



## **OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REMOTE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**October 8, 2020**

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on October 8, 2020 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 Michael Loonto; Vice Chairperson Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Michael O'Neill; Dr. Lorna Rivera; Jeri Robinson; Quoc Tran; and student representative Khymani James.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

### **DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Agenda

Boston School Committee Meeting Minutes: September 30, 2020

School Reopening Update, October 8, 2020

Recommendation of Exam Schools Admissions Criteria for School Year 2021-22 PowerPoint

Memo from Exam School Admissions Working Group to Superintendent Cassellius re: Admissions Recommendation, October 5, 2020

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Loonto called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll; Dr. Rivera and Ms. Oliver-Dávila were absent at roll call but joined the meeting shortly after the Superintendent's Report; all other members were present.

Mr. Loconto 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. He announced that interpretation services were available Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL); the interpreters introduced themselves. Meeting documents were publicly posted at [www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee) prior to the start of the meeting.

## CITATION

Mr. Loconto presented a citation on behalf of the School Committee and Superintendent to Hagop "Jack" Yessayan, director of Enrollment Operations, as the recipient of the Boston Municipal Research Bureau (BRMB)'s 2020 Henry L. Shattuck Award. The award recognizes public servants who exemplify integrity, initiative, leadership, and commitment to the public good. Mr. Yessayan offered brief words of thanks. Pam Kocher, BMRB president, extended her congratulations to Mr. Yessayan.

## APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

*Approved* – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the September 30, 2020 School Committee meeting.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

*As prepared for delivery.*

Thank you all for joining us this evening. It is hard to believe it has only been eight days since we last met. It's certainly been an eventful week and there is a lot of business to attend to tonight. My team and I will provide a reopening update shortly, but first I want to provide a few other updates and some highlights from the past week. Last Thursday was our first day of in-person learning for this school year and it was so great to see students back inside our school buildings.

Mayor Walsh, BTU President Jessica Tang and I visited Ellis Elementary, Carter School and Charlestown High together last Thursday, with some of our other colleagues. Thank you to Chief of Safety Services Neva Coakley-Grice and BPD Superintendent of Community Engagement Nora Baston, and other colleagues for joining us. The media joined us outside the Ellis and one fifth grader really stole the spotlight and held his own little press conference. He mentioned that he missed his friends and teachers and that, though he was "kinda nervous," he thought "the day is gonna be good!" It was really just heartwarming to see our school leaders, teachers, and all our school-based staff welcome our students back after a long, difficult 6 months. Since the first day, I've stopped by some other school as well, including Henderson, Russell and Orchard Gardens.

BPS has a long-standing partnership with the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) Infectious Disease Bureau, which provides a strong foundation for the development and implementation of COVID-19 protocols to keep students, staff and families safe. [BPHC performs all official contact tracing](#), and case investigation for confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 for the City of Boston including those that attend or work within BPS. When an individual tests positive for COVID-19, public health nurses begin the process of contact tracing

to identify any individuals who may have come in close contact with the confirmed case. The infectious disease teams at BPHC follow up to provide guidance on quarantining and any other type of support that may be needed. BPHC does not release private data that could identify an individual. In addition, the City of Boston and BPHC do not release any information by category in which the number of cases is fewer than 5, which is the case for positive test results received by BPHC connected to BPS.

October is College Month in the Boston Public Schools! This marks an exciting month of events and activities designed to encourage all students and their families to begin planning for a passion-filled life after high school as early as possible. Our entire district offers a wide variety of college access and success programs, and the goal of College Month is to spotlight these initiatives throughout October, making sure that students and their families know what resources are available to them. We know that the Class of 2021 is going to face challenges that classes before them have not encountered. FAFSA Day in BPS was last Friday, October 2, to raise awareness that the submission process has opened for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. We strongly encourage our students and families to complete the FAFSA at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). The district's goal is for every high school student to engage in a post-high school planning process using the comprehensive college and career readiness platform Naviance. Naviance helps students achieve critical milestones to prepare for college or careers. In addition we are promoting virtual events, including college fairs and panel discussions, and encouraging students to begin the postsecondary planning process early and engaging their families, counselors, teachers, partners, and mentors in their journey towards achieving their goals. We thank our Success Boston team, the extensive system of college access agencies, and the BPS Office of Secondary Schools for their ongoing leadership in this area to get our students ready, in, and through college. Thank you for fostering a college-going culture within BPS and the City of Boston.

