



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE EXAM SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS TASK FORCE COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION

June 23, 2021

The Boston School Committee and the Committee's Exam Schools Admissions Task Force held a joint remote community listening session on June 22, 2021 at 4 p.m. on Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee or <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/esataskforce>, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org, or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

Boston School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Jeri Robinson; and student representative Xyra Mercer.

Boston School Committee Members Absent: Hardin Coleman; Ernani DeAraujo; Quoc Tran; and Vice Chairperson Michael D. O'Neill.

Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Members Present: Co-Chair Michael Contompasis; Co-Chair Tanisha Sullivan (arrived after public comment); Acacia Aguirre (arrived after roll call); Simon Chernow; Katherine Grassa (arrived after roll call); Zena Lum (arrived after roll call); and Rachel Skerritt (arrived after roll call).

Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Members Absent: Samuel Acevedo; Matt Cregor; Tanya Freeman-Wisdom; Zoe Nagasawa; Rosann Tung; and Tamara Waite.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

[Agenda](#)

[Exam School Admission Task Force Update on Potential Considerations, June 16, 2021](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Contompasis called the meeting to order and welcomed the members and attendees. Ms. Sullivan called the roll for the School Committee. Chairperson Jeri Robinson and student

representative Xyra Mercer were present. Hardin Coleman, Ernani DeAraujo, Quoc Tran, and Vice Chairperson Michael D. O'Neill were absent. Ms. Parvex called the roll for the Task Force. Co-Chair Michael Contompasis and Simon Chernow were present. Co-Chair Tanisha Sullivan, Acacia Aguirre, Katherine Grassa, Zena Lum and Rachel Skerritt arrived after roll call. Samuel Acevedo, Matt Cregor, Tanya Freeman-Wisdom, Zoe Nagasawa, Rosann Tung, and Tamara Waite were absent.

Mr. Contompasis announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cabo Verdean, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, Portuguese, Somali, and Arabic; the interpreters introduced themselves and gave instructions in their native language on how to access simultaneous interpretation by changing the Zoom channel. He apologized that the Committee was unable to secure American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation for the session. He explained that the demand for ASL interpreters has increased tremendously during the pandemic as more public bodies are holding remote meetings. BPS continues to work with its state partners on this issue. Staff activated the closed captioned feature.

Ms. Robinson thanked the Task Force for their work. She encouraged people to read the update on potential areas for consideration that the Task Force presented to the School Committee on June 16. The Task Force will present its final policy recommendation to the School Committee on June 30th. The Committee will vote on a final exam schools admissions policy on July 14. She asked speakers to be respectful and said that hate speech was prohibited.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Steve Yang, West Roxbury resident, St Mary of Assumption School parent, testified regarding the composition of the Exam Schools Admissions Task Force.
- Anna Dore, West Roxbury resident, Kilmer K-8 School parent, testified regarding the selection priority in a lottery admissions process.
- Mike Heichman, Dorchester resident, member, Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA), testified in favor of eliminating exam schools.
- Patricia Kinsella, Northfield resident, testified regarding the use of test scores in the admissions process.
- Khymani James, Brighton resident, testified in favor of eliminating exam schools.
- Rachel Miselman, East Boston resident, testified in favor of preserving rigor at the exam schools and expanding high quality learning opportunities at elementary schools and at non-exam schools.
- Travis Marshall, Roslindale resident, Bates Elementary School parent, member of Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), encouraged the Task Force to be open-minded to creating a new admissions policy.
- Shirley Chen Weng, Brighton resident, Josiah Quincy Elementary School parent, testified
- Suzie McClone, Back Bay resident, testified regarding hate speech.
- Teresa Pregizer, Roxbury resident, parent, testified in favor of expanding exam schools.
- Cindy Tower-Loewen, not a Boston resident, testified in favor of extending the interim

policy for another year.

- Dr. Vanessa Calderon-Rosado, chief executive officer of Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA), testified in favor of increasing opportunities for all students.
- Shirley Chenweng, parent, Josiah Quincy Elementary School, testified regarding how the school's student body has been impacted by temporary exam schools admissions policy.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Contompasis thanked the speakers who provided testimony. He announced that the next remote meeting of the Exam Schools Admissions Task Force will take place on Thursday, June 24 at 5 p.m. The Task Force will present its final recommendation to the School Committee on June 30th.

ADJOURN

At approximately 5:12 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary