



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REMOTE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

October 6, 2021

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on October 6, 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 Jeri Robinson; Vice Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Ernani DeAraujo; Lorena Lopera; Rafaela Polanco Garcia; Quoc Tran; and Student Representative Xyra Mercer.

School Committee Member Absent: None.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

September 22, 2021 Boston School Committee Meeting Minutes

Advanced Work Class (AWC) Policy Flexibility Request Memo

In-Kind Donations with a Total Estimated Value of \$50,000

Grants for Approval Totaling \$782,500

Revised Code of Conduct -TABLED

Library Services Strategic Plan, 2022-2026 PowerPoint

Library Services Strategic Plan, 2022-2026

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Memo from Dr. Deb Frogatt to Boston School Committee re: Boston Public Schools Library Services Strategic Plan 2022-2026, September 14, 2021

BPS Library Services Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Equity Impact Statement

2021 MCAS Results PowerPoint

MCAS Results Equity Impact Statement

Memo from Monica Hogan, Senior Executive Director, Data and Accountability, to Boston School Committee re: Presentation of 2021 MCAS Results, October 6, 2021

Exam Schools Admissions Policy Implementation Update PowerPoint

Superintendent's Performance Goals, School Year 2021-2022

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. Mr. O'Neill, Mr. Tran, and Ms. Mercer joined the meeting shortly after roll call. All other members were present.

Ms. Robinson said that tonight's meeting was being streamed live on Zoom. It will be rebroadcast on Boston City TV. It will also be posted at bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee and on YouTube. She announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cabo Verdean, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and American Sign Language (ASL). The interpreters introduced themselves and gave instructions in their native language on how to access simultaneous interpretation by changing the Zoom channel. Translated meeting documents were posted at www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee prior to the start of the meeting.

Ms. Robinson explained that some members were displaying virtual backgrounds of their alma maters in honor of College and Career Month. She invited members and Superintendent Cassellius to recognize their alma maters.

- Ms. Robinson - Wheelock College
- Mr. O'Neill - Boston College
- Dr. Coleman - Williams College
- Mr. DeAraujo - Harvard College
- Ms. Lopera- Boston College
- Ms. Polanco Garcia - Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, Dominican Republic
- Mr. Tran - Northeastern University
- Superintendent Cassellius - University of Minnesota

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the September 22, Committee 2021 meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

As prepared for delivery.

October is College and Career Month in the Boston Public Schools! This marks an exciting time to ensure our young leaders of tomorrow are prepared for postsecondary success. Amidst the pandemic, it is more important than ever before to develop in every learner the knowledge, skill, and character to excel in college, career, and life.

Our entire district offers a wide variety of college access and success programs, and the goal of College and Career Month is to spotlight these initiatives throughout October, making sure that students and their families know what resources are available to them.

Last Friday we kicked off College and Career month with the Citywide and BPS College Pride Day, where our dedicated community of teachers, counselors, and staff not only represented their college colors and alma maters on social media, but they shared their personal paths with us.

Beyond College Pride Day, some of the key themes this year include:

- College Affordability Week with a highlight on FAFSA completion
- Career & Academic Success Planning With Naviance
- Virtual events, including college and STEM-focused fairs, HBCU information sessions, and panel discussions
- Understanding and beginning the postsecondary planning process

BPS and Success Boston will be sharing a number 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, and encourage students to engage 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.

Last week, we learned that longtime BPS educator Michael McCarthy passed away following a brave battle with Alzheimer's disease. Mr. McCarthy was born in Dorchester and went on to spend 40 years working for the Boston Public Schools. He began his teaching career at the former Thompson Middle School, then moved to the former Rogers Middle School in Hyde Park, where he spent 35 years as a teacher, assistant principal and later a principal. Mr. McCarthy retired from BPS in 2006, but has a lasting legacy in the BPS community. During his time in the district, Mr. McCarthy developed a course of study and reading manual for middle school

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teachers; directed a multi-ethnic materials workshop; and worked as an instructor for parent workshops, among many other commitments. Mr. McCarthy also founded Boston Baseball Camp, which provides an opportunity for the children of the various neighborhoods of Boston to make connections with peers and learn the game of baseball. Boston Baseball Camp has served the youth of this City since 1990 and continues to this day. Thank you, Mr. McCarthy, for your immense contributions to the Boston Public Schools and the City of Boston!

