



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

January 16, 2019

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on January 16, 2019 at 6 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, School Committee Chamber, Roxbury, Massachusetts. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael Loconto; Vice Chairperson Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Michael O’Neill; Quoc Tran; and student representative Evelyn Reyes.

School Committee Member Absent: Ms. Jeri Robinson

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

Boston School Committee Meeting Minutes: December 19, 2018 and January 7, 2019

2019 Massachusetts School Building Authority Accelerated Repair Program PowerPoint

2019 Massachusetts School Building Authority Accelerated Repair Program Equity Impact Statement

Boston Adult Technical Academy Over-aged Students PowerPoint

Office of Human Capital Annual Hiring Update PowerPoint

Office of Human Capital Annual Hiring Update Equity Impact Statement

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Grants for Approval Totaling \$1,035,500

Amount	FY	Grant Name	Status	Focus Area(s)	Sites
\$393,500	2019	Better: Bite By Bite	New	Food and Nutrition	Districtwide
\$7,000	2019	Early Childhood Special Education Discretionary Program Improvement Grant	New	Special Education	West Zone EEC, Haynes, Russell
\$30,000	2019	Innovation Schools Enhancement Grant	New	Curriculum and Instruction	Margarita Muñiz Academy
\$10,000	2019	Innovation Pathways Application Planning Grant	New	College and Career Readiness	Dearborn STEM Academy
\$475,000	2019	Turnaround Assistance Grant – Federal	New	Turnaround	Districtwide
\$120,000	New	Turnaround Assistance Grant – State	New	Turnaround	Districtwide

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Loconto led the pledge of allegiance and called the meeting to order. He welcomed Mr. Tran on his recent appointment to a four-year term with the School Committee. A Dorchester resident, Mr. Tran is an experienced civil rights attorney, a current BPS parent, and a former BPS high school teacher.

Mr. Loconto congratulated Ms. Jeri Robinson on her reappointment to the Committee for a second four-year term. Ms. Robinson brings more than 40 years of experience in teaching and consulting in the fields of early childhood and museum education. She recently retired from her position as vice president of Early Childhood Initiatives at the Boston Children’s Museum. Mr. Loconto noted that Ms. Robinson is recovering from knee surgery, and said that the Committee looks forward to welcoming her back soon.

Mr. Loconto thanked Dr. Coleman for years of leadership as vice chairperson, and congratulated Ms. Oliver-Dávila on her recent election to the position of vice chairperson. He thanked Ms. Regina Robinson for her four years of service to the Committee.

CITATIONS

The Committee and Interim Superintendent presented citations to the following educators who recently earned or renewed their certification with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards:

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- Emily Trono, The English High School, English as a New Language/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Cristina de Guzman, The English High School, English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood
- Deborah O'Shea, Gardner Pilot Academy, Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood
- Cristie Reich, Brighton High School, English as a New Language/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Jessica Cronin, East Boston High School, English as a New Language/Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood
- Quenna Lalonde, The English High School, Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood
- Mia Manduca, Kennedy Academy of Health Careers, English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood
- Cindy Muenkel, Harvard/Kent Elementary School, Generalist/Middle Childhood
- Laura Rosenfield, O'Bryant School of Math and Science, Social Studies-History/Adolescence and Young Adulthood
- Erin Rua, Guild Elementary School, Generalist/Middle Childhood
- Wai Chin Ng, Quincy Elementary School, Generalist/Middle Childhood

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the December 19, 2018 and January 7, 2019 School Committee meetings.

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

**As prepared for delivery.*

It's our first full School Committee meeting of 2019. To all of the Committee members, to the BPS students, staff, and families, and to the members of the community, I'd like to wish everyone a happy and healthy new year. I would also like to welcome our newest member, Quoc

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Tran, who is joining us for his first full meeting. It's a pleasure to have you aboard, and providing us a fresh set of eyes. I'd also like to congratulate Committee member Alexandra Oliver-Dávila for her recent appointment as Vice Chairperson of the Boston School Committee. I know Alex is a tireless advocate for the youth of Boston, and she will absolutely do well in her new role as vice chair.

I'd like to begin by providing some updates on a couple of important matters. First, I'd like to inform the School Committee and the public on the ongoing and additional efforts we are undertaking to prevent students from coming into contact with discarded hypodermic needles outside the Orchard Gardens K-8 School. The opioid crisis is a national challenge that affects every community in the country. Unfortunately, our schools are no exception.

We are continuing our commitment to doing everything we can to safeguard our children from any danger to their health or well-being. I am grateful that the Orchard Gardens community has come together with BPS and the City of Boston to find ways to respond even more aggressively to the continued and escalating threat that the opioid crisis poses to our schools. Since last year, BPS has worked with the City on training custodians on best practices around needle safety, and custodians are continuing to conduct regular sweeps of the school property. Teachers also educate students to, "Stop, Turn, and Tell," if they find a needle. And last year, the City installed a needle disposal kiosk on the property.

Nonetheless, given the continued scope of this citywide and indeed national challenge, we recognize - and have heard compelling testimony in this chamber, and in discussion with the school leader and community advocates, that additional steps are needed to protect our students and school community. As a result, working in collaboration with the school community and several City agencies, we are adding the following extra safety precautions:

Custodians are now sweeping the property for needles three times a day: before 7:00 AM, at 9:30 AM, and at 1:30 PM, and are keeping a log of this activity. This began at the end of December; The BPS citywide custodial grounds crew is now beginning its work week every Monday at Orchard Gardens to assist school custodians on cleaning and inspecting school grounds. This also began at the end of December; We are currently getting bids to install additional fencing around Orchard Gardens to address trespassing concerns; We're installing additional lighting as a safety precaution; We're installing an additional needle disposal kiosk on the Melnea Cass Boulevard side of the building; We are getting help with additional property maintenance from the Boston Parks Department; And, this week, officials from the Boston Public Health Commission conducted additional trainings with school staff about what to do if they encounter a needle.

We have begun sharing this news with the Orchard Gardens community, and we are sending a letter home to families, in multiple languages, in the coming days. I also want to note that while Orchard Gardens is at the epicenter of this challenge given its location, other schools are impacted as well. Thus we are currently consulting with several other schools - including the

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Mason, the Quincy Lower School, and the Blackstone - to offer additional needle kiosks for their locations as well, if desired. We can never be too safe when it comes to our students; and despite all of these efforts, we must always be vigilant about their safety. I am encouraged by the community and citywide effort to support one another as we make these improvements. We are all working together to make sure our students are safe and protected. I would like to thank everyone involved for doing their part, and I'd particularly like to thank the city agencies assisting us, including the Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Police Department, and the Boston Parks Department.

Also this evening, I would like to provide an update on the district's ongoing analysis of the maximum age policy for BPS students. This issue has been the subject of recent news coverage, and I think it's important to build understanding of the complexity of this issue, which has not been fully presented, and thus the challenge of finding a solution that meets the needs of all students, including both students in alternative education programs like BATA, and students receiving complex special education services in a number of schools and programs. While BPS age policy has been in place since 1999, implementation and compliance has been uneven in several schools over a number of years, which led the district to begin addressing consistent policy implementation in early 2018.

Today, nearly 100 students in 16 of our schools are approaching their 22nd birthday. Many of these students are English learners, or are students with disabilities - particularly our students with significant special needs who are served in non-diploma-bound programs in our schools. This is a complex, district-wide issue that we are trying to address in an equitable manner as quickly as possible. Certainly, all districts must set a reasonable limit on the length of its services to students and families. At the same time, we are working tirelessly to arrive at a solution that is in the best interests of all students. This includes making sure our students are in the right programs receiving the educational services they deserve. Because this has an impact on the entire district, any solutions brought forward must meet the needs of students while ensuring equitable solutions across both our alternative education and special education programs.

We have added an agenda item for tonight's meeting about the age policy because we want to bring a resolution to this issue as soon as possible. Tonight's presentation is not yet an action proposal. Rather, it will lay out the dimensions of the problem and outline two potential solutions that we are assessing. We have met with teachers and school leader from BATA while also consulting with other impacted schools and programs, as well as state agency partners to make sure we have fully considered implications of any proposed policy or program changes. We look forward to providing more details in our presentation a bit later tonight.

Now, I'd like to share some quick highlights from around the district. Last night during his annual State of the City Address, Mayor Walsh gave a major shout-out to the TechBoston Boys Basketball Team for winning the Division 2 State Championship. These students have brought a lot of hometown pride to Boston; and I'd like to thank the Mayor for starting his speech by giving them such prominent recognition. I'd also like to congratulate and recognize the Josiah

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Quincy Elementary School's Orchestra for a wonderful musical performance last night, along with the Boston City Singers. And, of course, I'd like to thank the Mayor for his continued commitment to the students, teachers, and staff of the Boston Public Schools; and for his ongoing support for our efforts to improve our facilities under BuildBPS.

I'd also like to thank Boston Police Commissioner William Gross for recently visiting seventh- and eighth-grade students at the Ohrenberger School, talking about his path to becoming Boston's first African-American police commissioner. Mr. Gross shared some personal stories about his upbringing in rural Maryland, and his experience moving to Boston as an adolescent in the 1970s during a turbulent time. Thank you to Commissioner Gross and all the men and women of the Boston Police Department who serve as positive role models for our students.

And finally, we're very excited for tomorrow night's BPS Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration at The Strand Theater. Now in its 37th year, the MLK Celebration honors the civil rights leader through song, dance, music, and spoken-word performed by students from Boston Public Schools. And right now, I'd like to take a brief moment to give you a sneak preview of tomorrow night's show. These are students from the Chittick Elementary School's All-Star Choir, who were rehearsing yesterday at Charlestown High School. Students from the high school and the elementary school are performing together — so that should be a wonderful collaboration to see. The MLK Celebration is being held at The Strand Theater, at 543 Columbia Road in Uphams Corner, in Dorchester, from 6:30-8:30 PM. The event is also being live-streamed online by our media partner, Boston 25 News. If you can't make it, you can catch the livestream at boston25news.com. But we hope to see you there!

Mr. O'Neill asked about collective bargaining negotiations between the district and the Boston Teachers Union following related to the closure of West Roxbury Academy and Urban Science Academy. Ms. Perille said that those conversations will be ongoing through January as students make school choice selections for next year. She said that a new location for Boston Collaborative High School is being worked out.

Mr. Loconto thanked BPS and city staff for collaborating to improve the safety and cleanliness of Orchard Gardens K-8 School grounds. He congratulated the TechBoston Boys Basketball team on their State Championship win, noting that the Committee will honor BPS athletic champions at a future meeting. He reaffirmed the district's commitment to protecting Title IX.

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

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

**As prepared for delivery.*

Good evening. This past Monday, the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) held a parent night. We connected with many interested parents who came to learn more about who we are and

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what we do as a youth-led organization. They provided us with great feedback on how to inform people about the Student Rights App and make it more accessible to parents.

We also met with students from the Greater Boston Regional Student Advisory Council (GBRSAC) to exchange information and learn more about each other. Together we are going to think about how to increase student representation both on BSAC and GBRAC.

Our representatives are also gearing up for their annual headmaster meetings. These meetings function as a way for headmasters to learn more about the BSAC priorities and for students to spread the word about BSAC at their schools.

The Student Rights subcommittee finalized a position paper concerning the Foundation Budget and presented it to the Steering Committee, who approved it for publication. In conjunction with work around the Foundation Budget, we are also very excited to see the PROMISE Act being championed by MA State Senator Sonia Chang Diaz in this legislative session and are looking forward to ensuring that student voice is heard in the legislative process. Lastly, we are happy to say that we will be sending representatives, who have been granted full voting rights, to the District Wellness Council. Thank you.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila requested that the Committee receive a copy of BSAC's position paper, as well as a list of BPS high schools that currently do not have BSAC representation. Ms. Reyes agreed to follow up.

Mr. Loconto thanked Ms. Reyes for her efforts, and said that the Committee plans to invite city budget officials to present an update about the Mayor's efforts to increase state funding for public education. Ms. Perille added that the district is partnering with many organizations to increase education funding. Mr. O'Neill said that he has been informed by state officials that the Governor's proposal for increased state aid for education would come with increased accountability.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Boston City Councilor At-Large Annissa Essaibi-George testified regarding her educational priorities for the coming year.

Jennifer Boyd Herlihy, BPS parent, testified regarding the School Committee governance structure and request for an additional shuttle bus to Boston Latin Academy.

Pedro Martin, student, Boston Adult Technical Academy (BATA), testified regarding the district's overage policy.

Mateo Phibel, student, BATA, testified regarding the district's overage policy.

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Carmen Perdomo, student BATA, testified regarding the district's overage policy.

Emanuel Gardiner, teacher, BATA, testified regarding the district's overage policy.

Lisa Guisbond, executive director, Citizens for Public Schools, testified regarding standardized testing and school quality.

Carolyn Kain, chair, Boston Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPAC), testified regarding a possible change to the maximum age policy, its potential impact on special education students, and funding for transition services.

Maura O'Toole, BPS parent and Mather Elementary school librarian, testified regarding budget concerns for Fiscal Year 2020.

ACTION ITEM

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent grants for approval totaling \$1,035,500.

REPORTS

2019 Massachusetts School Building Authority Accelerated Repair Program Statements of Interest – BPS Chief of Operations John Hanlon and City of Boston Public Facilities Department Chief of Staff Brian McLaughlin presented statements of interested for the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA)'s Accelerated Repair Program. The program provides school districts with financial reimbursement for facilities upgrades, such as roof, window and boiler projects. The district is submitting applications for projects at six schools: The English High School; McKinley K-12, Curley K-8, Mary Lyon 9-12, Josiah Quincy Elementary School, and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (Horace Mann). The Committee is scheduled to vote on the statements of interest on January 30th.

Mr. O'Neill praised Mr. McLaughlin for his work on behalf of BPS. He asked if projects are chosen using an equity lens. Mr. Hanlon explained that the condition of the facility drives the decision making. He said that the McKinley building needs cosmetic work but its internal systems have not been effected by roof deterioration. City funding will be used to repair leaks at Madison Park Technical Vocational. Projects at the Carter School and Josiah Quincy Upper School are in the study phase.

Ms. Reyes asked about the connection between MSBA and BuildBPS. Mr. Hanlon said that MSBA funding is a critical component of BuildBPS.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila requested a report on the state of BPS facility conditions. Asked about communication with school leaders about options for improvements. She clarified that the Tobin School is located in Mission Hill.

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Mr. Tran asked about the standards for school building conditions. Mr. Hanlon emphasized that the district's first priority is always the health and safety of students.

Mr. Loconto praised Mr. McLaughlin for leading the city's efforts to increase MSBA funding, noting that district's reimbursement from the MSBA has increased by a factor of 10 over the past four years when compared to the previous decade.

Boston Adult Technical Academy Over-aged Students – Academic Superintendent for Alternative Education Tommy Welch and Assistant Superintendent of Special Education Cindie Neilson presented the district's analysis of the maximum age policy for BPS students, which is currently age 22.

In 1999, the School Committee approved a policy establishing a maximum student age of 22. The policy was adopted to maintain consistency of programming opportunities with state and federal laws that govern the rendering of services to students with disabilities. Historically the maximum age policy was not uniformly implemented across the district. In SY 17-18 BPS identified students exceeding the age of 22 without being appropriately served. This led to an audit of placements, including Special Education and Alternative Education. As part of this process, BPS identified students at Boston Adult Technical Academy (BATA) who would turn 22 during the 2017-2018 school year. To allow the school to prepare transitions, BPS requested, and the School Committee approved, a waiver of the maximum age policy for the 2017-2018 school year for students at BATA. That waiver ended in June 2018, and the School Committee asked for a more comprehensive review.

The district currently has approximately 100 students who are approaching their 22nd birthday before the end of the current school year, impacting 16 schools. Many of the students are English learners, or are students with disabilities - particularly students with significant special needs who are served in non-diploma-bound programs.

Mr. Welch and Ms. Neilson outlined two potential solutions that the district is considering toward a resolution that is in the best interests of students across the district:

Option 1: Amend the BPS policy and allow students who turn 22 years old during the school year to exit at the end of the school year (with clear counseling of future options - documented - at age 20.5, 21, and 21.5 years old)

Considerations:

- Must be consistent policy for special education and alternative education students
- There are significant concerns regarding the impact of transitions for special education which warrant further analysis:
 - Families may appreciate being able to stay
 - Possible significant negative impact on adult services agencies if larger numbers of students transition at once

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- Students may lose their spots in adult programs if they do not transition at age 22
- Continuation of Related Services, Transportation, etc.

Option 2: Introduce a hybrid alternative education /adult education program, under the auspices of BATA and Boston Central Adult High School, allowing for dual rosters for BATA teachers to support 22 year old students to finish the semester or school year.

Considerations:

- Impact on other alternative education or adult education programs
- Teachers remain assigned to BATA, but will have a double-roster to serve 22 year olds if needed
- Since 22+ year old students will technically graduate under the BCAHS program, they will receive that diploma, though services will be through BATA until the end of the academic year in which they reach age 22
- Students will need to receive clear, documented counseling of future options at their time of enrollment (age 20.5, 21, or 21.5 years old), as well as transition planning to GED or adult programs in June of their final year, aligned to current Special Education practice at this age.

BPS will hold on enforcement of the age maximum for the 8 BATA students who have or are about to turn 22 through at least the end of the semester (January 31, 2019). By doing this, BPS will allow the students an opportunity to complete their current semester.

The Interim Superintendent will return to the School Committee on January 30th with a proposed long-term solution to account for over-age students; or a request for extension of existing policy waiver for BATA through end of current academic year while a long-term solution is designed.

Ms. Perille stressed the complexity of the issue, saying the district is committed to addressing it in an equitable manner as quickly as possible.

Mr. Loconto said this issue must be addressed this year with a long-term solution to avoid more anxiety for students, families and school staff.

Dr. Coleman discussed the options presented, noting that Option One has significant financial implications, and referred to Option Two as a kind of dual enrollment opportunity. Mr. Welch clarified that Option Two would not require additional training for teachers.

Mr. O'Neill thanked the district for taking a comprehensive look at a complicated issue that has widespread implications. He asked the district to provide the Committee with a written legal opinion on the potential implications that the hybrid approach model could have on special education students. He also asked the district to provide the Committee with more information on the district's BPS adult education program.

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Ms. Perille said that Massachusetts has one of the highest standard age policies in the nation, adding that BPS never enforces the maximum age policy unsympathetically. She asked the media and public at-large to adjust their language around this issue.

Ms. Oliver Dávila asked the district to provide further financial analysis of the options presented. She requested data on how many students have been impacted by the maximum age requirement in recent years, as well as the potential impact on other alternative education programs. She also asked the district to explore what dual enrollment-type opportunities are offered by other districts. She suggested that the district explore additional transition support for students.

Mr. Loconto affirmed that the district is committed to finding a fair, permanent solution to this issue, adding that the Committee looks forward to an update from the Interim Superintendent on January 30th.

Office of Human Capital Annual Hiring Update – Chief Human Capital Officer Dr. Emily Qazilbash and Managing Director of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity Programs Ceronne Daly presented the district’s annual hiring update. The Office of Human Capital (OHC) continues to create the system-level, equitable conditions for schools to compete for, attract, and retain top talent. OHC’s portfolio of targeted supports, programs, and pipelines is producing small but significant workforce diversity results. The district’s multi-pronged approach includes programs and pipelines that support diversity; enabling individual school administrators to recruit and hire effective educators; and continuing our successful practice of early, mutual-consent hiring of teachers. OHC continues to build school-based capacity to recruit, hire, develop, and retain educators through effective leadership teams to serve every child.

Dr. Coleman praised the district’s work and encouraged the acceleration of efforts. Dr. Qazilbash said that OHC plans by building deeper pipeline and pathway programs, holding recruitment events in other cities, strengthen its partnerships with institutions of higher education and increase MTEL preparation support.

Mr. Tran requested that the data presented be further disaggregated by categories other than race. The presenters agreed to follow up.

Mr. O’Neill asked about the number of teachers who are currently in Suitable Professional Capacity (SPC), which is less than 60. He encouraged the district to be put guardrails in place ensure fairness. He requested data showing the diversity of non-teaching BPS employees, which the presenters agreed to provide.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila asked OHC to track the language capacity of teachers and find ways to utilize those skills. She encouraged the district to hire more Latino school leaders and central office leaders, and to strengthen support to retain current Latino leaders. She suggested that OHC consider working with JG Consulting, a firm with track record of placing Latinos. Ms. Oliver-Davila also encouraged the district to strengthen its partnerships with higher education to attract and retain diverse talent.

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Mr. Loconto praised the district's steady progress in this critical area.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

John Mudd, advocate, testified regarding the Office of Human Capital's Hiring Update, praising mutual consent hiring and calling on the district to increase its hiring diversity efforts.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

At approximately 9:58 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary