rapid antigen test for their use at home, weekly. Pool and symptomatic testing would still be available through the updated program. BPS staff and students, through their legal guardians, would be able from the comfort of their homes to take a test, and in case of a positive result, stay home and report that result to their schools. It is important to add, if this policy is adopted, that the State would require staff and parents to sign a new opt-in form in order to receive at-home rapid tests. The consent form that parents previously signed permitting their child to participate in pool testing, Test and Stay, and symptomatic testing will not count towards the at-home rapid testing option. We have been reviewing this policy closely, weighing what it would mean to shift away from pool testing in schools, seeking to understand how the district could reliably review results from at-home testing, and strategizing how we would collect those results. We sent questions back to DESE and have engaged with District staff, School Staff, SpedPac, BSAC and Families to hear feedback about the latest guidance. We are in daily consultation with the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) as we consider all options. We have to verify the delivery of these tests and ensure we can rely on this supply on a consistent basis before making decisions. We will share an update with our entire community once we have gathered all of the information and finalized our approach.

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During my report at the last School Committee meeting, I shared our approach at that time to the isolation guidance issued by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in late December — which, under some circumstances, reduced the length of isolation for COVID-positive people from 10 to 5 days. We adapted that approach for vaccinated and asymptomatic staff, but continued to follow BPHC guidance that directed students to isolate for 10 days if they tested positive. Since then, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) announced an updated guidance on January 21 regarding isolation and quarantine. I want to be clear in this update that isolation is what is expected of individuals who are confirmed positive with COVID-19, and quarantine is for individuals who are known to have been exposed to a person who is confirmed positive with COVID-19. We must continue to exercise good judgment to keep our community safe. The new CDC guidelines reduced the number of days of isolation from 10 to 5 only IF the exposed individual does not have symptoms and can properly and consistently wear a mask for the remaining 5 days. We have adopted this approach with staff, but BPHC added in the requirement to include a negative antigen test as a required part of coming back after 5 days if symptoms have stopped or are improving. If symptoms are not improving and the individual still has a fever, or the individual cannot mask properly or does not achieve a negative test, they are still required to observe the full 10 days of isolation. This is regardless of vaccine status. We are continuing to review the new guidance in conjunction with BPHC for students, as we closely monitor city and school-based data. But, as of today BPS students must still abide by the 10-day isolation period if they test positive. The health and safety of our students and staff is a top priority for BPS, and we will continue to review public health guidance and provide consistent communication if there are any new changes.

As a reminder, BPS IS HIRING! Please visit our website at [bostonpublicschools.org/jobs](https://bostonpublicschools.org/jobs) for a full list of our available roles and opportunities with the district. We are also working to simplify the application process, write more approachable job descriptions, and to promote openings via our social media channels. Additionally, the BPS Office of Recruitment, Cultivation and Diversity Programs will participate in the City of Boston Virtual Job Fair on Saturday, January 29, 2022. The office will be collecting resumes and providing real-time application support to all who attend that are interested in joining BPS as a substitute or paraprofessional. A cultivated list of attendees will be shared with school leaders following the fair. As of this morning, the City of Boston informed us that 111 people have registered for the job fair. Please visit [boston.gov](https://boston.gov) or Google search “*City of Boston Virtual Job Fair*” to sign up.

I want to finish my Superintendent report by setting the table for an important report you will hear later tonight on our work with High School Redesign. I want to highlight a few important points that are critical to our strategy to successfully implement new academic programs and supports that will lead to increased opportunities for student achievement and ensure every student in every high school graduates ready for college, career, and life. We have significant work ahead of us, but we have also made progress despite the pandemic. While student achievement data reveals persistent achievement gaps, we have seen movement. And while our graduation rate is up and our dropout rate is down, the underlying data shows us the urgency of the work ahead and that we cannot wait to take decisive action to achieve our vision of an excellent and equitable education. Given the tremendous strain that comes with mitigating a