Last week was a week of celebration and recognition. On Tuesday, September 28 Mayor Janey joined me in visiting the Winship Elementary School in Brighton to celebrate the school's success and congratulate the community on the honor of being recognized as a Blue Ribbon School. The Winship was given this national honor for its sharp focus on cultivating students' identities, interests, and strengths in and outside of the classroom. As I greeted the staff, parents, caregivers and students during my visit with the Mayor, there was a warm sense of community and family. I could feel in the air the care and attention they give to each child and their families as students entered the building. As I toured the school, I could also see the preparation each teacher took to ensure students are welcomed, there were enriching texts that reflect their diverse identities, and there were engaging instructional materials nicely laid out for the day's lessons. This is all of what makes an excellent school, and more importantly an excellent experience for the students in the care of Boston Public Schools. I am proud of the Winship for representing so much of the good BPS does every day across all of our schools.

Last week, The English High School, the oldest public school in the nation, celebrated its 200th birthday! English High School is a testament to the endurance and importance of public education, and I'm happy to have shared in yet another milestone for this school. I am incredibly proud of The English staff and students, as the school's graduation rate over the last six years has improved by nearly 30%. English is made up of an amazing team of educators who continue to cultivate a school culture that is supportive and challenging, meeting students where they are and helping them achieve their full potential.

On Saturday we celebrated English's 200th anniversary with a virtual event to honor its rich history and its bright future. The virtual event highlighted some great shout outs and congratulatory remarks from English teachers and staff, Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz, Representative Ronald J. Mariano, actor and alum Arthur Wahlberg, Councilor Michael Flaherty, Governor Charlie Baker, Secretary of Labor, Marty Walsh, and Mayor Kim Janey to name a few. We also celebrated the renovation of two Social Emotional Learning rooms last week with a ribbon cutting ceremony. These rooms were built to give English High students a place to access supportive services and programming provided by the school's behavioral health staff. These bright and inviting spaces help to provide social emotional support and connection for our students as a critical component of their return to full-time in-person learning. I am grateful to the team at Loomis Sayles for their belief in our students and their work with The English High School, and I look forward to seeing more of what this school community can accomplish.

I would like to take a moment to recognize educators across the district who have recently received awards and recognition for their dedicated service to our community. Congratulations to Marjorie Pita, PreK Teacher, and Cándida J. Mundo-Arboleda, Spanish Language Literacy

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Teacher-HILT for SLIFE Program, both of the Rafael Hernandez K-8 School in Roxbury, who will be honored at the Latinos in Education "State of Latino Education" conference this week.

Today, Marjorie is receiving the prestigious Adelante Award, a national recognition that celebrates public school educators who have made significant contributions to advance educational equity, meaningfully engage Latino families, and work diligently to enhance the schooling experience of Latino students. Tomorrow, Cándida will be recognized as a Latinx Educator of Excellence for her exceptional work within Boston Public Schools and her community. I am so BPS proud of both of these educators. The recognition of our dedicated educators does not stop there. In addition to Marjorie and Candida, the Mass Mentoring Partnership is recognizing the work of Benjamin Helfat, Head of School at the Boston Adult Technical Academy at its Cheers for Champions event, which highlights innovative mentoring programs that successfully adapted their services to best support young people during the COVID-19 crisis.

We know there have been some recent challenges with COVID-19 testing, something districts across the State have been experiencing. We are grateful to DESE for providing testing services in our schools, a critical mitigation measure to ensure the health and safety of our students, staff and overall community. But the rollout has been challenging across the state. We continue to work with DESE and our testing vendor, CIC Health, to iron out some of the implementation challenges, including increasing CIC Health's staffing capacity. I want to thank our incredible nurses, Health Services staff, and our school leaders for their patience, flexibility, and grace, as we work to strengthen this partnership and make the necessary improvements.

The Advance Work Class (AWC) working group convened 10 meetings from April - June 2021. I want to thank co-chairs Edith Bazile and John Travis for their work convening the group and facilitating the conversation. As we form out our comprehensive Academic Plan for grades 4 - 6, I've asked Dr. Echelson to work with this committee and to align this work to recommendations regarding AWC, EFA, ESI and rigorous instruction. I expect a future recommendation to the school committee in the future as part of the academic plan update. For School Year 2021-2022, I am recommending that we extend the temporary flexibility of the policy governing Advanced Work Class (AWC) and I am recommending that the School Committee grant me the temporary authority to determine the appropriate standards for these policies for the remainder of the school year.

During our last meeting, I mentioned that I would be putting together a working group to dive deep into our Transportation challenges. I want to first want to again apologize for these shortages and any inconvenience this has caused our families, students and educators. Let me highlight the steps we've taken and the progress that has been made. Transdev continues to focus intently on hiring, while facing a challenging hiring market with many other companies offering large retention and hire bonuses. Six new drivers started work in September. An additional five new drivers are currently in training and should all be on the road within one-two weeks. Further, 8 recent new driver hires are being processed to start training. Transdev is also working with drivers to reduce, where appropriate, the number of drivers on leave or who have issues with their licensure. We are also actively interviewing and hiring candidates to provide proper coverage on our buses and safely transport our students as bus monitors. In the past one-two

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weeks, Transportation has submitted 51 candidates for hire, with 3 monitors fully hired. Our team is also working to consolidate routes. We started the school year with 649 buses routed to run daily. So far, we have removed 21, bringing us down to 628 buses operating daily. We are aiming to get down to below 623 total buses within the next week. This work, in combination with our focus on driver hiring, will ultimately lead us to a sustainable point where we can be confident that all our bus routes have drivers in place to run them on schedule on a daily basis and we can provide safe, reliable, and on-time transportation for all students. So far this week (through yesterday, October 5th) bus on-time performance is averaging 90% during morning trips and improving to 99% within 15 minutes of school start time. Afternoon on-time performance is averaging 88% this week, with 98% of buses arriving within 15 minutes of school dismissal time and 99% within 30 minutes.

No matter how high our on-time performance, we know that if it is not 100%, that means our students and families are impacted. It is time that the public understands the deeper complexities of our transportation system and the reasons behind the recurring challenges. The new working group will be tasked with coming up with solutions to improve on time performance; address systemic issues affecting operational excellence; and work towards realizing a 30% reduction or more in costs. The body will advise me on recommendations to improve operations and performance. As I mentioned during our last meeting, I am forming this group because I believe it will take political will and public support to make these necessary changes.

The group will discuss the recommendations made by our Transportation Consultant and will address operational areas including:

- Start Times
- Assignment and choice (Special Education programs/ SEI)
- Student information and assignment data transfer
- New hire processing
- Monitors assignment and coverage
- Walk Zones and Neighborhood/Magnet Schools
- Service for non-BPS schools
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- Clarity of bid process
- Transdev Partnership, management, and Accountability
- and Athletics

BPS Transportation is an incredibly complex system and I again want to acknowledge and commend the Transportation Team and in particular, Delavern Stanislaus on their continued work to improve. Ms. Stanislaus is actually receiving the Henry L. Shattuck Public Service Award this evening from the Boston Municipal Research Bureau at a virtual event. It is so well-deserved because Del and her team work day and night to implement every operational improvement they can in service of our students and families.

We are finalizing the membership of the working group, though we expect the group to include:

- Deputy Superintendent of Operations Samuel DePina
- Chief Operations Officer Indy Alvarez
- Director of Transportation Delavern Stanislaus

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- Chief Equity Officer Charles Grandson or a designee
- A member of the Boston School Committee
- A BTU representative
- A BPS staff member from each of the following offices/departments:
Communications, Data & Accountability, Family and Community Engagement,
and Planning and Analysis
- The City of Boston's Chief of Streets or a designee
- A parent representative (SPEDPAC, DELAC, Etc.)
- A school leader and/or school-based administrator
- Student representatives
- A representative from a local civil rights organization
- A representative from the United Steel Workers Union and the Bus Monitors
Union
- A representative from the ESSER Commission
- A representative from City of Boston Office of Urban Mechanics

I will provide another update on the working group at our next meeting. That is my Superintendent's Report for this evening.

Dr. Coleman expressed support for the transportation working group's proposed charge and membership. He asked about possible solutions for increasing equitable access to AWC. The Superintendent said that the AWC working group has more to accomplish before presenting its recommendations to the Committee. Deputy Superintendent of Academics Drew Echelson will collaborate with the working group to design a broader academic vision. In the meantime, the Superintendent is seeking the Committee's approval of seeking approval of AWC policy flexibility for SY 2021-22.

Mr. DeAraujo said that he does not support continued suspension of the terra nova test for AWC admissions, suggesting that the district should engage in more vetting with the community to determine how AWC fits into the distinct broader academic vision. Mr. DeAraujo spoke about the importance of making improvements to transportation service, saying that all stakeholders must be aligned in order to address systemic issues. He stated that he would not vote in favor of a transportation policy or a collective bargaining agreement until he receives in writing verification that all stakeholders are aligned.

Ms. Mercer questioned why transportation is such a complex issue. The Superintendent explained the various factors that complicate transportation service, including school assignment, enrollment size, school start times, and traffic. The Superintendent confirmed for Ms. Mercer that students need permission from a parent or guardian to be vaccinated. She advised students in need of support to contact their school social worker.

Ms. Polanco Garcia expressed concerns about the urgency of transportation problems. She asked for clarity regarding the family notification process. The Superintendent clarified that 21 routes were removed, not drivers, and that 51 bus monitors were hired. Ms. Polanco Garcia said it's imperative that families are notified about delays immediately. Deputy Superintendent of

Operations Sam DePina explained the district’s notification process to families regarding transportation delays, adding that the district has seen much improvement since the start of the new school year.

Ms. Lopera spoke about facilities challenges, including locations and conditions and how these issues related to the quality of education. She echoed Ms. Polanco Garcia’s concerns about communication, saying that there is room for growth in that area. The Superintendent said that bus driver attendance is critical to on-time performance. Ms. Lopera asked about challenges with COVID pool testing and how the state is responding. The Superintendent said that the state’s pool testing vendor, CIC, is experiencing a staffing shortage and that she has been in communication with the state Commissioner of Education to address these concerns. Ms. Lopera suggested that the Committee consider mandating the COVID vaccine for students.

Mr. O’Neill said the Committee should be watching other districts closely to measure support for vaccine mandates. He noted that both he and the Chair experienced technical difficulties uploading their vaccine verification on the City’s website. The Superintendent acknowledged the barriers experienced by some employees, adding that BPS is providing 15- minute rapid tests. Mr. O’Neill clarified the Superintendent’s recommendation for continued AWC policy flexibility by allowing school leaders and school site councils to determine AWC invitations at the school level rather than have students sit for a high-stakes test following the learning disruptions caused by the pandemic. The Superintendent will then incorporate the recommendations of the AWC Working Group into her broader academic vision.

Ms. Robinson requested an update on Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). The Superintendent said that FNS staffing is down 22 percent, prompting BPS to shift to pre-plated meals at about 20 schools. She cited employee residency requirements as a challenge. She said that hourly employees are essential to operational success. She also said that BPS needs to examine equity and parity in structuring its employment contracts which would come with tradeoffs. Ms. Robinson asked for an update on Edward M. Academy for Health Careers (EMK), which is now co-located at the Endicott Building. The Superintendent said that she recently visited EMK at Endicott and that her staff continue to work with a realtor to find a long-term location.

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent’s report.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Claudia Bueno, Roxbury resident, BPS student, Sociedad Latina member, testified in favor of designating the October holiday in honor of Indigenous People.
- Ileana Montalvo, Roslindale resident, Mission Hill K-8 School parent, testified regarding bullying.
- Suleika Soto, South End resident, Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA) member, testified regarding reopening and interpretation.
- Nicole Wang, Beacon Hill resident, parent, testified regarding the exam school application process.
- Mike Heichman, Dorchester resident, BEJA member, testified regarding state

receivership, the Boston Student Advisory Council, and Mission Hill K-8 School.

- Nancy Lessin, Jamaica Plain resident, MassCOSH Health-Technical Committee member, testified regarding COVID-related safety.
- John Mudd, Cambridge resident, advocate, testified regarding teacher diversity.
- Andrew Iliff, Jamaica Plain resident, Mission Hill K-8 School and Boston Latin Academy parent, testified regarding the district's management of the Mission Hill School.
- Shery Keleher, Charlestown resident, Warren-Prescott K-8 School and Boston Latin School, testified regarding ventilation, dress codes, learning loss, exam schools, support for scholar athletes, and public comment.
- Yavielies Figueroa, Roslindale resident, Mission Hill K-8 School parent, testified regarding bullying.
- Monica Borgida, Charlestown resident, parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Alan Tian, West Roxbury resident, parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Charlie Kim, North End resident, BPS parent, Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpEdPAC) member, testified regarding Covid Compensatory Services.
- Ruby Reyes, Dorchester resident, BEJA executive director, testified regarding equity.
- Marcie Carmody, Charlestown resident, BPS parent, testified regarding transportation concerns.
- Avery Saulnier de Reyes, Roxbury resident, Mission Hill K-8 School parent, testified regarding the district's management of the Mission Hill School.
- Mano Katsompenakis, Charlestown resident, BPS parent, testified regarding high quality high schools.
- Sarah Wharton, North End resident, Eliot K-8 School parent, testified regarding high quality high schools.
- Bonnie McBride, Jamaica Plain resident, Fenway High School librarian, testified in support of the Library Services Strategic Plan.
- Amy Wyeth, West Roxbury resident, Edward M. Academy for Health Careers parent, testified regarding facilities concerns.
- Andy Crowe, West Roxbury resident, Mission Hill K-8 School parent, testified regarding the district's management of the Mission Hill School.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved in-kind donations with a total estimated value of \$50,000.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$782,500.

Chair Robinson announced that she pulled the action item on the revised BPS Code of Conduct from the agenda while the Committee awaits additional information from the district about how feedback from the Code of Conduct Advisory Committee (COCAC) will be incorporated into the document. The revised Code will be presented to the Committee for approval at a future meeting.

Mr. O'Neill thanked the Superintendent for funding library staffing through the general fund budget and using Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding for related expenses.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved the Boston Public Schools Library Services Strategic Plan, 2022-2026.

REPORTS

2021 MCAS Results - Senior Director of Data and Accountability Monica Hogan presented the 2021 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) results for BPS. Students in grades 3-8 and 10 took the MCAS in the spring of 2021 in English Language Arts (ELA), Math and Science. Exams were administered in limited capacity during the 2020-21 school year as a result of the global pandemic. Students in grades 3-8 were permitted to take MCAS remotely or in-person, while students in grade 10 were required to test in-person due to the state's graduation requirement. DESE previously announced that the state would not use the data for district accountability purposes, unlike previous years.

The results demonstrate the need for continued efforts to address academic recovery and to deploy resources to support students and teachers. Utilizing a combination of district and federal relief funds, BPS has directed efforts to ensure students are reconnected with their classmates and teachers after a year of hybrid learning, that their teachers have support in reviewing the data to inform instruction, and that schools have access to curricular materials that are relevant to students and grade-level appropriate.

In grades 3-8, students took only one session of the MCAS. Ninety-one percent (91%) of BPS students in grades 3-8 took the MCAS in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, with participation by grade level ranging from 87% - 94%.

Thirty-one percent (31%) of tested students met or exceeded expectations in grades 3-8 in ELA, a decrease of 4 percentage points from 2019, which is less than the statewide decline of 6 percentage points. The average scaled score in grades 3-8 ELA was 487.4, a decrease of 4.5 points from 2019 to 2021, which is similar to the statewide decline of 4.7 points.

Twenty percent (20%) of tested students met or exceeded expectations in grades 3-8 in Math, a decrease of 13 percentage points from 2019, which is less than the statewide decline of 16 percentage points. The average scaled score in grades 3-8 Math was 479.5, a decrease of 10.5 points from 2019 to 2021, which is similar to the statewide decline of 9.5 points.

Grade 10 students who did not take the MCAS in spring 2021 will have the opportunity to take the test in fall of 2021. Across BPS, 70% of 10th grade students took the ELA MCAS and 68% of 10th grade students took the Math MCAS. For students who participated in 10th grade

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MCAS, ELA results were consistent with pre-pandemic performance, while math performance declined from 2019.

Deputy Superintendent of Academics outlined the district's plan for academic acceleration, which focuses on ensuring students are connected to school; ensuring teachers understand students' academic and social-emotional progress; and ensuring schools have the time and resources to design improvement plans.

To support students' connection to each other and their schools, BPS has deployed a full-time social worker in every school and a full-time family liaison to every school. These staff members reflect the cultures and languages of the communities they serve and are critical to building supportive relationships with students and families. The district is also expanding the Hub Schools model to provide access to wraparound services for students and families in schools.

Last school year, BPS launched new data tools including Panorama Student Success which enables school-based and district staff to access real-time, actionable and holistic student data, work together to log support notes, and design and monitor Student Success Plans. Starting this school year, BPS will contract with an online vendor that provides 24/7 tutoring support aligned with BPS curriculum and instruction. Also, BPS announced earlier this year a renewed commitment to equitable literacy during the district's August Leadership Institute, which includes access to new materials and professional development for school leaders and school-based staff.

To monitor student progress, BPS is utilizing the MAP Growth Assessment in Reading and Math, which provides information to schools and educators to help direct additional academic support to students. BPS has provided access to new grade-level culturally appropriate curricular resources and provided yearlong professional development on equitable literacy instruction for the 43 Transformation coaches in order to further support educators. In total, BPS has allocated \$2.8 million on instructional materials and professional development. BPS is also investing \$3.4 million in upgrades to school libraries to update collections with new, high quality texts. With the adoption of the MassCore curriculum last year, BPS schools are now working toward standard, grade-level, and culturally relevant curriculum and instruction.

In addition, the district will make significant investments in extended learning through acceleration academies and full-day summer programming that include both academic and enrichment opportunities.

Ms. Mercer asked why the exam for 10th grade students was not shortened. Ms. Hogan said that it was due to the state's graduation requirement. Ms. Mercer asked for insight regarding the decline in math scores. Ms. Hogan explained that the sequence of topics in math do not always build upon each other year over year in the same way as ELA, so students were more likely to miss certain content areas in light of learning disruption caused by the pandemic. Mr. Echelson agreed with Ms. Hogan's analysis, adding that the math MCAS assesses a much broader range of standards that could have contributed to a decrease and greater decrease in math outcomes compared with ELA. Ms. Mercer asked if students who failed the 10th grade exam will have the opportunity to retake it. Ms. Hogan confirmed that they would.

Dr. Coleman spoke about the importance of having a solid definition of proficient and advanced in order to identify gaps and respond accordingly. Ms. Hogan discussed the shift from legacy MCAS which utilized the standards “proficient and advanced” to the current MCAS exam which uses “meeting or exceeding expectations.” She spoke about the complexities of gap measuring. Dr. Coleman spoke about family wealth being a significant contributor to MCAS performance. The Superintendent said that it becomes more difficult for students to pass the exam every time there is a new version and higher cut scores.

Ms. Lopera asked about the district’s plans to expand before and after school programming. The Superintendent said that BPS will use ESSER funding to support that expansion and expects to take the program to scale next year. Ms. Lopera expressed concern about current juniors who did not pass 10th grade MCAS, saying that the state is holding students to a standard when they were dealing with circumstances beyond their control.

Mr. DeAraujo asked about interventions for English Language Learners (ELLs). Mr. Echelson detailed the district’s long-term and short-term investments to support multilingual learners, including acceleration academies, virtual learning tools, and increased access to native language instruction. Mr. DeAraujo emphasized the importance of helping ELL families understand the importance of participating in summer learning opportunities.

Mr. Tran expressed frustration with the MCAS results.

Ms. Polanco Garccia called for creative solutions. She suggested offering stipends to teachers who provide additional tutoring.

Mr. O’Neill described the results as sobering but not surprising, noting that students faced significant disruptions during the pandemic. He urged the district to address the learning loss with a sense of urgency using ESSER funds and forming creative partnerships.

Dr. Coleman asked how BPS manages professional development, evaluation, and remediation for teachers implementing social-emotional learning (SEL) tools for students. Mr. Echelson said that his team has developed a number of SEL tools to support educators and will use ESSER funds to support the SEL curriculum. He highlighted the innovative practices emerging in Hub Schools. He said that he would ask Chief of Schools Corey Harris to follow up regarding teacher evaluation.

Dr. Coleman asked about the process for progress monitoring. Mr. Echelson spoke about school superintendents serving as levers of change. He also spoke about using formative assessments and documenting data through the Panorama system.

Ms. Robinson asked if data will be disaggregated at the school and classroom level. Mr. Echelson confirmed that it was already disaggregated and staff are examining patterns and trends across specific standards. Central office staff are working with school leaders to determine next steps. He emphasized that the district is using the data to provide both accountability and support.

The Superintendent said that as part of her October 27th Superintendent's Report, she will present the preliminary results of formative assessments and the district's response.

Mr. Echelson clarified that Paper is a company that BPS partnering with to provide 24/7 access to tutoring. He confirmed for Ms. Lopera that Paper is an opt-in process for students and that the district will track its usage.

Exam Schools Admissions Policy Implementation Update - Chief of Family and Community Advancement Monica Roberts and Deputy Superintendent of Academics Drew Echelson presented an update on the implementation of the exam schools admissions policy approved by the Committee in July 2021.

Students need a minimum B GPA to be considered part of the applicant pool. No assessment will be required for the School Year (SY) 2022-23 admissions cycle due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Starting in SY 2023-24, eligible students will receive a composite score based on assessment (30%) and GPA (70%). Students can receive either 10 additional points if they attend school where 40% or more of the students enrolled are from economically disadvantaged families, or 15 additional points if they are in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF), reside in Boston Housing Authority (BHA) housing, or are experiencing homelessness. One hundred percent of invitations are distributed using straight rank within 8 socioeconomic tiers. Each tier receives approximately the same number of invitations.

Overall Simulation Assumptions

Data set for the simulation:

- Assumes ~1,000 invitations to distribute
- 7th grade applicants for SY20-21
- Incorporates ISEE scores in place of MAP Growth
- Re-calculated GPA using Fall grades only -- GPA is not rounded
- Incorporates students with a GPA of B or better in ELA and Math who also had an ISEE test score

Considerations to keep in mind:

- The simulations can only provide a sense of what may happen and should not be interpreted as definitive results.
- The approved policy includes science and social studies grades, which are not incorporated herein.
- The current district assessment contract is with NWEA for MAP Growth. The simulation uses ISEE scores because MAP Growth results are not available.
- Applicants for the next admissions cycle may not be distributed across the city in the same way applicants were for the SY20-21 admissions cycle.
- Applicants for the next admissions cycle may not rank the three schools in the same way applicants did in the SY20-21 admissions cycle.

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- The grades that will be used for admission this cycle (SY21-22 grades) have not yet been recorded.

Students who attend a school with less than 40% poverty account for 17% of Citywide 6th grade enrollment and 20% of the simulated invitations. Students who attend a school with 40% or greater poverty account for 83% of 6th grade enrollment and 80% of invitations. Students who attend a school with less than 40% poverty account for 204 (20%) of simulated invitations to an exam school. Students who attend a school with 40% or greater poverty account for 796 (80%) of simulated exam school invitations. Simulation data shows racial, socioeconomic, and geographic diversity that is more aligned with student enrollment.

The presenters reviewed the timeline for implementation, which includes the publishing of an annual report starting in June 2022 that contains disaggregated student outcomes and program evaluation. BPS is partnering with the City of Boston's Analytics Team to create an interactive tier map that will allow families to type in their address and the map will identify what tier they live in. The map is anticipated to launch on the BPS website by November 1. All educators will be expected to complete a short (~45 minute) module on equitable grading and exam school admissions changes related to grading.

The Summer Strategies 4 Success (S4S) programs provided summer acceleration programming for exam school admittees who, while academically prepared for exam school content, may require more time to get acclimated to the pace of exam school study. S4S serves students entering 7th and 9th grades at each exam school.

Two components of programming:

- June 2021: 4 week virtual program
 - Focused on writing, ELA and math
 - Cost: \$415,600
 - 615 Students Participated
- August 2021: 2 - 3 weeks of programming at each exam school
To help students develop a sense of belonging to their school community and to introduce them to academic, social and civic expectations.
 - Cost: approximately \$300,000
 - BLA: 177 Students Participated
 - BLS: 286 Students Participated
 - O'Bryant: 129 Students Participated

Exam School Cohort Supports

Launched in SY2021-22, to be expanded in SY2022-23

- Advisory Programs for all incoming students
- Increased Number of Guidance Counselors and Social Workers
- Special Education Support in the classroom
- Increased Number of Special Education Teachers and Paraprofessionals
- Included After School Tutoring Program

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- Thompson Island Team building
- Extracurricular Fair

Ms. Mercer asked how METCO and charter schools students will be impacted by the new policy. The Superintendent said that all students who live in Boston are able to apply for exam school admissions. If their school is below 40% poverty level, they would not receive the additional points; if their school is above the 40% poverty level, they would receive the points.

Mr. DeAraujo described the policy making process as flawed and rushed. He spoke about the importance of the Committee receiving presentations well in advance of meetings and said he looks forward to discussing the issue of process further at the Committee's retreat on October 12th. He said that the presentation is not responsive to all of his questions. He questioned why additional points are being provided in a year when the entrance exam is not being offered. He requested a breakdown of simulations by school and expressed concerns about possible unintended consequences for students attending BPS schools that do not receive additional points. The Superintendent spoke about challenges and complexities of working with data simulations.

Dr. Coleman asked if there is evidence that some schools would be excluded from invitations. The Superintendent said that grades and test scores will largely determine whether or not a student receives an exam school seat. Dr. Coleman said that while he is supportive of the broader policy, he is concerned by claims that students attending certain BPS schools may have no access to exam schools. He asked the district to respond to that claim explicitly. Ms. Hogan said that the simulations show that the percentage of students receiving invitations is roughly proportional to the percentage of students enrolled citywide in sixth grade. Mr. DeAraujo expressed concern that the district has not adequately modeled the data and suggested that the Committee consider rescinding the additional points for the School Year (SY) 2022-23 admissions cycle when no test is administered. He requested a breakdown of students receiving the 15 additional points, including homeless and students in the care of the Department of Children and Families (DCF). He also requested simulations with and without the 10 points for this coming year when no exam is administered, as well as the impact of administering a test vs. no exam. The Superintendent said that she and her team will continue to provide data and be transparent and will continue to examine policy.

Mr. O'Neill expressed concern about possible unintended consequences that the policy may have on enrollment. He said that he felt more comfortable with the policy after seeing the simulations which show that the policy provides a level playing field for students.

Ms. Robinson echoed Mr. O'Neill's comments and asked about utilization of tiers. Ms. Hogan explained that the tiers were sized based on the number of children in grades 5 - 8 in order to make them proportionally sized. She added that she does not foresee a scenario in which there is a shortage of qualified candidates. Ms. Robinson said that the simulations provide her with comfort to move forward with the implementation of the policy.

Superintendent's Performance Goals, School Year 2021-2022 - Dr. Coleman presented a proposal for the Superintendent's performance goals for School Year 2021-22. Providing the Superintendent with an annual performance evaluation is among the chief responsibilities of the School Committee.

Dr. Coleman proposed goals in the following areas:

Student Learning Goals:

1. **ENGLISH LEARNERS:** Significantly improve outcomes for students who are English Learners by increasing the district's capacity to meet the needs of English Learners.

Measure 1.1 Making Progress: Increase progress towards achieving English language proficiency, as measured by the percentage of students making progress on the ACCESS for ELLs exam.

Measure 1.2 EL SWD: Increase progress towards achieving English language proficiency of students who are EL and have an IEP, as measured by the percentage of students making progress on the ACCESS for ELLs exam.

Goal #1 Strategies: The district will increase seats in dual language programming, increase the linguistic diversity of BPS staff members, and continue providing interpretation services in BPS official languages at School Committee meetings and community meetings in order to increase the district's capacity to meet the needs of English Learners.

2. **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Develop and implement a plan to significantly improve outcomes for students with disabilities by increasing the district's capacity to meet the needs of Special Education Students.

Measure 2.1 Disproportionality: Decrease disproportionality in the percentage of students of color who are placed in substantially separate programs.

Measure 2.2 Student Growth: Increase student growth in ELA and math, as measured by the Mean Student Growth Percentile on MCAS for students with disabilities in grades 3-8.

Goal #2 Strategies: The district will increase inclusion seats and inclusionary practices in the district. We will do this through our ESSER funded Inclusion and Universal Design for Learning project which is intended to increase inclusionary practice and access to general education curriculum in the Least Restrictive Environment, which will reduce disproportionality. We will work with 15-20 schools to increase inclusion seats and inclusionary practices. Further, we will examine referral rates for disproportionality so that we do not perpetuate existing inequities through our inclusion work.

3. RETURN, RECOVER, REIMAGINE: Attend to student health, social-emotional well-being, and academic progress during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing differentiated supports focused on cultivating student belonging and academic acceleration.

Measure 3.1 Equitable Literacy: Increase the percentage of K2-2 students who meet or exceed grade level expectations on the phonological awareness or literal comprehension measures of the NWEA MAP Reading Fluency assessment by the end of the year.

Measure 3.2 Chronic Absenteeism: Reduce the proportion of students who are chronically absent.

Goal #3 Strategies: The district will upgrade school libraries to include updated collections with high-quality texts, adopt grade level appropriate and culturally relevant curriculum, and provide professional development to educators focused on equitable literacy practice. BPS will extend learning opportunities through the provision of acceleration academies and full-day summer programming that includes academic and enrichment. The district will utilize the MAP Growth Assessment in Reading and Math to monitor student learning progress and direct additional academic support to students. Educator teams will develop and monitor intervention plans in Panorama Student Success for students identified as needing targeted group or individualized intervention. Equity round tables held at all levels of the organization will ensure inclusive, transparent, and student-centered reflective decision-making guides our efforts to recover well and reimagine what is possible.

Professional Practice Goal:

4. DISTRICT OFFICE: Cultivate trust with families and staff through operational excellence and strong customer service across the BPS District Office in order to significantly improve capacity to close opportunity and achievement gaps.

Measure 4.1 School Leader Perception: Improve school leader perception of central office service, effectiveness, and accountability for results as measured by average scores on items from the Gallup poll.

Measure 4.2 District Office Perception: Improve organizational culture throughout the central office as measured by the Gallup Q12 engagement mean.

Goal #4 Strategies: District office leaders will outline an arc of professional development for all district office employees, including creating an intentional onboarding process and professionally developing supervisors to bolster and institutionalize effective management practice. The district will establish and refine systems for assessing organizational risks associated with various business processes and strategically coordinate risk mitigation initiatives across the enterprise to ensure compliance assurance district-wide. The district office will adopt standardized project management and performance management practices within and across functional groups. District office teams will consistently utilize the Racial Equity Planning Tool to inform policy development and district-level decision making.

Ms. Lopera suggested adding metrics within the strategies to better track progress. Dr. Coleman said that the Committee should discuss the issue and determine how to best measure progress. The Superintendent spoke about her dissatisfaction with typical growth and the challenge of balancing aspirational goals with realistic goals.

Mr. O'Neill applauded the structure of goals and their alignment with the Committee's priorities. He suggested adding a measurement for customer satisfaction, citing the value of family feedback. The Superintendent spoke about her Strategic Plan goals of cultivating trust and amplifying voice. Mr. O'Neill said that it is important to have the Committee hold the Superintendent accountable in this area. The Superintendent agreed to add the measure.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

- Kathleen Chardavoine, Charlestown resident, Eliot K-8 School parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions policy simulations.
- Sarah Grandfield, West Roxbury resident, BPS parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions policy simulations.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Coleman suggested that the Committee examine how to better manage the acceptance of grants. Ms. Robinson responded that the Committee will discuss the issue further at the planning retreat scheduled for October 12, 2021.

ADJOURN

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

Attest:

Elizabeth Sullivan

Boston School Committee Remote Meeting

Zoom

October 6, 2021

Elizabeth Sullivan

Executive Secretary