



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

**November 18, 2015**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on November 18, 2015 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](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org), 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 O'Neill; Vice-Chair Dr. Hardin Coleman; Meg Campbell; Michael Loconto; Jeri Robinson; Regina Robinson; Dr. Miren Uriarte; and student representative Savina Tapia.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

### **DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

School Committee Meeting Minutes: November 4, 2015

Alternative Education State Grant: Education Pathways to Support Students Most-at-Risk of Not Graduating from High School - \$20,000

Spring 2015 PARCC Results

High School Redesign Boston

Evaluating the Superintendent Under the New Massachusetts Educator Evaluation System

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. O'Neill led the pledge of allegiance and called the meeting to order.

### **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the November 4, 2015 School Committee meeting.

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## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The Superintendent congratulated the BPS students who held a collaborative youth marketplace in the lobby of the Bolling Building that day. The student-run businesses were created through partnerships with The Possible Project, BUILD, the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship, and YouthCITIES. The event allowed young entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products and services.

Earlier today, the Superintendent joined Mayor Walsh and a number of city officials to support new regulations to restrict the sale of tobacco to anyone under the age of 21. Increasing the minimum required age of tobacco purchases is an important step in encouraging students to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Yesterday, the state Board of Education voted to adopt a so-called "hybrid" version of standardized assessment statewide. This new assessment will be aligned to the Common Core. Moving forward, the BPS leaders will work closely with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to work out the details on the new assessment, and how it will be implemented. BPS made the right decision last school year to get a head start on preparing for the next generation of assessments by transitioning to PARCC. More rigorous assessments that test for deep critical thinking and leverage technology better prepare students for college, career and life.

On November 12<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's visited the Jeremiah E. Burke High School – the only high school in Massachusetts to exit Level 4 status. Secretary Duncan praised The Burke for being a beacon of success, and lauded the Massachusetts for being the national model for education. Chairman O'Neill, Mr. Loconto, Ms. Jeri Robinson and Ms. Regina Robinson joined the Superintendent for the visit.

Yesterday BPE hosted its annual Principal Partners event, which brings together community and business leaders for a morning of shadowing school leaders. Virtually all Boston Public Schools principals participated in this event. Mayor Walsh spoke at the luncheon which followed the morning's activities.

Earlier today, the Superintendent attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Boston Scholar Athletes (BSA) facility in Roxbury. BSA is a great organization that provides tutors to student athletes; as well as other programs that encourage both athletic and academic participation; college visits; and scholarships.

The Eliot K-8 School raised more than \$125,000 at its annual "Evening for Educators" fundraiser. The money raised will go toward the school's robotics program, its Italian language program, science materials, and athletic equipment for both of the Eliot's physical education and after-school sports programs. The Henderson Inclusion K-12 School held its gala on November 13<sup>th</sup>.

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Also on November 13<sup>th</sup>, the Superintendent served as the Mystery Reader to the kindergarten students at the Bates Elementary School in Roslindale.

Ms. Regina Robinson announced that students at the Roosevelt K-8 School, including her son, will perform in *Oliver!* this weekend. She cited the performance as a great example of inclusive practices.

Mr. O’Neill noted that Sec. Duncan said in his speech at the Burke that all great schools have great leaders.

The Superintendent introduced two new members of his leadership team: Rebecca Shuster has been appointed Assistant Superintendent, Office of Equity; and Dr. Colin Rose has been appointed Assistant Superintendent, Opportunity and Achievement Gap.

The School Committee approved the Superintendent’s Report by unanimous consent.

#### **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

A.W. Taqwa, education minister, requested information on the district’s plan to close opportunity and achievement gaps in light of the hiring of Dr. Rose as Assistant Superintendent, Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps.

Peggy Wiesenberg, citizen, testified regarding high school redesign.

#### **ACTION ITEM**

**Approved** – The Committee approved by unanimous consent a grant for approval in the amount of \$20,000.

#### **REPORTS**

**BPS 2015 PARCC Results** – Nicole Wagner Lam, executive director for the Office of Data and Accountability, presented the results of the 2015 PARCC exam. Dr. Doannie Train, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Professional Learning, co-presented. BPS is one of 194 Massachusetts school districts to transition from MCAS to PARCC for students in grades 3-8 and one of 69 districts to administer PARCC to students in grades 9 and 11. BPS PARCC scores in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math offer insight into whether students are making “expected” progress toward college and career readiness standards.

Thirty-nine percent of BPS students in grades 3-8 met expectation in ELA/Literacy, while 32 percent met expectations in math. Thirty-eight percent of high school students in BPS were “college and career ready” in grades 9 and 11 and 10 percent of students were “college and career ready” in high school math.

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Ms. Wagner Lam added that PARCC is a timed test, which about half of students took online, the other half used paper and pencil. Not all high schools elected to administer the PARCC exam to students in grades 9 and 11.

Ms. Campbell requested a deeper analysis of student performance by sub-groups to find out what is working e.g. what curriculum are the students who did well using? Ms. Regina Robinson requested additional information on schools that did well in an effort to share best practices.

Mr. Loconto asked if the state would hold BPS schools harmless on the new exam. Dr. Donna Muncey, Deputy Superintendent of Strategy, agreed to follow up.

Mr. O'Neill encouraged the district to push the state to answer many unknown questions about the future of standardized testing in Massachusetts.

Ms. Tapia said some students did not feel adequately prepared for the PARCC. She requested information about the high school participation rate. Ms. Wagner Lam said she would follow up. Regina Robison said student voice is critical.

Ms. Jeri Robinson encouraged district leaders to learn from other districts that performed well on PARCC.

Dr. Coleman said that the district must maintain its focus on accountability, even if the state and federal government eases pressure. He added that the district must be prepared to allocate resources for assessment.

Mr. O'Neill asked Chief Information Officer Mark Racine about technology lessons learned from administering PARCC. Mr. Racine said it was a challenge, explaining that BPS dedicated a great deal of resources to prepare the network and teachers for the online exam. The greatest challenge was a connection issue due to national bandwidth difficulties. Ms. Regina Robinson requested the results of teacher and student survey that followed the PARCC exam. Ms. Campbell said that students need access to technology and must be able to type to perform well on online exams.

The Superintendent said he is supportive of the Commissioner's recommendations and that Massachusetts will remain in the PARCC consortium. He noted that all schools will be encouraged to administer PARCC this year.

**High School Redesign Boston** – Rahn Dorsey, the Mayor's Chief of Education, Dr. Ross Wilson, Managing Partner of Innovation, presented an update on High School Redesign Boston (HSReD), a joint effort by Boston Public Schools, the Mayor's Education Cabinet and the Opportunity Agenda to prepare every young person for post-secondary, career and life-long success by redesigning the learning experience. Too many of BPS high schools are not fully prepared to teach to the Common Core and to expressed needs of employers – students who graduate as problem solvers, critical thinkers, with the ability to independently think, analyze,

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reason, and synthesize, who are collaborative and can work well in teams, and who have strong communication and technology skills.

Since HSReD's Public Engagement Phase launched in early May 2015, more than 1,800 community stakeholders and partners have participated in over 28 design conversations. The feedback that emerged can be categorized as four major principles: whole person, rigorous, dynamic and expansive. Moving forward, the HSReD team will validate and make final refinements through ongoing community engagement, and apply, prototype and build broader capacity through Project Cardinal.

Kevin McCaskill, executive director, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, provided an overview of Project Cardinal, which includes the revision of the school's innovation plan by December 2015. In November and December, stakeholders will engage in a series of "design sprints" or working sessions to design the school's future vision, which will be reviewed by a steering committee in January 2016. By that time, HSReD expects to have built capacity among educators at BPS high schools leading to deeper engagement in the HSReD across the portfolio and the development of new, principle-aligned prototypes for instruction and student support.

Dr. Uriarte said that the high school redesign process and Project Cardinal seem disconnected.

Ms. Campbell expressed concern about equity in relation to personalized learning and about excess capacity at the high school level. She stressed that the core sequence of high school students is important to colleges.

Ms. Jeri Robison was pleased to learn that high school drop outs were engaged in the design conversations.

Mr. Loconto encouraged the district to focus its efforts on preparing elementary and middle school students for high schools of the future, adding that many partners are eager to help Madison Park succeed.

Dr. Coleman requested more explicit content on the design principles.

Mr. O'Neill said he was encouraged by the wide-range of community sessions held to solicit public input and that the Committee looks forward to future updates.

For more information, visit [www.highschoolredesign-boston.org](http://www.highschoolredesign-boston.org).

***Superintendent's Evaluation Process*** – Mr. O'Neill explained that the School Committee is responsible for conducting an annual performance review of the Superintendent. In 2012, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education introduced a new educator evaluation system for teachers, principals, and other educators, including superintendents. The model rubric for superintendents consists of four standards (instructional development; management and operations; family and community engagement; and professional culture); 20 indicators, and 41 elements. The performance ratings are unsatisfactory, needs improvement,

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proficient, and exemplary. Superintendent Chang's employment contract includes options for salary increases based upon positive evaluation ratings.

The evaluation process is comprised of 5 steps:

- Understanding the Evaluation System and Related Criteria
- Meeting to Formalize the Goals and Superintendent Development Plan
- Implementing the Evaluation and Collect the Evidence Upon Which to Base the Evaluation
- A Mid-Cycle Goals Review Meeting
- The End-of-Cycle or Summative Evaluation and Report

Mr. O'Neill said that the superintendent's evaluation is a public process, and noted that the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) has prepared a helpful guide, *Evaluating the Superintendent Under the New Massachusetts Educator Evaluator System*. [https://masc.org/images/pdf/475\\_MASC\\_Guide\\_to\\_Superintendent\\_Evaluation\\_2012.pdf](https://masc.org/images/pdf/475_MASC_Guide_to_Superintendent_Evaluation_2012.pdf)

Mr. O'Neill said that MASC recommends that the School Committee should have an entry plan that includes the Superintendent's transition plan as well as goals that were discussed during the Superintendent's hiring process. MASC recommended that districts with new superintendents use between 5-10 indicators in the initial evaluation. Chairman O'Neill and Vice-Chair Coleman will lead the process, together with Ms. Regina Robinson. The Committee will select the indicators it wishes to use. The Committee can also decide the time period for the review e.g. January-December, July – June, and/or a two-year cycle. The Committee may also want to consider doing a provisional evaluation for the superintendent's first year.

Ms. Campbell encouraged the Committee to make the evaluation process as simple as possible, adding that she favors the July - June time table, and possibly using a two-year cycle. She also suggested that the School Committee conduct a self-evaluation. Mr. O'Neill said that the Council of Great City Schools is looking at best practices related to school committee self-evaluations, adding that he is supportive of the Committee engaging in such an exercise.

Mr. Loconto suggested that the Committee schedule training with MASC, which Mr. O'Neill agreed to arrange. Mr. Loconto said that he also favors a two-year evaluation cycle.

The Superintendent closed by explaining that he relies on the great work of his team and depends on their talent, hard work and feedback.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS**

John Mudd, advocate, suggested that future reports to the School Committee include more explicit data on achievement gaps. He also encouraged the School Committee to ask the District to present an achievement gap impact statement with every report.

Megan Wolf, member, Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), testified regarding high school redesign.

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**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. O'Neill announced that the Committee would adjourn to executive session, adding that the reason for executive session stated in the agenda would not be invoked. Instead, the Committee would adjourn to discuss collective bargaining strategy with the Boston Teachers Union. He explained that having such a discussion in open session could have a detrimental effect on the Committee's bargaining decision.

At approximately 9:05 p.m., the Committee unanimously approved, by roll call, a motion to adjourn to executive session. The Committee did not return to public session.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary