



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

June 30, 2021

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on June 30, 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; Quoc Tran; and Student Representative Xyra Mercer.

School Committee Member Absent: None.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

[Agenda](#)

[Minutes: June 16, 2021 School Committee Meeting](#)

In-Kind Donations with a Total Estimated Value of \$1,027,000

Donor Name	Donated Item(s)	BPS Recipient (Site)	BPS Vendor (Y/N)	Estimated Value (provided by donor)
Scholar Athletes	54 Laptops	Various	Y	\$27,000
Shah Family Foundation	My Way Cafe Food Service Equipment	Various	N	\$998,000
Staples	school supply kits	Blackstone Innovation School	Y	\$2,000

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[Grants for Approval Totaling \\$695,130](#)

[Renewal of Transdev Transportation Contract, School Year 2021-2022](#)

[Superintendent's Composite Performance Evaluation and Final Rating, School Year 2020-2021](#)

[Two-year Extension of Superintendent's Employment Contract from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2024](#)

[Amendment to Superintendent's Employment Contract: Extending the time to notify the Superintendent of decision to extend or end the employment relationship](#)

[Key Provisions of Dr Cassellius Contract with BSC relating to Potential Contract Extension / Termination](#)

[Suspension of the Maximum Age Policy, School Year 2021-2022](#)

[Memo from the Office of Secondary Schools to the Boston School Committee re: Continued Suspension of the Maximum Age Policy](#)

[Continued Suspension of the Maximum Age Policy Equity Impact Statement](#)

[Horace Mann In-District Charter Renewal: Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School \(DSNCS\)](#)

[DSNCS Charter Renewal Application](#)

[DSNCS Charter Renewal Equity Impact Statement](#)

[Memo from Superintendent to Boston School Committee re: Recommendation Regarding Charter Renewal Application - Dudley Street](#)

[Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Policy Recommendation](#)

[Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief \(ESSER\) Funding Update](#)

[ESSER Funding Equity Impact Statement](#)

[Memo from Chief Accountability Officer Eva Mitchell to Boston School Committee re: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funding Plan](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. All members were present.

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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 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. Meeting documents were translated into all of the official BPS languages and publicly posted at www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee prior to the start of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the June 16, 2021 meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

As prepared for delivery.

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all for joining us this evening. We have quite a bit on the agenda tonight, so I have kept my report brief.

I want to first acknowledge an important agenda item this evening. Later tonight we will receive a recommendation for the permanent exam schools admissions policy from the Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Co-chairs. The Task Force has met two dozen times over the past several months and has engaged in impassioned public discourse as to the future of this policy, following the approval of the temporary, one-year policy last fall. During and following the Task Force's meeting last night, members expressed frustrations with how the process concluded. The recommendation that we are proposing tonight is historic. If you told me two years ago that tonight we would be bringing forward a policy that would significantly increase equitable access to our exam schools for all of our students, I wouldn't have believed it. We live in a divided country, and we also live in a divided city. To say that the exam schools are a hot button topic in this city is an understatement. I learned about this before I became Superintendent and I've learned so much more over the past couple years. But I came here to advance equitable access for students, particularly our most marginalized students, who have not had the same opportunities as their peers for far too long. This is a historic proposal and we have made substantial progress towards our goal of developing a policy that, across our exam schools, maintains rigor and results in a student population reflective of the racial, socioeconomic, and geographic diversity of all BPS students. We must also recognize that important policy changes like this are not easily won. We experienced that this year when we passed policies regarding data privacy, retention, graduation standards and grading.

There is still more to do. My team and I remain focused on implementing the BPS strategic plan, advancing equitable outcomes, and improving the overall excellence at all Boston Public Schools, particularly our traditional high schools. We will continue to address the difficult issues,

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examine our existing policies through an antiracist lens, and persevere even in a climate of differing opinions so we can provide all our students with the excellent education that they deserve.

I'd like to start off my brief report with a high-level summary of our reporting of positive COVID-19 cases this past year. Since our last meeting we officially wrapped up the 2020-21 school year, which was unlike any school year we have ever encountered. We recently completed the final update to the COVID-19 case dashboard, which we used to publicly report a weekly update on confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in our schools. The dashboard reported the combined number of confirmed positive cases for students and staff who had accessed schools for in-person teaching and learning. The dashboard covers every week of the school year, as you can see in the graph here. Throughout the year there were 539 confirmed positive cases -- with almost equal numbers of student and staff cases. There were 261 confirmed positive cases for students and 278 for staff. 42 schools had 5 or more cases over the course of the year. Whereas 109 schools had at least one case.

Looking at cases over time, staff cases were more likely at the beginning of the school year, given that we only reported positive cases for individuals inside school buildings. 63% of staff cases were reported between September 24th and March 3rd. Between mid-April, by which point staff would have had the opportunity to be considered fully vaccinated, and the end of the school year, there were 22 reported positive staff cases, representing 8% of staff cases. Approximately half (or 48%) of student cases occurred during the hybrid phase-in between March 4th and April 14th. I want to thank our Health Services team who worked tirelessly all year developing our health and safety protocols, working with the Boston Public Health Commission on each and every positive case. This team of course includes our nurses in every single one of our schools who were our first points of contact for our students and our staff. I've appreciated their guidance throughout our reopening and their unwavering support for the entire BPS community, from our students and families to their fellow colleagues. I also thank the Office of Data and Accountability for their collaborative work this school year, across departments. We've looked to our ODA team more than ever before as we've dived deeper into our data and expanded our data systems to promote excellent and equitable student outcomes. Thank you!

The majority of our summer learning programs begin next Tuesday, July 6th, following the observation of Independence Day on Monday, July 5. We are currently at or near capacity for the majority of the BPS-operated summer learning programs.

We currently have 11,721 students enrolled (as of yesterday, June 29th) in

- Extended School Year
- Credit Recovery
- Early Childhood Programs
- 5th Quarter Programs in schools and with community-based organizations (for example the YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston, and the Immigrant Family Services Institute)
- and English Learner programs.

In addition, 461 students are currently on a waitlist for their program of choice. For BPS led programs, we're currently at 75% enrollment. Our partners at Boston After School & Beyond

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have provided a projection of 120% of their initial enrollment and the PIC, or Boston Private Industry Council, will provide updated enrollment information for their programs once the summer kicks off. Boston After School & Beyond's Boston Summer Learning Community sites project enrollment of 9,758 students across 127 sites. The number of sites does not include the 93 5th Quarter sites operated with BPS. Many of the students served in the Boston Summer Learning Community sites are BPS students. You can see here, looking at the totals for 2019, 2020, and 2021 (so far), that the overall number of students served has increased substantially year over year. This summer, per current guidance from the Boston Public Health Commission and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, all students and staff inside a BPS building or working with BPS students will be required to wear a mask at all times, regardless of their vaccination status. This is consistent with other City of Boston public buildings, including BPS offices. I've mentioned before that this is the most important summer I can remember in my career for students to remain engaged in their learning. We are so excited to provide academic and enrichment opportunities next week so that our students can continue their learning! For more information on all things summer, please visit bostonpublicschools.org/summer.

We also recently announced a joint initiative with the Boston Public Library that will greatly benefit students this summer and beyond! Students can now use their current BPS ID cards to obtain a pre-registered Boston Public Library card, granting them access to all of the services offered by BPL across its 26 branches. The new initiative makes it easy for students to fully access the books, technology, and services available from the Boston Public Library. BPS students ages 13+ can now access the library's catalogue of [electronic resources](#), including books, magazines, graphic novels, movies, and much more. They can also access the BPL [Homework Assistance Program](#), gaming programs on Twitch, writing classes, book groups for teens, and STEM programming. As a result of having a library card, students can also access [free museum passes](#) to take advantage of Boston's rich cultural offerings as an additional benefit. This collaboration grants more equitable access to library spaces for our students. I thank our City of Boston colleagues and BPL President David Leonard for their work to provide this opportunity for our students. I encourage our students and families to head to their nearest library and get a jump start on summer reading! Summer reading lists for students entering grades K0-12 are available in multiple languages at bostonpublicschools.org/summerreading. For more information on the Boston Public Library, visit bpl.org.

This year the city, state, and country made great strides in finally recognizing and celebrating the significance of Juneteenth. President Biden signed a bill earlier this month making Juneteenth a federal holiday, and for the first time, the City of Boston officially observed Juneteenth as a state holiday on Monday, June 21. Juneteenth is a day to gather with loved ones, celebrate Black lives, and reflect and recognize the struggle for liberation in America. This year, Mayor Janey held a flag-raising ceremony at City Hall on June 18, alongside fellow city leaders and residents. The English High Drumline provided musical entertainment as the flag was raised. Also in attendance, helping to raise the flag, was English High School alumnus Enoch Woodhouse, one of the last surviving Tuskegee Airmen. It was wonderful to see Mr. Woodhouse help Mayor Janey - and the City of Boston - mark this moment by raising the flag. I want to thank Assistant Head of School Carrie King-Woodson for her work on the event and her continued efforts to provide community service programs and projects for her students.

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Finally, throughout the month of June we celebrated the Class of 2021 with in-person graduation ceremonies across the city. I was so happy to attend many of these wonderful events, where we celebrated a group of students who overcame the many challenges presented by the pandemic during both their junior and senior years. I'd like to close my report this evening by showing a short video highlighting the BPS Class of 2021. That is my Superintendent's Report for this evening.

Dr. Coleman thanked the Superintendent for the grace and care she has demonstrated this school year. Ms. Robinson agreed and asked the Superintendent about her plans for school libraries. The Superintendent said that she wants a library in every school.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- State Representative Russell Holmes testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Boston City Councilor At-Large Annissa Essaibi-George testified regarding ESSER Funds.
- Boston City Councilor At-Large Julia Mejia testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Carolyn Kain, Dorchester resident, Henderson Inclusion School parent, testified in favor of extending the Superintendent's employment contract.
- Mike Heichman, Dorchester resident, Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA) member, testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Maya Grealley, West Roxbury resident, Boston Latin School alumna, testified in support of former School Committee members Alexandra Oliver-Davila and Lorna Rivera.
- Sharon Hinton, Hyde Park resident, Black Teachers Matter founder, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Domingos DaRose, Hyde Park resident, Boston City Council candidate, testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Travis Marshall, Roslindale resident, Bates Elementary School parent and member of Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Wilmer Quinones, Roxbury resident, BPS parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Ruby Reyes, Dorchester resident, executive director, BEJA, testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Edith Bazile, Dorchester resident, testified regarding special education, exam schools admissions, and extended school year.
- Mary Battenfeld, Jamaican Plain resident, member, QUEST, testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Sarah Henderson, Roslindale resident, BPS parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Khymani James, Brighton resident, BPS alumnus, testified against extending the

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Superintendent's employment contract.

- Anna Dore, West Roxbury resident, Kilmer K-8 parent, testified regarding exam school admissions.
- Kendra Hicks, Jamaica Plain resident, Mozart Elementary School parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Steve Yang, West Roxbury resident, parent, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Lisa Green, North End resident, member, Boston Coalition for Education Equity, testified regarding exam schools admissions.
- Kristin Johnson, Jamaica Plain resident, member, Boston Coalition for Education Equity, testified in favor of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.
- Shirley Chen Weng, Brighton resident, Josiah Quincy Elementary School parent, testified in favor of using an entrance exam as part of the exam schools admission process.

ACTION ITEMS

Mr. O'Neill thanked the donors of the in-kind donations for their generous contributions.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved in-kind donations with a total estimated value of \$1,027,000.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$695,130.

Dr. Coleman praised the Superintendent and her team for the high quality reporting of data for the Transdev contract renewal, adding that he looks forward to the issuance of the district's next multi-year transportation contract that includes clear expectations and increased accountability.

Mr. O'Neill and the Superintendent thanked the BPS Transportation Director Delavern Stanislaus and her team for their hard work during this difficult year.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved a one-year contract renewal between the Boston Public Schools and transportation provider Transdev, covering the period from July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.

Dr. Coleman spoke about the challenge of writing a performance evaluation that captures the work accomplished and the skills demonstrated in a system that is riddled with historical challenges. The Superintendent thanked the Committee for its support. She thanked her team, teachers, and staff for their hard work. She briefly reviewed highlights of accomplishments from the past school year as well as forthcoming Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) investments. Mr. Tran extended his appreciation to Dr. Coleman for leading the evaluation process on behalf of the Committee. Ms. Robinson praised the Superintendent for her focus on children.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved Superintendent Cassellius' School Year 2020-2021 final composite performance evaluation and provided her with an overall rating of effective/proficient.

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Mr. O'Neill presented a brief PowerPoint presentation reviewing key provisions of Superintendent Cassellius' employment contract, which states, "This Agreement may be extended for an additional period of two (2) years in the sole discretion of the Committee, with the consent of the Superintendent, contingent upon a majority of the whole number of Committee members giving the Superintendent a rating of "exemplary" or "proficient" in the end cycle evaluation that takes place on or around June 30, 2021. Notice of the Committee's intent to extend this Agreement or to end the employment relationship upon expiration hereunder must be given by certified mail, return receipt requested to the Superintendent at his/her address of record at least twelve (12) months prior to the Anniversary Date of this Agreement. The "Anniversary Date" of this Agreement is defined as the date on which the Agreement is executed by the Superintendent. If the Committee does not notify the Superintendent at least twelve (12) months prior to the stated expiration date of its intent to extend or terminate this Agreement, the employment relationship shall end upon expiration."

In response to a question from Dr. Coleman, Mr. O'Neill clarified that the Superintendent is an at-will employee. Committee can terminate her employment with cause or without cause with one-year severance. Coleman spoke about the stability that the contract extension will bring to the district following a long period of leadership transitions at the city and district levels.

Mr. O'Neill praised the superintendent for her equity work. He said that today he is ending his term as chair of the board of the Council of Great City Schools and noted that Dr. Cassellius is held in high regard nationally. He expressed support for the contract extension.

Ms. O'Neill applauded Supt and her focus on students.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee approved an offer to extend Superintendent Brenda Cassellius' employment contract from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024, pursuant to section 1.1 of her employment contract. Mr. DeAraujo voted no. All other members voted yes.

Approved - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved an amendment to the employment contract between the Boston School Committee and Dr. Brenda Cassellius dated May 8, 2019 extending the time to notify the Superintendent of the decision to extend or end the employment relationship.

REPORTS

Suspension of the Maximum Age Policy, School Year 2021-2022 - Manny Allen, Director of the Re-Engagement Center and Carlos Diaz, Coordinator of School Services for Alternative Education, presented the Superintendent's request for a continued temporary suspension of the Maximum Age Assignment and Enrollment Policy, allowing students currently expected to age out of their school assignment due to be allowed to remain at their current school through the end of the 2021-22 school year or until graduation requirements are satisfied, whichever happens first. This policy suspension applies to all students who attend alternative education or high schools who would otherwise be ineligible to continue their enrollment because of their

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age (21 years old on or before August 31, 2021).

Mr. O'Neill thanked Mr. Allen and Mr. Diaz for leading the district's re-engagement efforts with a door knocking campaign last week. Mr. Allen said that volunteers knocked on 59 doors in about an hour and a half, made 31 connections with students and families, and will follow up with them. Mr. O'Neill asked to be invited to the district's next door knocking event. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the policy suspension request at the July 14th meeting.

Horace Mann In-District Charter Renewal for the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School - Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (DSNCS) Principal Elijah Heckstall, DSNCS Board Chair Hakim Harris, and Boston Plan for Excellence Executive Director Jesse Solomon presented a request for the Committee's approval of a the school's charter renewal request to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

DSNCS, a Horace Mann charter school serving grades K1-5 and located at 6 Shirley Street in Roxbury, received its initial charter in 2012, and was approved for a five-year renewal in 2017. If approved, DSNCS's charter would be renewed for the period 2022-2027. DSNCS contracts with BPE as an educational management organization. As an educational management organization, BPE oversees specific day-to-day school functions, while the school's board oversees overall strategy and guidance and progress towards academic goals.

Pursuant to G.L. 71, § 89(dd), "a charter for a Horace Mann charter school shall not be renewed by the board without a majority vote of the school committee and local collective bargaining unit in the district where said charter school is located" DESE bases its decision to renew a charter "upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter, including the extent to which the school has followed its recruitment and retention plan and has disseminated best practices in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 89(dd); the success of the school's academic program; and the viability of the school as an organization." 603 CMR 1.11. Pursuant to G.L. 71, § 89(dd), "a charter for a Horace Mann charter school shall not be renewed by the board without a majority vote of the school committee and local collective bargaining unit in the district where said charter school is located" The Superintendent is recommending the Committee's approval of DSNCS's charter renewal application to DESE for the period of 2022-2027.

Mr. DeAraujo and Dr. Coleman praised the school's leadership and expressed support for the charter renewal. Mr. O'Neill applauded DSNCS's feeder school pattern with Dearborn 6-12 STEM Academy, the first school in New England that was custom-built for STEM education. Mr. Solomon said that the Dearborn's enrollment is currently at capacity at about 600 students.

Ms. Robinson spoke about the value of partnerships with local colleges and universities. Mr. Solomon said that

Ms. Robinson suggested partnership with local colleges and universities. Mr. Solomon said that DSNCS has partnerships with Wentworth Institute of Technology and Ben Franklin Institute of Technology, among others, and plans to expand its partnerships. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the charter renewal request at the July 14th meeting.

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Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Policy Recommendation - Building upon the work initiated by the Superintendent's Exam Schools Admissions Criteria Working Group, the Boston School Committee Exam Schools Admissions Task Force is charged with developing a set of recommendations for the admissions policy for Boston Public Schools exam schools. The desired outcome is to expand the applicant pool and create an admissions process that will support student enrollment at each of the exam schools such that rigor is maintained and the student body better reflects the racial, socioeconomic, and geographic diversity of all students (K-12) in the city of Boston. The Task Force shall consider use of the new NWEA assessment and other factors, and leverage learning from a full review of the implementation of the SY 2021-22 admissions criteria, as well as a thorough review of practices in other districts.

The Task Force held 24 public meetings and four public listening sessions, including a student-led session, between February and June 2021. A roster of members and all meeting documents are publicly posted at bostonpublicschools.org/esataskforce.

Exam Schools Admissions Task Force Co-Chairs Tanisha Sullivan and Michael Contompasis presented a recommendation that consists of two areas: eligibility and invitations. For School Year 2022-23, eligibility will be based on grades (B average or higher) for the first two quarters/first trimester of 6th grade: ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies due to continuing COVID-19 pandemic +High Poverty Indicators (Students attending schools with 50% or more of students identified as economically disadvantaged would receive an additional 10 points in the invitation process. Students experiencing homelessness, students in the care of DCF and students living in BHA housing would receive an additional 15 points in the invitation process.) No assessment would be required this year due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. For School Year 2023-24 and beyond, student eligibility would be based on assessment (30%) and grades (70%) +High Poverty Indicators. Assessment would be offered twice: Spring of 5th grade and Fall of 6th grade. Student's best score would be considered. Grades would include the final term of 5th grade: ELA and Math. First two quarters/first trimester of 6th grade: ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies.

For School Year 2022-23 and beyond, the Task Force recommends that 20% of invitations at each exam school shall be reserved for the top ranking applicants citywide. Invitations will be extended to the top ranking applicants to their first choice selection. The remaining 80% of seats will be distributed to the highest ranking applicants within Socioeconomic Status Tiers. Invitations are distributed in 10 rounds with 10% of each SES tier's seats allocated in each round. A specialized tier will be created for students experiencing homelessness, students in the care of DCF and students living in Boston Housing Authority housing. Each round will begin with the specialized tier, followed by the tier with the lowest socioeconomic band. Socioeconomic status (SES) tiers are based on a socioeconomic score for each census tract in the city. The socioeconomic score is a composite measure of 5 data points from the American Community Survey and indicates need relative to the other census tracts in the city. The tiers are proportionally sized based on the number of school-aged children in grades 5-8 living in each census tract.

The Task Force presented the following additional recommendations:

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Student Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide appropriate support – both before and during the school year - for 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.
Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct annual monitoring of applicants, invitees and enrollees to the exam schools, disaggregated by student group and school. ● An annual report should be made to the School Committee to assess the wellness of the school community and student admissions data.
Policy Review and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Require a full policy review at least every 5 years, ensuring there is student and teacher voice represented in the review process. ● Work with an external researcher to evaluate and understand the impact of policy changes for multiple cohorts of students, starting with the SY20-21 admissions cycle.
Investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The school district will fund a summer academic orientation, academic interventions, acceleration and rigor for elementary grades. ● Secure the additional funds required for implementation from the city, not from the existing budget.
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide information about the application process in native language online, in print and at community centers
Grading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommend changing the 5th grade grading system from standards-based to A-F grading scale.

Task Force members Dr. Rosann Tung and Simon Chernow presented a dissenting opinion, advocating for 100% of seats to be allocated by rank in socio-economic groupings and expressing dismay at the interference that led to the 20/80% proposal.

Mr. DeAraujo offered to meet with the Task Force. He thanked them for their work.

Dr. Coleman said that the district must focus on providing equitable access to excellence for all students. He requested modeling on the impact of the 20/80% vs. 100% seat allocation. Ms. Sullivan agreed to share the simulations. He asked clarifying questions about the high poverty indicator. Ms. Sullivan explained that due to privacy concerns, the Task Force selected SES tiers which are geographically based rather than individually based.

Mr. Tran asked if the recommendation was ratified by the Task Force. He also asked for more information about the thought process behind the 20/80 allocation. Ms. Sullivan said that the Task Force did not take any formal votes. Mr. Contompasis said that the proposal is based on Chicago’s model of 30/70, noting that it mirrors the district’s interim process which identifies students who are the highest achievers.

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Mr. O'Neill asked how high poverty schools are designated. Mr. Contompasis said that the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education makes that determination. Mr. O'Neill asked for clarity on which assessment will be used. Mr. Contompasis and the Superintendent explained that the Task Force intentionally decided that the type of assessment will be determined by the district.

Ms. Mercer asked clarifying questions about high poverty indicators. Ms. Sullivan explained that students can receive either 10 additional points if they attend a high poverty school, 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.

Ms. Robinson asked for clarity about points and composite scores and spoke about the importance of transparency for families. Ms. Sullivan explained how additional points can be added to a student's composite score. Monica Hogan, senior executive director of the Office of Data and Accountability, said that her team is exploring the development of a web tool that will allow families to view their SES tier by home address.

Ms. Robinson spoke about the importance of equitable grading. Mr. Contompasis agreed and said that is why the Task Force is recommending changing the 5th grade grading system from standards-based to A-F grading scale.

Ms. Robinson announced that the Committee would hold a remote listening session on exam schools admissions on July 7th at 5 p.m. on Zoon. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the Superintendent's final exam schools policy recommendation on July 14th.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funding Update - Boston Public Schools (BPS) will be receiving \$400 million from the federal Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund over the next three years. BPS is in the process of creating an ESSER plan that will serve as a blueprint for allocating these funds in ways that support efforts to return students safely, recover from the impact of the pandemic, and simultaneously reimagine how BPS serves students and the community. The ESSER plan will be grounded in the community-driven 2020-2025 BPS Strategic Plan, leveraging additional feedback received from many engagements that BPS has hosted concerning this federal relief funding opportunity.

Chief Accountability Officer Eva Mitchell provided an update on the district's ESSER engagement process, the focus areas for BPS's ESSER investment, and proposed allocations to schools, district offices deploying resources across all schools, and BPS partners. BPS is seeking feedback before moving forward with (1) its application to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Schools to release ESSER II funds, and (2) the ESSER Plan that the Superintendent is planning to release July 8, 2021 followed by a 30-day public comment period. BPS will present a draft to DESE followed by an amended plan after the completion of the public comment period. Ms. Mitchell spoke about the district's focus on the instructional core, multilingual learning and inclusion, high quality pathways, equitable access, school environments, and community.

Mr. DeAraujo requested clarification on when the Committee will vote on the final ESSER plan. The Superintendent and Chair clarified that the Committee will take action on August 4th.

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Dr. Coleman praised the district’s iterative community engagement process. He spoke about the importance of using evidence-based research to support schools and the district in driving change.

Mr. O’Neill cautioned against creating funding cliffs and spoke about the importance of sustainability. The Superintendent said that she is establishing a risk management office to conduct auditing and provide oversight. She said that the district is being very strategic with its investments in staffing positions. The Superintendent and Mr. O’Neill expressed optimism that the federal government will provide infrastructure funding for schools.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Peggy Wiesenberg, advocate, testified in support of assigning 100% of exam school seats by rank in socioeconomic tiers.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Mercer requested that the Committee schedule a future discussion to consider whether the Committee will support providing the student representative to the Committee with voting rights and a stipend.

ADJOURN

At approximately 10:37 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary