



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REMOTE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

January 27, 2021

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on January 27, 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; Quoc Tran; and student representative Khymani James.

School Committee Member Absent: None.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

Boston School Committee Minutes: January 13, 2021 Meeting; January 20, 2021 Retreat; and January 21, 2021 Retreat

Update on Health and Safety Preparations for Reopening of School Buildings PowerPoint

Reopening Update Equity Impact Statement

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

Request for Policy Flexibility during COVID-19 Pandemic PowerPoint

Memo from Superintendent to Boston School Committee re: Proposal for Flexibility of Policies for School Year 2020-2021

Request for Policy Flexibilities Equity Impact Statement

Boston School Committee Remote Meeting
Zoom
January 27, 2021

Grants for Approval Totaling \$2,143,597:

Amount	FY	Grant Name	Status	Fund Manager	Representative Title	Focus Area(s)	Site(s)
\$23,357	2021	Enhanced Programs for Students on an IEP Continuation Grant	Continuation	Kenya Elisa-McLaren	Expanded Learning Time Grants Manager	SPED	Gardner Pilot Academy
\$403,549	2021	Morgan Chase New Skills Ready Grant	New	Michelle Sylvaria, Monica Hogan, Eva Mitchell	Executive Directors	Career and Technical Education	Districtwide
\$15,000	2021	Massachusetts Work Immersion Network	New	Kevin McCaskill	Executive Director	Career and Technical Education	Madison Park Technical Vocational HS
\$898,019	2021	Secondary Virtual Course Access Grant	New	Christine Landry	Assistant Superintendent	At Risk	Districtwide
\$803,672	2021	Social Emotional Learning in School and Out-Of- School Setting Initiative Planning Grant	Continuation	Sylvia Singleton	Project Manager	Social Emotional Learning	~14 sites

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Oliver-Dávila called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. All members were present with the exception of Dr. Coleman, who joined the meeting less than a minute after roll call. Ms. Oliver-Dávila 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.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila provided an update on the work the Committee is doing to shape its focus for the next five years. On January 20th and 21st, the Committee held a two-day public retreat on priority setting and effective governance practices. To strengthen the Committee's focus on student outcomes, it has drafted a set of goals and guardrails to guide its work.

Draft Goals:

- *BPS will create the conditions for students to arrive in grade 3 ready to thrive in school by ensuring that the percentage of K-2 students who meet or exceed grade level expectations on the Reading Comprehension and Writing assessment at the end of the year will increase from [w]% in June 2020 to [x]% by June 2026.*
- *BPS will cultivate the linguistic and learning assets of students by ensuring that the percentage of students who are English Learners who demonstrate at least [v]% growth on the ELL Access test will increase from [w]% in June 2020 to [x]% by June 2026.*
- *BPS will cultivate the linguistic and learning assets of students by ensuring that the percentage of students with disabilities who demonstrate at least [v]% growth on English SGPs and who are in full or partial inclusion will increase from [w]% in June 2020 to [x]% by June 2026*
- *BPS will educate students to be able to critically reason, discern, and demonstrate academic mastery of math, science and literacy so that the percentage of students in 7th and 8th grade who perform at the proficient level in reading, math, and science will increase from [x]% in June 2020 to [y]% by June 2026.*
- *BPS will support students graduating with the agency to direct their futures by ensuring that the percentage of graduates who have 1) completed MyCAP and 2) either an industry/CTE certification, IB credential, score 3 or above on an AP exam, or 20hrs of dual credit will increase from [x]% in June 2020 to [x]% by June 2026.*

Draft Guardrails:

Strategic Plan Mission: BPS will ensure that every child in every classroom in every school gets what they need. To honor this overarching value, the BPS School Committee's five-year guardrails are:

- *BPS will leverage the cultural and linguistic wealth of students and families to incorporate authentic student voice and create partnerships that recognize their value, assets, and needs.*
- *BPS will [work with community partners to] prepare students for unlimited global and local opportunities.*
- *BPS will implement, with fidelity, opportunity and achievement gap-closing practices that are research-based; [and] data-driven at the district, school, and classroom levels*
- *BPS will recruit and retain a highly effective, racially and linguistically diverse, culturally proficient workforce that can provide rigorous culturally and linguistically affirming inclusive curriculum and experiences that celebrate the assets of our students and provide a joyous and positive school experience.*
- *BPS will deliver a universal Multi Tiered System of Support that addresses the social, emotional, and physical well being of all our students.*

Ms. Oliver-Dávila announced that the Committee will hold a series of community stakeholder listening sessions in February to receive input from the community on the draft goals and guardrails. Each session will be co-facilitated by two Committee members and interpretation will be provided. She explained that these community conversations will be focused *only* on the goals and guardrails. Dates are posted on the Committee’s webpage bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: JANUARY 13, 2021 MEETING; JANUARY 20, 2021 RETREAT; AND JANUARY 21, 2021 RETREAT

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the following School Committee meetings: January 13, 2021 meeting; January 20, 2021 retreat; and January 21, 2021 retreat.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

As prepared for delivery.

Thank you, Madame Chair. I’d like to get right into my Superintendent’s Report this evening. We are adopting a slightly more interesting format and will have some photos and images to share to go along with my updates.

During my Superintendent's Reports moving forward, I’d like to provide some important data points to affirm our commitment to transparency and to ensure we remain focused on student outcomes. I want to remind the community that we have a public-facing data dashboard, which

we launched on January 8th, available at bostonpublicschools.org/dashboard. I just want to briefly mention some of the data we are reporting. You'll see here on the overview tab that the dashboard shows the breakdown of hybrid vs. remote learning across the district, student and staff attendance, student online participation, the number of students with BPS Chromebooks, and more. You'll see, for example, that our average daily attendance rate is 90% and our students' daily online activity rate is 87%. The dashboard also provides some context for these figures. For example, when we were fully in-person, the BPS Average Daily Attendance Rate ranged from 91.9% to 92.9% between 2014-15 and 2019-20. The information here is updated weekly and is disaggregated by school, demographics, and other subgroups. While this provides us with important data to help us identify trends and direct support and services to students and families, it does not paint the full story of remote or hybrid learning. We have included some vignettes on the landing page to provide more information on the wonderful teaching and learning happening in our schools. Be sure to go through all the links on the left and use the drop down menus to further disaggregate and sort the data. I hope you and the public find this useful. We hope to continue to expand this dashboard as we continue our focus on transparency in reporting and our renewed focus on specific metrics and outcome data.

We also continue to report positive COVID-19 cases to DESE, individual school communities, and the larger community through our dashboard, available at bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus. Health Services will go into greater detail during their update, but I wanted to provide our most recent numbers. School-year-to-date we have had 151 positive cases for students and staff who have accessed schools for in-person teaching and learning. To date, we have had 25 students and 126 staff members who have accessed our buildings and who have received a positive COVID test.

Last week we all watched as the 46th President of the United States, Joe Biden, was sworn into office. We also watched the glass ceiling shatter as Vice President Kamala Harris became the first Black American, the first Asian American, and the first woman to serve as Vice President. This was an incredible moment for me to see, personally, as a Black woman. But all I could think about was how important of a moment it was for our young women, young girls everywhere, especially Black girls, Asian girls and biracial girls. We all know the power of representation, and seeing Kamala Harris place her hand on that bible was a moment that many girls will remember for the rest of their lives. I was equally inspired by Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman and her moving poem, "The Hill We Climb." I shared a clip of the video in my check-in to staff this week and strongly encourage everyone to watch. I was so happy to learn that Ms. Gorman performed her poetry alongside students from Orchard Gardens K-8 at a community event in 2018! I am so proud of our educators who facilitated thoughtful discussions about the inauguration, particularly in the context of the recent violence in DC and the divisive rhetoric that has become all too common for our young people to hear. I saw a great story about Kennel Etienne, a history teacher at Snowden, who held "office hours" on the morning of the Inauguration so that his ninth graders could come discuss the historic day. Additionally, Boston Latin School students and Head of School Rachel Skerritt put together a truly moving tribute to our Vice President, showing us all that this moment is "Bigger" than any one of us. These are just some of the examples of our educators stepping into this moment and educating our students about the past, as we look ahead to a brighter future.

Now, I would like to highlight a great educational opportunity given to some of our BPS seniors through the Posse Foundation. The Posse Foundation is a nonprofit educational organization that recruits, identifies and trains individuals with extraordinary leadership potential. Posse Scholars receive a full tuition leadership scholarship at a Posse partner college or university. I am pleased to announce that 40 young leaders from 12 BPS schools are the recipients of the Annual Posse Foundation Scholarship. Here you see two of them - from Fenway High School, Judith Guzman and Ramon Asuncion Batista. These inspiring high school seniors have been selected for their academic achievement and proven leadership. They have earned four-year, full-tuition scholarships from Bryn Mawr College, Bucknell University, Centre College and Union College. They will attend these colleges together in supportive cohorts of 10. Pictured now are our Posse Scholars, from various BPS high schools, who will all attend Centre College next year. These Scholars join a network of Posse Scholars that now exceeds 10,000 members, who represent the rich diversity of this nation. That diversity is much needed at the decision-making tables where our country's most difficult challenges can be addressed. The effect of Posse alumni reverberates around our City and our Nation. I am so #BPS Proud of their resilience and fortitude, especially during the past year of constant change and tumultuous times. I cannot wait to see and hear their impact stories as they represent BPS and continue to carry the torch as the young leaders we so desperately need more than ever.

Yesterday I was pleased to join the surprise celebration for TechBoston Academy guidance counselor Jessica Descartes at the school. Jessica was presented with the 2021 School Counselor of the Year Award by the Massachusetts School Counselor Association (MASCA). In the past year, I have mentioned the passing of two TechBoston Academy staff members in my Superintendent's Report - Co-Headmaster Keith Love and Nurse Susan Arase. The TBA family has also sadly lost other members of their community in the last year as well. Jessica Descartes has been a pillar of strength for the TBA community this year and for the last six years. It was an honor to be there in-person as she was presented with the award, joined by her brother, her colleagues, and her students. Jessica mentioned that when she talks about her "kids," she's talking about her students. The love in the room was palpable and I couldn't help but get emotional myself. This has been such a difficult year, and every day I am blown away by the love and support our educators and staff provide for our students and families. Congratulations, Jessica!

I also want to take a moment to recognize Boston Latin School Cross Country and Track and Field Coach Mike Meagher, who announced that he is retiring *after 50 years!* Of course we have many wonderful employees who retire and I wish I could recognize them all, but at 50 years as a coach - that is something quite remarkable. Mike is a BPS veteran, and worked at the JFK Elementary, as well as Charlestown High for 24 years. He's also a former BPS student and ran track during his time at Boston Technical High School. Mike clearly never forgot where he came from, continuing to give back to Boston youth for over half a century. Thank you, Mike, for your commitment to our students!

Tomorrow, Thursday, January 28th, my team and I will host a virtual community meeting to discuss reopening! The meeting will be on Zoom, from 5:30- 7:00 pm and will feature interpretation services in Arabic, Cantonese, Haitian Creole, Mandarin, Somali, Spanish, and

Vietnamese. Visit www.bostonpublicschools.org and you will see it on the calendar on the main page. If you're unable to join, we will post a recording of the meeting on our reopening website.

We are so excited to enter our next phase of reopening and welcome an additional 7,700 students back to our school buildings. Our buildings are ready and my team will go into further detail shortly in our reopening update. We have been communicating with families at the district level and schools have also reached out to families to confirm their learning models. To request a change to your learning model, for example hybrid to remote, families can either contact their school or complete the request form available in 10 languages at bostonpublicschools.org/reopening. Forms must be submitted by Friday, January 29. Again, families with any questions can contact their school or call the BPS Family Helpline at 617-635-8873.

Finally, I'd like to give a brief update on the School Safety Working Group. This group is charged with further discussing issues related to the recently established Policy Regarding Preparing and Sharing Student Incident Reports and Other Student Information with the Boston Police Department. I will share reports with the Working Group about the district's implementation of this policy, and the Working Group will make recommendations to the School Committee. I will announce membership at the next school committee meeting which requires by policy the following membership.