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global pandemic and the immense challenge we are all coming out of with this latest surge, we know we have to move and move boldly for our students to recover. Our students and parents want to see us improve all our high schools and provide the support needed so every graduate is ready to achieve their dreams. Our organization- and our partner organizations- have produced many reports which have confirmed what we have known for a long time, Boston has not delivered on a promise of a high-quality and rigorous education for all of our students, most especially for our black and brown students as well as for our students with disabilities and our multilingual learners. Today I am sharing foundational work we have commenced during the past two years and also necessary changes for next year that outline our immediate next steps at systemwide level changes to continue our work and deliver on the promise and commitments we've made to the community. Evidence reminds us that we cannot achieve the goals by focusing solely on structural interventions. Past interventions – small schools, changing grade configurations, or making major staffing changes – have not worked because they have not been paired with an overall strategy to systematically improve teaching and learning across the secondary level.

Without a doubt, structural changes, and particularly major facility improvements and new builds, and the grade configurations we will discuss tonight, must be part of the strategy, but the central component of our work must center on good and effective teaching and learning with a specific focus on our students from diverse backgrounds, multilingual students and students with disabilities. To achieve that goal, we will focus on increasing academic rigor, academic support, and enrichment opportunities for our students, most especially for students we have not historically served well in our schools. This is why we spent the needed hours on developing, in collaboration with the Boston School Committee, a critical foundation for high school redesign: MassCore common graduation requirements, Inclusionary practice and Native Language Literacy that can lead to a Seal of Biliteracy on our students diploma.

One of the keys to a strong, aligned and coherent strategy is setting the standards and expectations. I am grateful to this body for passing the MassCore Common Graduation Requirements. The lack of common graduation requirements has interfered with the work of improvement for years. This is a huge foundational achievement to all other work to follow. At its core, this policy will work to ensure that ALL of our students have a well-rounded 21st century academic experience that prepares students for the demands of college and career. It also requires that all BPS students have access to a sequence of courses that would allow for admission into a state university. As a tangible example, next year Brighton High School will offer additional STEM electives at the school including a biotech pathway and an entrepreneurship pathway that will begin in grade 9. In the presentation tonight, we will share more details about what this will look like for our students.

Native Language Instruction and Seal of Biliteracy: The Seal of Biliteracy is another opportunity for us to set-up our students for success in college and career. The Seal encourages students to pursue biliteracy, honors the skills our students attain and serves as evidence of skills that are attractive to college and employers. As the district pursues instructional initiatives, which build and focus on native language instruction and Heritage Language programs we will develop systems that allow more students to graduate from our high schools across the city with the Seal.



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Inclusionary practices will provide opportunities for our students with disabilities to have greater access to programming their peers have had for years and also provide less concentration of special education programming and more opportunity across the city making schools more accessible and giving families more choice in their child's educational placement.

Students also deserve access to a well-rounded education that supports their development as active members of their school and home communities. This includes an expansion in athletics and arts, adding more field trips and expeditionary learning, new and expanded before and after school programs, and civic engagement programs including debate and student government.

The final point that I want to make is that Boston operates from a position of strength. We have talented educators and school leaders who are eager to lead transformation and create the schools we all want and our children deserve. We have committed families who love their children and rightfully are demanding improvement from our system. We must continue to listen carefully to their voices and leverage the collective strength of their advocacy. There is also significant industry strength in our city, many of whom are poised to provide internship, research and career opportunities for our students and we need to continue engaging with them and the PIC to design and create even more opportunities. We are thankful for the tremendous support of our City, Mayor Wu and former Mayors, and our engaged and supportive City Council. All who want to see BPS successful. The talent and resources are already here. Boston is ready. And we are stronger together. I've said all along this will be an all hands on deck effort. Coming out of this recovery and taking on the challenges ahead- will surely be worthy work. Our job school committee is to ensure every school gets the resources and attention it needs to make it possible and for you to hold me and my team accountable to executing our work. We must meet this moment for our students and I hope you will see that the presentation tonight sets the path forward.

And that is my Superintendent's Report for this evening.

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Ms. Lopera asked about testing air quality in communal spaces such as auditoriums and cafeterias. Deputy Superintendent of Operations Sam DePina said that BPS does not have air quality sensors in larger spaces, adding that he will follow up with the district's rationale. Ms. Lopera requested guidance provided to schools about cafeteria use vs. eating in classrooms. Ms. Lopera asked about the district's efforts to expand native language instruction. Deputy Superintendent of Academics Drew Echelson said that expanding native language instruction is central to the Superintendent's strategic plan. He said that his team is working closely with the Committee's English Language Learners Task Force on this issue. The Superintendent recently approved a \$10 million investment to support this work.

Ms. Mercer requested clarity on the COVID positivity cases reported to the district. The district is not capturing rapid home test results. The Superintendent said BPS will continue to expand vaccine opportunities for students. Ms. Mercer requested clarity on the planned improvements of the high school redesign work. The Superintendent said the work includes physical,

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programmatic and academic improvements. She added that some of the programmatic changes are school-based decisions.

Dr. Alkins asked for projections on the number of teachers being impacted by the City's vaccine mandate. The Superintendent said that she anticipates some disruption due to the implementation of the City's vaccine mandate policy and that she and her team are monitoring the situation closely.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked when families can expect to see greater access to rigorous coursework and what success looks like. The Superintendent said that much of the redesign work is already underway. She added that success means more students have the opportunity to take advanced courses, specifically at least two advanced courses before graduating from high school. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked how the budget will support learning recovery. The Superintendent said that her FY23 budget proposal will be reflective of the current needs of students impacted by the pandemic, including increased mental health supports, athletics, and co-curricular partnerships. The budget will also provide additional support for English learners and students with disabilities.

Ms. Polanco Garcia asked about planned grade reconfiguration for King and Trotter schools. The Superintendent explained that the schools' planned reconfigurations from K-8 to pre-K-6 have been planned in collaboration with the Grove Hall Alliance. The Burke High School, which will add grades 7-8, has held a school equity roundtable about the planned expansion. Ms. Polanco Garcia strongly encouraged the district to further engage the Trotter and King communities about the planned grade reconfigurations. The Superintendent said that impacted families will receive priority in the school choice process.

Mr. O'Neill congratulated Educators of the Year.

Ms. Lopera asked about the district's engagement with the King and Trotter School communities. The Superintendent said that she has spoken with the school leaders who are working directly with families. Ms. Lopera said she looks forward to hearing from students and families about this potential change. Superintendent spoke about the additional resources and support that 7 & 8 grade students will receive at the Burke, adding that pandemic recovery is part of the rationale for the reconfigurations.

Ms. Robinson said she looks forward to more family engagement with the impacted schools. She encouraged district leaders to communicate clearly with families and to ensure that all voices are heard. She requested clarity about the potential shift in COVID testing protocols. The Superintendent said that if BPS decides to change its testing protocols, those changes would need to be implemented districtwide. She said that she and her team are taking the time necessary to better understand the DESE policy and engage with stakeholders. Mr. DePina said that districts must provide the state with two weeks' notice before changing testing protocols.

***Approved*** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent's Report.

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**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following people testified regarding the future of the P.A. Shaw Elementary School:

- Glason DeSouto Sanches, Dorchester resident and Shaw student
- Emersyn Wise, Dorchester resident and Shaw student
- Jahmai Sullivan, Dorchester resident and Shaw student
- Skyla Nichols, Mattapan resident and Shaw student
- Andrew Robinson, Mattapan resident and Shaw student
- Nehemie Journal, Mattapan resident and Shaw student
- Amelia Edmund, Mattapan resident and Shaw student
- Tiffany Vassell, Mattapan resident and Shaw parent
- Ramona Shea Marsceill, Dorchester resident and Shaw student
- Deb Shea, Dorchester resident and Shaw parent
- Oneida Casado, Dorchester resident and Shaw teacher
- Lisa Robinson, Mattapan resident and Shaw parent
- Tracy Curtain, Jamaica resident and Shaw teacher

The following people testified regarding the potential impact of the exam schools admissions policy's 10-bonus points on the Manning Elementary School:

- Bang Nguyen, West Roxbury resident and Manning Elementary School parent
  - Daniel Noemi, Jamaica Plain resident and Manning Elementary School parent
  - Jeannette Aitelhadj, West Roxbury resident and Manning Elementary School parent
  - Kanako Ito Nguyen, West Roxbury resident and Manning Elementary School parent
  - Victoria Woodward, Brighton resident and Manning Elementary School parent
  - Margaret Day, Jamaica Plain resident and Manning Elementary School parent
  - Erin Birmingham Anadu, Roslindale resident and Manning Elementary School parent
  - Nick Neri, Jamaica Plain resident and Manning Elementary School parent
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- Estephany Almanzar, Dorchester resident and Blackstone Elementary School parent, testified regarding COVID health and safety.
  - Michael Heichman, Dorchester resident and Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA) member, testified regarding a variety of education-related issues.
  - Nancy Lessin, Jamaica Plain resident and member of BPS Families for COVID Safety and MassCOSH, testified regarding COVID health and safety.
  - Shery Keleher, Charlestown resident and BPS parent, testified regarding a variety of education-related issues.
  - Ruby Reyes, Dorchester resident and BEJA executive director, testified regarding the budget.
  - Janet Platt, Ashland resident and Boston Day & Evening Academy teachers, testified regarding potential impact of the City's vaccine mandate on BDEA staffing.
  - Elise Pechter, Jamaica Plain resident and member of MassCOSH, testified regarding COVID health and safety.

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- Ymaris Matias, South End resident and Orchard Gardens K-8 School parent, testified in favor of BPS offering a remote learning option.
- Dacia Morales, South End resident and BPS parent, testified in favor of BPS offering a remote learning option.
- Edith Bazile, Dorchester resident and advocate, testified regarding the district's use of the racial equity planning tool.
- Jason Samaha, Wilmington resident and Madison Park Technical Vocational High School teacher, testified in support of the Superintendent's Intervention Plan for Madison Park.
- Judith Baker, Dorchester resident and member of Friends of Madison Park, testified in support of the Superintendent's Intervention Plan for Madison Park.
- Courtney Feeley Karp, Roslindale resident and Henderson Inclusion School parent, testified regarding COVID health and safety.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

Dr. Alkins praised Ms. Mercer and the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) for organizing a student walkout earlier this month. He requested an update on the progress of the Kaleidoscope advisory teams. The Superintendent agreed to follow up with the information. Region 1 Assistant Superintendent Tommy Welch said that the Kaleidoscope initiative kicked off this year at schools in East Boston, the North End and Charlestown. The grant before the Committee for approval this evening will fund professional development.

Ms. Robinson requested that the district provide the Committee with a full report on Kaleidoscope in the near future.

Mr. Tran asked about the grant to support teacher diversity. The Superintendent explained that the grant will support MTL licensure and will help the district retain new teachers. Mr. Tran asked about the bullying prevention grant. The Superintendent said that the funding will help BPS increase awareness about bullying prevention and safe spaces..

Dr. Alkins asked clarifying questions about the teacher diversity grant. Ceronne Daly, Managing Director, Office of Recruitment, Cultivation and Diversity Programs, explained that the funding will provide teachers with a second certification rather than a directed focus on a particular grade level.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Boston School Committee approved grants for approval totaling \$741,714. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez abstained. All other members voted yes.

Mr. Tran expressed concern about the lack of Asian representation among school safety officers. Ms. Coakley Grice said that her office is aggressively recruiting diverse staff and planning extensive training modules.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked about the district's engagement with stakeholders regarding the revision of the Code of Conduct. Assistant Superintendent, Division of Schools, Dacia Campbell

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explained that the engagement included students, parents, school-based staff, school administrators, central office leaders, and the Code of Conduct Advisory Council (COCAC). She said that the Code of Conduct is updated every couple of years, adding that the most recent update was delayed due to the pandemic. The current revision focuses largely on the expansion of restorative justice practices and equity. The updated Code is simplified and shortened to make it more user-friendly.

Ms. Lopera asked how the district has addressed the concerns about the revision that were raised by COCAC last fall. Ms. Campbell said that the district re-engaged with COCAC and was able to come to an agreement about the district's plan for restorative justice practices and the use of the racial equity tool. She said that COCAC expressed satisfaction with the district's commitment in those areas. She reaffirmed the district's commitment to working with COCAC moving forward.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez said that he was glad to learn that the Code is updated regularly. The Superintendent spoke about the value of regularly reviewing and updating district policies.

Mr. O'Neill briefly summarized the evolution of the BPS Code of Conduct (formerly the Code of Discipline) for the benefit of newer School Committee members.

Ms. Mercer thanked the district for updating the Code and for listening to students.

Dr. Alkins asked when the Committee will receive an updated analysis using the racial equity planning tool. Mr. DePina said that after the Committee approves the revised Code, the district will move forward with the training and implementation, at which time he will have a better sense of the timeline moving forward.

The Superintendent described the BPS COC as the progressive Code she has ever worked with.

Ms. Campbell confirmed that BPS does not release COC records to colleges and/or the military.

Mr. Tran requested a future update on the success of the district's restorative justice practices.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved the revised Boston Public Schools Code of Conduct.

## REPORT

**High School Redesign Update** - Superintendent Cassellius presented an update on the district's 7-12 high school redesign work. She was joined by Chief of Schools Corey Harris and Deputy Superintendent of Academics Drew Echelson.

BPS Must Provide Every Student with a Quality Guarantee

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- Academics: High quality ethnically and culturally responsive curriculum, instruction and career pathways
- Enrichment: Access to arts, sports, student government, and safe places to go before and after school
- Facilities: 21st century buildings with access to science labs, technology, libraries, gymnasiums, and performance , supportive and green spaces
- Student & Family Supports: Resources for families so our students, families, and communities can thrive

The High School Redesign project aims to increase rigor and advanced learning opportunities for historically underserved and marginalized students. It will create seats in high quality, joyful classrooms across seven high schools, with an emphasis for SY 2022-23 on schools engaged in Phase 2—English High School, Burke High School, Brighton High School. The King School, and Trotter School are K-8 schools that will become K-6. These schools will set specific goals to eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps, especially for Black, Latinx, and Asian students, as well as English learners, students with disabilities, and other historically underserved populations. BPS is working to increase the number of inclusive opportunities across our high schools and decrease the number of substantially separate classrooms. BPS is also working to build and expand opportunities for English language learners by collaborating with stakeholders, developing educator capacity, and adopting the MA State Seal of Biliteracy.

This proposal includes recommendations to shift the English, Burke, and Brighton High Schools to 7th through 12th grades; shift the King and Trotter to kindergarten to 6th grades; and place Charlestown High School, McKinley K-12, and Madison Park High School into intervention status for school improvement. All schools in this cohort will create access and remove barriers for our most vulnerable student bodies through accelerating learning. The High School Redesign process is led by Dr. Lindsa McIntyre and Dr. Elia Bruggeman with the collaboration of various stakeholders who also reflect the diversity of the BPS student population.

All secondary school students will have access to the Core Four: 1. Pre-Advanced Placement and Advanced Placement 2. International Baccalaureate 3. Early College and Dual Enrollment 4. Career and Technical Education Grade reconfiguration will expand quality experiences and predictable pathways for all students, and allow for fewer transitions by moving to a K-6/7-12 or K-8/9-12 model. The Redesign will roll out in phases to mitigate the impact of COVID on school communities. With the implementation of the MassCore, students will be afforded standards-based learning, and have more opportunity to engage in extracurricular activities, such as sports, visual art, music, theater and career exploration. The Intervention process at Charlestown, Madison Park, and the McKinley will include assembling a team of stakeholders, amplifying their voices, a targeted analysis of each school program, and working together to ensure that students and educators get what they need. School improvement intervention recommendations will be made to the Superintendent following the quality review process.

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Ms. Lopera if BPS had conducted an audit of MassCore. Dr. Echelson said that an audit was done in collaboration with Mass Insight. He added that as part of the budget collaborative process this year, district staff are conducting an academic collaborative process with every secondary school leader and members of the Academic Team to ensure that they are ready for implementation of MassCore. He said that the district now has the necessary resources behind MassCore to implement the policy well. The Superintendent said that she would send the MassCore policy vote and supporting materials to Ms. Lopera.

Ms. Lopera requested information comparing the cost of implementing MassCore and current capacity at the school level. The Superintendent said that she would share the district's analysis from its first MassCore presentation to the Committee.

Mr. O'Neill briefly summarized the history of the district's adoption of the MassCore graduation policy for the benefit of the newer Committee members. He asked staff to recirculate the previous MassCore presentations and materials to demonstrate how the policy evolved and gained widespread support as a strategy to improve student success in high school and beyond.

Ms. Robinson asked how teachers in younger grades are preparing their students for MassCore. Dr. Echelson spoke about the importance of the quality guarantee.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked how the district plans to monitor the data to track progress to graduation. Dr. Echelson said that BPS has adopted a universal screener system and will monitor performance-based and interim assessments to look at student growth. The district is also creating a common course catalog.

Brighton High School Head of School Andrew Bott and Jeremiah E. Burke High School Head of School Amilcar Silva presented their perspectives on the high school redesign work as school leaders.

Dr. Alkins asked how the district is supporting students who have experienced learning loss due to the pandemic. Dr. Amilcar described Burke's mitigation efforts, such as giving students who are behind in their work an incomplete. Mr. Bott spoke about offering students credit recovery opportunities. Dr. Echelson spoke about district-level mitigation efforts such as providing online tutoring and acceleration academies. Ms. McIntyre spoke about Burke being a hub community school that provides students with critical wrap-around services.

Mr. O'Neill asked if the Burke and Brighton High Schools will offer 7th and 8th grade academies. Mr. Silva said yes. Mr. Bott said he plans to open a small 7th and 8th grade in the same year, then increase in size. Mr. O'Neill asked how the quality school guarantee connects with hub schools. The Superintendent said that hub schools will become a key component of high school redesign. Mr. Bott said that Brighton High has experienced an increase in enrollment in recent years.

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Ms. Lopera spoke about the need for a comprehensive facilities master plan. The Superintendent agreed, saying that the process has been slowed by multiple mayoral transitions. She said that Mayor Wu is supportive of such a plan. BPS has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a vendor to assess how academic standards will drive any new facility upgrades. BPS is also exploring the Weighted Student Funding (WSF) formula in an effort to more equitably fund schools.

Ms. Lopera asked what is the determining factor for expanding some schools and not others. The Superintendent said that the upcoming assessment will provide more information. Ms. Lopera asked how long some students will be placed in temporary spaces. The Superintendent said that by this fall, district leaders should have a schools needs assessment, adding that the construction process could take several years.

Dr. Alkins asked about the rigor of teacher evaluations. Mr. Harris acknowledged that teacher evaluations have varied and been inconsistent across the board. The Superintendent offered to follow up with more information.

Ms. Robinson asked how many students are graduating with the seal of biliteracy and what languages are offered . Dr. Echelson estimated between 130 to 150 students are graduating annually with the seal of biliteracy. He offered to follow up with a detailed list of the specific languages that BPS offers.

Ms. Robinson asked about the larger vision of what 7-12 learning should look like. The Superintendent explained that her vision involves providing families with a portfolio of high performing schools.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURN**

At approximately 10:55 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



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Zoom**

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A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth Sullivan".

Elizabeth Sullivan  
Executive Secretary