As a reminder, there is no school on Monday. That is my Superintendent's Report for this evening.

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Mayor Martin J. Walsh briefly joined the meeting and spoke about the challenges of COVID and its impact on education. He praised BPS for its extensive distribution of free meals and Chromebooks. He discussed the importance in-person learning, particularly for special education and other high priority students. The district has purchased fans, partitions, and PPE for the safety of students, teachers, and staff. The Mayor said that he has received positive feedback from families about improvements with remote learning. On the first day of in-person learning for high priority students, last week, the Mayor and Superintendent visited Ellis Elementary, Carter School, and Charlestown High School. He received tremendous feedback from families about the impact of in-person learning on students with the highest needs. A few days later, the citywide COVID positivity rate rose to 4.1%. The Mayor spoke with officials from BPS and the Boston Public Health Commission who determined that it was safe to continue in-person learning for high priority students. He praised BPS teachers for their dedication. Mr. Loconto thanked Mayor Walsh for his leadership.

Mr. James spoke about the importance of receiving timely meeting materials to prepare for Committee meetings. He asked when the district will begin releasing weekly COVID reports.

The Superintendent said that when the citywide rate reaches over five percent, BPS will issue a weekly COVID report.

*Approved* - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent's report.

## REPORT

***Returning Boston Strong: BPS Reopening Update*** - The Superintendent and her senior team presented an update on the district's school reopening plan, *Returning Boston Strong*. Presenters included Chief of Operations Sam DePina, Chief of Student, Family, and Community Advancement Monica Roberts, and Chief Information Officer Mark Racine.

Daily Percent of Tests That Are Positive  
7 Day Moving Average (as of 10/3) 4.1%

### COVID CASES:

\*As of 10/1/20 - 10/08/20

In Person Students: 1

In Person Educators: 0

In Person Support Staff: 2

### Timeline:

- Sept. 29 Side Agreement to MOA signed for flexibility in scheduling Remote/Hybrid
- High Priority Students started Oct. 1
- Oct. 6- 4.1 Positivity Rate
- Oct. 7 All Remote
- Oct. 7 BPHC announces BPS can open for HIPP students
- Oct. 8 Reopen for HIPP students - BTU filed Actions
- # Teachers reporting to work today

### Enrollment:

- Outreach and registration efforts
  - Remote service covering all family languages
  - Continued outreach using ethnic radio, television and newspapers, CBOs, traditional media and newer mechanisms like iheart radio
  - Trained family liaisons will support with continued outreach and support for their school and district-wide
- 53,890 students enrolled for SY20-21 (as of September 1)
  - 55,230 students enrolled for SY19-20 (as of 9/1/19)
- As of 10/6, the number of students for SY20-21 is 51,231.
  - 53,534 students enrolled for SY19-20 (as of 10/1/19)
- Break down by grade for SY20-21:
  - 6,265 in grades K0-K2

**Boston School Committee Remote Meeting**  
**Zoom**  
**October 8, 2020**

- 18,399 in grades 1-5
- 10,770 in grades 6-8
- 15,797 in grades 9-12

**Technology:**

- **Devices**
  - 20,000 additional Chromebooks deliveries to schools underway, starting with our transformation schools
  - Headphones will be delivered to all schools by end of week
- **Internet**
  - 1,400 new hotspots distributed starting 9/28 to homeless/mobile students
  - Comcast Internet Essentials funding vouchers will be provided to families in need of financial assistance
- **Classroom Technology**
  - 3,500 cameras delivered to schools Attendance:
- First two weeks of school attendance was consistent with previous years with an average of 91% present
- Approximately 890 students did not start this year, down from 1150 in 2019 and 1419 in 2018
  - Asian - 6%
  - Black - 37%
  - Latinx -46%
  - White - 7%
  - Native American & Other - 5%
- Daily attendance is tracked as in-person and remote absent/present (req. By DESE) and we are seeing approximately 1300 students in-person each day.

**Food & Nutrition**

- **Meal Service for Remote Learning**
  - Meals available at 26 school sites citywide
  - Added survey cards to all boxes distributed and delivered to obtain feedback from parents and students
  - In the 4 days, have served over 350,000 meals
  - Quality Control processes emphasized at both vendor and school sites
  - Changes implemented regarding portion size, packaging and variety
- **Meal Service for Hybrid Learning**
  - 98.2% of meal service plans finalized
  - Students can take home packs of 3 breakfasts/3 lunches ■ Changed boxes to bags
- **Other Updates**
  - 91.3% of Health inspections completed (as of 10/7)
  - Continuation of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) in 65 schools
  - Updated P-EBT data was submitted on September 18th

- Notifications will be sent in October to families

Transportation

Critical Next Steps:

Upcoming work on bus routes & scheduling

- 4 days per week HIPP students, routing at 500 per week
- New A/B assignments, a large number came through this week
- Normal student changes (e.g., school assignment changes, address changes)

Continuing to work to improve TransDev & bus yard operations

- There were serious issues with on-time performance (OTP) challenges on days 1 and 2 of school due to a variety of issues.
- Over the weekend, Transdev and BPS worked on a number of solutions that were rolled out week 2. For week 2, so far, 88% OTP -> 90%+ OPT. Continuing to monitor closely.

Status Update - First Week of School

Operations for our students

- Yellow bus: Major improvements

Communications with families and school leaders

- Call Center: 26 hotline workers have taken 1500+ calls from schools and families through 4 days
  - Significant challenges on days 1 and 2 (average 8+ min wait times for families)
  - Wait times averaging 1:27 for week 2 so far. Continuing to improve and monitor

closely

- Families: Mailers continuing to be sent with Transportation updates, with the addition of email this year as well
- School leaders: Handbook sent out with all details
- Ongoing comms: Notify school leaders and families about severe delays as we learn of them daily. Monitoring bus routes that have had issues on multiple days to resolve repeat issues

Ms. Oliver-Dávila apologized for being tardy to the meeting, explaining that she and Dr. Rivera attended an event co-hosted by Amplify Latinx and the Greater Boston Latino Network (GBLN) about the Latino nonprofit sector in Greater Boston and MA. She offered support for Mr. James' request for timely information. She asked for clarification as to whether students are permitted to use virtual backgrounds. Mr. Racine said that there are some technical limitations. Ms. Oliver-Dávila encouraged students to be able to use them.

Dr. Rivera expressed concern about the rising COVID rate in Boston, saying she supports fully remote education. She asked for more information about accommodations that the district is providing for teachers with health conditions. The Superintendent said that she will provide an update at the next School Committee meeting.

Mr. O'Neill said that he supports the Superintendent's decision to continue in-person learning for high priority students while providing remote learning for others, describing the situation as complex. He asked how many students the district is currently transporting. Mr. DePina said BPS is transporting about 1,700 students.

Mr. James expressed concerns about the city's rising COVID positivity rate. He repeated his suggestion that BPS mail MBTA passes to students to avoid having students congregate at pick up locations. He asked if the district has implemented any changes to the walk zone. Mr. Loconto clarified that BPS has not made any changes to the walk zone. The Superintendent encouraged people to inform the district if they have concerns about social distancing on school property. Mr. James suggested that there should be a maximum capacity on MBTA buses.

Ms. Robinson asked how many day students will be returning to school buildings for in-person learning next week. The Superintendent agreed to follow up with the information. Ms. Robinson asked the Superintendent to explain how teachers use technology to conduct simultaneous in-person and remote teaching. She expressed concern about scheduling issues and a lack of joy in remote learning pods managed by providers. The Superintendent said that she will address the concerns with the academics team.

Mr. Loconto spoke about the preliminary injunction filed by the Boston Teachers Union, which seeks to immediately shift all students and staff into remote learning. He said that the district is taking the steps necessary to provide a safe, appropriate, learning environment. If conditions change, the district will reevaluate. He said that high needs students are being harmed when they don't receive in-person services. He thanked teachers and staff for their dedication to students.

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Boston City Councilor Ricardo Arroyo testified regarding the reopening of schools.
- Boston City Councilor At-Large Annissa Essaibi-George testified regarding the reopening of schools.
- Cady Malkemes, student, Boston Arts Academy, testified regarding the reopening of schools.
- Olga Gjika, student Excel High School, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Anya Edwards, student, Boston Arts Academy, testified regarding the reopening of schools.
- Charlene Adames-Pimentel, BPS student, testified regarding food services and air ventilation.
- Frida Swallow, student, Boston Arts Academy, testified regarding Indigenous Peoples' Day.
- Roxi Harvey, chair, Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac), testified regarding in-person instruction for special education students.
- Edith Bazile, advocate and BPS grandparent, testified regarding in-person instruction for special education students.
- Peggy Wiesenberg, Access to Justice Fellow, testified regarding exam schools admissions for SY21-22.
- Mike Heichman, member, Boston Education Justice Alliance, testified regarding school reopening and exam schools admissions for SY21-22.

- Nancy Lessin, BPS grandmother, testified regarding school reopening.
- Megan Castro, parent, Eliot K-8 School, testified regarding in-person instruction for special education students.
- Kelsey Brendel, BPS parent, testified regarding in-person instruction for special education students.
- Maithily Erande, BPS parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions for SY21-22.
- Michelle Caine, teacher, Excel High School, testified regarding school reopening.
- Wendy Lam, teacher, Excel High School, testified regarding school reopening.
- Nikki Rivera, parent, Mendell Elementary School, testified regarding in-person instruction for special education students.
- Kris Grymonpre, teacher, McCormack Middle School, testified regarding school reopening.
- Lisa Green, member, Boston Coalition for Education Equity, testified regarding exam schools admissions for SY21-22.
- David Walsh, parent, Mission Hill K-8 School, testified regarding in-person instruction for special education students.
- Nicol Riley, parent, Sumner Elementary Schools, testified regarding in-person instruction for special education students.
- Ruby Reyes, executive director, Boston Education Justice Alliance, testified regarding school reopening.
- Go Sasaki, BPS teacher, testified regarding school reopening.
- Ruth Gonzalez Vega, parent, Eliot K-8 and Boston Latin School, testified regarding school reopening.
- Donna Humphreys, staff, Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, testified regarding school reopening.
- Lara Krepps, teacher, Boston Teachers Union Pilot School, testified regarding school reopening.

## **REPORT**

***Recommendation of Exam Schools Admissions Criteria for School Year 2021-22*** - Chief of Student, Family, and Community Advancement Monica Roberts and Exam School Admissions Criteria Working Group members Tanisha Sullivan, Michael Contompasis, and Pastor Sam Acevedo presented the Superintendent's recommendation for a one-year exception to the current exam schools admissions for School Year 2021-22 (admissions cycle 2020-21). The Boston Public Schools (BPS) has three exam schools: Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School, and the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science. All three schools accept new students for grades 7 and 9. The O'Bryant School also accepts a limited number of new students for grade 10.

Working Group members included: Samuel Acevedo, Opportunity and Achievement Gap Task Force Co-Chair; Acacia Aguirre, John D. O'Bryant parent; Michael Contompasis, former Boston

Latin School Head of School and former BPS Superintendent; Matt Cregor, Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee; Tanya Freeman-Wisdom, John D. O'Bryant, Head of School; Katherine Grassa, Curley K-8, Principal; Zena Lum, Boston Latin Academy parent; Rachel Skerritt, Boston Latin School, Head of School; and Tanisha Sullivan, President, NAACP Boston.

In August, the Superintendent charged the Working Group with making recommendations for a revised admissions criteria for SY21-22 in light of the current pandemic and the seven months of interrupted learning that students have experienced across the city.

The Working Group considered the following exam schools enrollment trends:

- Student preference, as defined by ranking of exam schools, show that over 70% of students living in the three zip codes with the highest median household income prefer BLS, while students in the three zip codes with the lowest median household income show preferences for all three exam schools.
- Current BPS students account for roughly two-thirds of incoming students to Boston's exam schools, and about 60% of incoming students at BLS. Half of non-BPS (private, parochial, charter, home-schooled) students who applied to exam schools got into BLS, twice the rate of BPS students.
- Approximately 83% of students in exam schools remain enrolled between 7th and 10th grade. Students admitted with an average GPA of B have high rates of continued enrollment in exam schools, particularly economically disadvantaged (81%) students.

BPS has worked to increase access to the exam school schools by increasing the number of seats available in the Exam School Initiative (ESI); offering the exam school admissions test during the school day to all currently enrolled BPS students, beginning in Fall 2019; and engaging in an RFP process for a new exam, which resulted in the selection the NWEA MAP Growth, a bias tested exam that is untimed and aligned to core standards curriculum.

The Working Group made the following considerations for Fall 2020 Testing

- Logistics for in-person exam administration, including social distancing, honoring family choice for students to learn remotely, and availability of technology to administer the exam
  - Inability to ensure test security in remote test administration
  - An exam's ability to assess students' preparedness for exam school classes given the continued educational disruption caused by COVID-19
  - Disparate impact of educational disruption on low-income families and families of color
- Contingency plan if Boston's COVID-19 rates escalate this fall

BPS Asian and white students are considered meeting or exceeding expectations at higher rates than Black and Latinx students on state exams and district report cards.

Recommendation for SY21-22:

- Identify students for the applicant pool based on admissions criteria of prior report card grades or prior assessment results. All grades and assessment results would reflect pre-COVID work, and require school district (or equivalent) verification that the student is performing at grade level based on the Massachusetts Curriculum standards.
- Distribute invitations to students based on admissions criteria of prior report card grades and invitation mechanism of zip code.
  - Up to 20% of seats at each exam school are reserved for the top ranking students in the city based on GPA.
  - The remainder of invitations are distributed by using a combination of GPA and student home zip code.

Criteria for an Applicant Pool:

- To mitigate challenges of COVID-19, disparities in existing achievement data and test administration logistics during a pandemic, students meeting one of the following criteria would be included in the applicant pool:
  - Met or Exceeded Expectations on the 2019 ELA and Math MCAS; OR Earned a B or higher Average GPA during the first two terms of SY19-20; and
  - School district(or equivalent) verification that the student is performing at grade level based on the Massachusetts Curriculum standards

These criteria were chosen to ensure students would be successful once enrolled at an exam school.

Invitation Distribution:

- 20% of invitations at each exam school will be reserved for the top ranking students citywide. Invitations will be extended to the top ranking students based on GPA only and their first choice selection.
- Create a pool for each school from the identified top 20% of students who ranked the school first.
- Distribute invitations to students in order of rank, up to the number of seats available. Any ties based on GPA will be resolved using a random number.
- Students in the top 20% citywide who do not secure a seat at their preferred exam school will be considered for a second opportunity in the next round of invitations by zip code.
- The remaining approximately 80% of invitations will be extended based on a combination of zip code and GPA.
- Each zip code in the city is allocated a number of seats based on the percentage of school-aged children in the city of Boston living in that zip code.
- Eligible students are ranked by GPA in their respective zip code.
- Invitations are distributed in 10 rounds with 10% of each zip code's seats allocated in each round. Zip codes will be ranked according to median household income, and seats

will be allocated to the zip codes with lowest median household income first in each round.

Projections based on the proposed recommendation indicate greater racial, socioeconomic and geographic diversity, as compared to the invitations sent during the SY20-21 admissions process.

The Working Group made the following additional recommendations:

- Provide appropriate support – both before and during the school year - for SY21-22 admittees who, while academically prepared for exam school content, may require more time to get acclimated to the pace of exam school study
- Expand the Exam School Initiative (ESI), beginning as early as 4th grade and running through October of the 6th grade year, focused on academic acceleration in both ELA and math
- Continue convening a working group to advise on permanent efforts to expand the applicant pool, considering use of the new NWEA test (as noted above) and other factors, based on what can be learned from applying the recommendations to this year's admissions and what the working group has learned in reviewing practices in other districts.
- Secure the additional funds required for implementation from the city, not from the existing budget
- Amend current policy to remove “non-traditional entry” (approved December 16, 1992) and “deferral of acceptance” (approved September 16, 1992) provisions.

The Superintendent is requesting a vote by the School Committee on the recommendations on October 21. If approved, the following timeline would apply:

November & December 2020: Identify students qualified for the applicant pool

January 2021: Students in the applicant pool submit school preferences

February 2021: BPS determines students who will receive invitations

March 2021: Invitations sent

April 2021: Supports for invited students begin

Dr. Coleman praised the work of the Exam School Admissions Criteria Working Group but said that he feels conflicted because he does not support the concept of exam schools.

Dr. Rivera encouraged the district to closely track the resulting data should the recommendations be approved. She suggested that the working group be expanded to include exam school alumni, students, and academic researchers. She recommended giving priority weight to BPS students applying for admissions. She urged the district to be explicit about the need for racial equity.

Mr. Loconto suggested elevating the Exam School Admissions Criteria Working Group to the level of a School Committee Task Force in order to continue the discussion in a public format.

Mr. James expressed support for the recommendations, adding that priority should be given to BPS students. He suggested that admissions criteria extend beyond grades to include non-academic qualities. He said that non-exam schools should be better resourced.

Mr. O'Neill asked the Working Group their thoughts on the NWEA MAP test. Mr. Contompasis said that the MAP test needs to be validated but should not be given this year in light of the current pandemic. Ms. Sullivan said that exam schools admissions criteria should determine which students are prepared to excel in an exam school setting. Mr. O'Neill asked if the Working Group had considered using geocodes rather than zip codes. Ms. Sullivan said that geocodes might be worth exploring. She emphasized that the proposed introduction of zip codes and utilization of median income is expected to result in an increase in socioeconomic diversity. Mr. O'Neill suggested adding other criteria such as recommendations and essays. He expressed concern about the possible legal implications of giving priority weight to BPS students. He spoke about communications problems faced by non-exam BPS high schools.

Ms. Robinson said that she supports pausing the exam schools admissions test during this pandemic year. She said that all 25 BPS high schools should be excellent. She suggested having student representation on the Task Force. She requested additional data detailing the specific numbers on slide 13 of the PowerPoint presentation, not just the percentages. She expressed concern about the city's gentrifying neighborhoods. Ms. Sullivan referred to slide 13, which details fourth grade MCAS performance by race, a crisis. Mr. Contompasis called the data an embarrassment in a city of resources. He said that reforming high schools requires risk taking. He held up as an example of collaboration the Dever McCormack School's partnership with UMass Boston, which provides learning opportunities for students in grades PreK-16.

Mr. Loconto highlighted the Working Group's additional recommendations such as increased support for students in grades four and five, and additional support for students entering the exam schools. He said that those efforts must be supported in the budget.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila expressed concern about 4th grade achievement on the MCAS. She expressed support for continuing the mission of the Working Group and elevating it to a Task Force. She said that there should be a priority weight added for BPS students. She encouraged the district to look more deeply at income levels within neighborhoods. She said that the student population in the exam schools should reflect the district population. She urged the district to bring more resources to non-exam schools.

Mr. Loconto explained that the Working Group's recommendation is a one-year solution but is also part of a continuum. He said that the Committee's vote on an exception to admissions policy paves the way to reexamining the exam schools admissions process. He spoke about the need to about level the playing field across the city. He noted the persistence rates for students entering the exam schools with a B average or higher.

Mr. O'Neill said that students should have a wide range of quality choices. He spoke about the importance of conducting outreach to families, building trust, and careful implementation. Ms. Roberts said that the Office of Engagement is working closely with the Office of Data and

Accountability and the Working Group on these issues. The Superintendent said that the district will examine grade inflation

Mr. Loconto said that he will consider the continuation of assessments in the long-term. He thanked the Working Group for their hard work and dedication.

The Superintendent closed the conversation by speaking about the need to reinvent education, changing structures and leading with courage. She spoke about policies serving as the levers of change.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. Coleman requested more information about the district's rate of returned mail. The Superintendent agreed to follow up.

Dr. Rivera made a motion that the Committee adopt Indigignous Peoples Day. Mr. Loconton explained that the Committee does not take action during new business. He thanked the Superintendent for removing Columbus Day from the BPS calendar. He said that the Committee will take Dr. Rivera's recommendation under advisement and may take action at a future meeting.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila offered support for Dr. Rivera's suggestion. She said that BPS needs to reexamine how it teaches history. She spoke about the importance of fully funding and implementing ethnic studies courses.

Mr. Loconto said that Chief Academic Officer Andrea Zayas will present a full report on academics soon.

## **ADJOURN**

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

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan  
Executive Secretary