The Working Group shall be composed of 12 members, representing the following groups:

- (i) a BPS student, nominated by the immigration, youth or community advocacy organization, with preference given to a student who attends a school that has historically experienced a high volume of arrests or Incident Reports;
- (ii) a parent or guardian chosen by the Citywide Parent Council;
- (iii) a member of the Boston Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpEdPAC);
- (iv) a teacher chosen by the Boston Teachers Union (BTU);
- (v) a school administrator with an assigned Safety Services employee, chosen by the superintendent;
- (vi) a representative from an immigration, youth, or community advocacy organization chosen by the School Committee;
- (vii) a representative from the BPS Office of Opportunity Gaps;
- (viii) a representative from the BPS operational leader team, or other BPS central office representative with responsibility for advising School Administrators on the Code of Conduct;

- (ix) a representative from the BPS Department of Safety Services;
- (x) an individual, who is not an employee of the City of Boston, with expertise in law enforcement and school safety laws and regulations, chosen by the School Committee; and
- (xi) two representatives from the superintendent's student data working group (which made recommendations on this policy), nominated by the working group.

Again, I will share names at our meeting next week. And that is my Superintendent's Report for this evening.

Mr. O'Neill congratulated the Posse Scholar recipients.

Mr. James invited people to attend a virtual town hall about remote learning co-hosted by the Boston Student Advisory Council and the Boston Education Justice Alliance on Thursday, January 28th from 4:30 - 6 p.m.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila congratulated all BPS seniors and the TechBoston Academy staff for their hard work and resiliency.

REPORT

Update on Health and Safety Preparations for Reopening of School Buildings - The Superintendent presented an update on the district's healthy and safety preparations for the reopening of school buildings for the next phase of in-person learning starting February 1st. She was joined by co-presenters Health and Human Services Chief Marty Martinez; Deputy Chief of Operations Teresa Neff-Webster, Deputy Chief of Operations; Executive Director of Food and Nutrition Services Laura Benavidez; Director of Athletics Avery Esdaile; Chief of Safety Services Neva Coakley Grice; and Senior Director of Health Services Djenny Lobo Lopes.

Facilities

Phase 2 Window Repairs:

- 12,045 were inspected, cleaned, and lubricated ● 6,306 have been repaired to date 897 Remaining; on track for completion mid-February
- PPE: 1,000 adult and 1,000 child size disposable paper masks have been delivered with a large inventory on hand for delivery as needed
- Cleaning Supplies: 3 months of cleaning supplies in all schools (soap, paper towels, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- BPHC approved cleaning protocols are ongoing. Disinfecting through misting will continue Wednesdays and Fridays

Phase Two Air Purifier Distribution:

- 2,500 more units have been delivered. The delivery of additional air purifiers to Non-HVAC schools is being finalized
- Merv- 13 Filters: Will continue to be installed as delivered

Boston School Committee Remote Meeting

Zoom

January 27, 2021

- Data Loggers: Finalizing selection of a vendor to provide this service
- Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Testing: * Finalizing cost estimates and schedule of additional testing per the recent side letter of agreement with BTU. BPS will be testing a representative sample of 17% of all BPS classrooms

Food and Nutrition Services

Meal preparation for hybrid learners

- Meals ordered/prepped to meet the number of students returning to ensure students are fed and reduce waste
- Staff connecting with School Administration to verify where students will be eating meals to finalize delivery method and number of FNS staff needed
- One day meal packs will be available for students to take home and 3-day packs can be picked up at Super Sites
- Door-to-Door service continues for qualifying students
 - More than 1.1 million meals delivered

Athletics

Student Interest (By Sport)

- Girls Basketball- 316 students
- Boys Basketball- 507 students
- Girls Ice Hockey - 44 students
- Boys Ice Hockey - 136 students
- Swimming - 80 students

Season Winter Start Date: 1/11/2021 & 1/19/2021

End Date 2/27/2021

Sports:

- Girls Basketball
- Boys Basketball
- Girls Ice Hockey
- Boys Ice Hockey

Safety Services

- Strengthen community relationships by:
 - Create a positive narrative that reflects improving community perception and understanding of reform
 - Restore transparency and accountability by School Police
 - Update officer uniform to create a more approachable image which will support with community engagement
- Engagement:
 - Safety officers engaged 400 stakeholders during 75 school visits across 11 Boston neighborhoods
 - Attended 100 community meetings and interacted with 1,000 community members

- Received 4,000 social media hits on virtual events
- Operations improvements:
 - Improved radio communications by installing radio system BAPERIN, increased reliability and compliance
 - Dedicated to improving staff training and professional development
- Deployment:
 - 17 superior officers and 50 officers assigned to 26 high schools, 16 middle and K-8 schools who ensure safe school time arrivals, class transitions, and dismissals
 - 4 mobile units proactively visit schools everyday and respond to location request
 - Provide support at 32 food service sites and athletic games

Health Services

COVID Testing:

- Beginning 2/1, all BPS staff working in-person in our opened schools will have access to weekly surveillance testing
- BPS has applied for the Massachusetts DESE Pooled Testing pilot program in order to conduct pooled surveillance testing. This opportunity will be available to all BPS students with a signed consent form on file

COVID Tests Completed:

- Student pool tests: 93
- Staff individual tests: <1,000

BPS [Dashboard](#) for Positive Cases

BPS has confirmed 151 positive COVID cases to dates: 25 students and 126 staff

Contact Identification and Tracing:

- Health Services identifies possible close contacts
 - Through interviewing the COVID + case
 - Reviewing information with BPHC Infectious Disease Unit
- BPHC makes final determination of close contact(s)
- Health Services informs close contacts individually by phone
- Health Services notifies School leaders, nurses, Communications, Facilities
 - Communications: letter for school community
 - Facilities: cleaning/disinfection of school
 - School Leader: sends communication to the school community

Phase 1- COVID Vaccine

- All health and safety personnel eligible to receive vaccination.
- Collaboration with the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) for vaccine administration.

Vaccinated to date:

- 90% safety personnel
- 54% health personnel
- 67 nurses on 1/25

Influenza Vaccination Update

- The MA Department of Public Health has removed the SY20/21 requirement for flu vaccination.
- BPS & BPHC continue to strongly recommend that everyone age six months and older receive their seasonal flu vaccine.

Ms. Robinson asked if teachers reporting to school buildings for the first time since the shutdown will receive an orientation regarding health and safety protocols. The Superintendent said that the BPS Communications Office and school leaders are sharing health and safety protocols with teachers and staff.

Dr. Rivera asked about indoor air quality testing of every school. The Superintendent said that the indoor air quality of every school will be tested but not every classroom.

Ms. Neff-Webster said that BPS is following guidance from the Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Rivera asked if school buildings will be used after school hours. Ms. Neff-Webster said that custodians are working with school leaders to create schedules for cleaning and sanitizing school buildings day and night, taking into account after school activities and athletics.

Mr. James asked how school safety officers are deployed. Chief Coakley Grice explained that officers are not assigned to every school, but rather cover the full district and food distribution sites.

Ms. Robinson asked how determinations are made about which schools are assigned a school safety officer. Ms. Coakley Grice said that officers are assigned based on the prevalence of incidents at that location and in the surrounding community, as well as staff requests. Ms. Robinson asked about the breakdown of students and adults who have tested positive for COVID. Ms. Lobo Lopes said that health officials have not seen a correlation in those statistics through contact tracing. Chief Martinez said that the staff and student positivity rate has been lower than the community rate.

Mr. O'Neill asked for more information about the Massachusetts DESE Pooled Testing pilot program. Ms. Lobo Lopes explained that BPS is in the process of applying for the program which will provide pool testing for students. Chief Martinez explained that BPS is working with BPHC to conduct individual testing for staff because adults are more infectious than students. Mr. O'Neill asked about vaccines for teachers and staff. Chief Martinez said that district and city

leaders are planning a combination of strategies for vaccination distribution. School nurses are being vaccinated this week and next week.

Dr. Rivera noted that 54 percent of health personnel have been vaccinated. Chief Martinez said that there is some hesitancy about being vaccinated. The City has launched a public awareness campaign to inform people about the vaccine approval process. The number of BPS nurses vaccinated is expected to grow.

Mr. James asked how BPHC thresholds were established. Chief Martinez said that thresholds were established last summer based on six metrics. Mr. James asked Chief Coakley Grice for clarity about her earlier comments about dinnertime incidents. Chief Coakley Grice explained that safety incidents have taken place at BPS meal sites in the late afternoon and evening.

Mr. Tran asked about staff and students who have tested positive for COVID. Ms. Lobo Lopes affirmed that no connections have been through contact tracing. She explained the close contact notification process. Staff are asked to complete a daily health checklist and should not come to school if they are symptomatic.

Chief Martinez said that BPHC has seen a recent decrease in COVID metrics, including a decrease in activity and a decrease in the positive test rate.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Erica Haydock, BPS parent and member, Voices for BPS Families, testified regarding school reopening.
- Kathleen Adams, parent, Lyndon K-8 School, testified regarding the Exam Schools Admissions Task Force.
- Mike Heichman, member, Boston Education Justice Alliance, testified regarding school reopening, MCAS testing, and the budget.
- Corey Zehngebot, BPS parent and member, Voices for BPS Families, testified regarding school reopening.
- Jessica Tahiraj, parent, Kilmer K-8 School, testified regarding classroom space for 7th and 8th graders.
- Cathy Ware, parent, Ohrenberger School, testified regarding the Advanced Work Class (AWC) curriculum.
- Shery Keleher, parent, Warren Prescott K-8 and Boston Latin School, testified regarding remote learning.
- Ruby Reyes, executive director, Boston Education Justice Alliance, testified regarding the budget.
- William Zhao, parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Eugenia Corbo, parent, Umana Academy, testified regarding school reopening.
- Marcie Carmody, BPS parent and member, Voices for BPS Families, testified regarding school reopening.

- Edith Bazile, advocate and BPS grandparent, Manning Elementary School, testified regarding Advanced Work Class.
- Kathleen Chardavoynne, BPS parent and member, Boston Parents Coalition for Academic Excellence, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Megan Castro, BPS parent, testified regarding school reopening.
- John Mudd, advocate, testified regarding School Committee goal setting and upcoming community listening sessions.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved - On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$2,143,597.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila read aloud the names and titles of the proposed Exam Schools Admissions Task Force members:

- 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.

Dr. Coleman expressed support for the charge and membership.

Mr. O'Neill expressed his support for the public process that comes with the establishment of the Task Force. He encouraged the Task Force to closely examine the impact of the implementation of this year's exam schools admissions process.

Approved - On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved the membership and charge of the Exam Schools Admissions Task Force.

REPORT

Request for Policy Flexibility during COVID-19 Pandemic - The Superintendent requested that the Committee grant her flexibility on the following BPS Policies due to COVID for SY 2020-2021: Promotion/Retention (including attendance and assessment requirements); Graduation; the admissions process for Advanced Work Class (AWC). The flexibility of these policies will help to mitigate some of the continued academic challenges faced by students during the COVID-19 pandemic and will allow the district to further develop equity-centered strategies that strive to close opportunity and achievement gaps.

BPS Principals Courtney Sheppeck (Murphy K-8 School), John Travis and Ed Puliafico, (Beethoven-Ohrenberger School), and Cynthia Soo Hoo (Quincy Elementary School) expressed support for the proposal and explained their outreach to their respective school communities.

Dr. Rivera expressed concern about the racial demographics of the AWC program. She requested data showing how many AWC students enter into the exam schools. She expressed support for the temporary suspension of AWC admissions testing and advocated for the expansion of Excellence for All (EFA). The Superintendent said district leaders discussed the AWC proposal at last week's equity roundtable and will discuss EFA this week. She said that she will establish a working group to address the future of AWC.

Mr. James echoed Dr. Rivera's comments about AWC data. He advocated for parent and student representation on the Superintendent's AWC Working Group. He asked how policy changes are being communicated to families. The Superintendent said that the BPS communications team and school leaders will share the information with families.

Ms. Robinson suggested expanding best practices from AWC and EFA. She spoke about the importance of offering high quality curriculum at all schools and suggested that the Committee examine the district's enrollment policies. The Superintendent spoke about the district's efforts to expand rigor from K-12. Ms. Robinson asked what percentage of AWC seats were taken by students coming from outside of the district. The Superintendent agreed to follow up with the data.

Mr. O'Neill encouraged the Superintendent's AWC Working Group to examine EFA as well as AWC. He praised the Superintendent and her team for working to expand rigor to every student or offer alternatives. The Superintendent said the concepts of EFA are the right concepts but that the district needs to do a better job supporting school leaders with implementation. She clarified

that the AWC Working Group will make a recommendation for a permanent policy. Mr. James suggested that students receive days off for mental health.

Ms. Robinson asked about the cost of funding an AWC classroom, an EFA classroom, and general ed classroom. The Superintendent agreed to follow up.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila praised the Quincy School K-12 pathway model. She said that all students should have access to rigor. She spoke about the importance of project-based learning and other alternative learning models.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

At approximately 8:35 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary