



## OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REMOTE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

August 4, 2021

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on August 4, 2021 at 4:30 p.m. on Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit [www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee), email [feedback@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:feedback@bostonpublicschools.org) or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

### ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Jeri Robinson; Vice Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Ernani DeAraujo; Lorena Lopera; Rafaela Polanco Garcia; and Student Representative Xyra Mercer.

School Committee Member Absent: Quoc Tran

### DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

#### Agenda

Approval of Minutes: July 14, 2021 Boston School Committee Meeting

In-Kind Donations with a Total Estimated Value of \$19,820 | Spanish/español

Grants for Approval Totaling \$17,868,972

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

UP Academy Boston Charter Amendments PowerPoint

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Memo from Legal Advisor Cathy Lizotte to Boston School Committee re: UP Academy Request for Approval of MOU and Management Contract

Draft Agreement Between the Boston Public Schools and the UP Academy Charter School of Boston, a Horace Mann Charter School

UP Academy Boston Equity Impact Statement

Academic and Business Services Agreement by and between UP Education Network Inc. and the Board of Trustees of the UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester and the UP Academy Charter School of Boston

Boston Teachers Union Horace Mann Charter School Certification Statement: UP Academy Boston and UP Academy Dorchester

Preparing for School Year 2021-2022 PowerPoint

Wellness Policy Update PowerPoint

Wellness Report SY 2019-20 Executive Summary

Wellness Report SY 2019-20

Wellness Report Memo from Assistant Superintendent of Health and Wellness Jill Carter to Boston School Committee, Aug. 4, 2021

Wellness Report Equity Impact Statement

Memo from School Committee Chair to Boston School Committee re: English Language Learners Task Force Co-Chair Nomination, August 4, 2021

## CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. Mr. Tran was absent. Mr. O'Neill joined the meeting moments after the roll call. Dr. Coleman joined during the executive session. All other members were present.

## ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Approved* - On roll call, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to an executive session for the purpose of conducting a strategy session related to collective bargaining with the Boston Teachers Union. She announced that the Committee would return to public session at 5 p.m.

## RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

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The Committee returned to public session at approximately 5:15 p.m. Ms. Robinson explained that the Committee had just returned from an executive session for the purpose of conducting a strategy session related to collective bargaining with the Boston Teachers Union.

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

Ms. Robinson welcomed two new members to the Boston School Committee: Lorena Lopera and Rafaela Polanco Garcia were appointed by Mayor Janey on July 22, 2021. Both Ms. Lopera and Ms. Polanco Garcia are BPS parents and native Spanish speakers.

Ms. Lopera serves as Executive Director at Latinos for Education New England, the first Latino-founded and led national organization dedicated solely to creating leadership pathways for Latinos in education. She is a veteran of local organizations focused on expanding educational access for Latinx youth and students of color, including Roxbury-based Sociedad Latina, La Vida, Inc., and Building Excellent Schools, as well as national organizations such as City Year and the Posse Foundation.

Ms. Polanco Garcia is an immigrant from the Dominican Republic who has a background in law and bilingual advocacy. Her activism on behalf of the Latinx community in education includes working on the No on 2 campaign in 2016, helping to pass a sanctuary schools resolution, and passing the Student Opportunity Act. Since 2015, she has served as the Director of Parent Engagement and Organizing at St. Stephen's Youth Programs in the South End. Her primary language is Spanish and she will utilize an interpreter at meetings.

Ms. Lopera and Ms. Polanco Garcia each thanked the Mayor for their appointment and spoke about the importance of increasing inclusive opportunities for non-English speaking families. The new members were welcomed by their fellow Committee members.

## APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

*Approved* – On roll call, the Committee approved the minutes of the July 14, 2021 meeting. Ms Lopera abstained. All other members voted yes.

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

*As prepared for delivery.*

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all for joining us this evening. I have a few updates before we get into the rest of our meeting.

First I'd like to apologize to the school committee chair and members for allowing my license to expire. There was a misunderstanding between my temporary and emergency license given the pandemic. As you know, when I came from Minnesota, I have been a fully licensed educator and superintendent for 30+ years. I intended to take the required exam during my first year. As we shifted to support our students and families in response to the pandemic, I devoted my full attention to mitigating the health crisis and the license requirements were waived during the pandemic. I am still working to mitigate the pandemic to keep our community safe. This came to my attention late Monday night when the Commissioner called me. I immediately called my team to check on it and have scheduled the test for Saturday, August 14th. I take this seriously and I am resolved to complete this task immediately. I am in contact with the Commissioner and will keep you updated. We have school opening in just a few weeks and we cannot afford any distractions.

I want to join you, Madam Chair, and Vice Chair, and members, in welcoming our two newest additions to the Committee. I appreciate the work of the Nominating Panel, Mayor Janey and her team in all that it took to identify, interview, and select these two new members. As I have said a number of times, we know that representation matters and it's critically important that we have all voices at the table while we're considering the important work ahead of us. On a personal note, I am heartened that we have two fantastic women of color joining the policy conversation. I have no doubt that your experience and your voices will lead us to better decisions on behalf of students and families

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the recent passing of one of my predecessors. The BPS community was incredibly saddened to learn of the passing of former Superintendent Tom Payzant, who passed away on July 23rd at his home in Boston, surrounded by family. Dr. Payzant was Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools for 11 years, from 1995-2006 and pioneered the sharp focus on curriculum and instruction that our students are still benefiting from in 2021. Before his time in Boston, he was the Superintendent of Oklahoma City Public Schools from 1979-1982, and spent another 11 years leading the San Diego Unified School District from 1982-1993. Current superintendents, school leaders, administrators, and teachers were inspired by his leadership and there are so many current BPS employees with such fond memories of their time working with Dr. Payzant. Under his leadership, Boston Public Schools was a finalist several years in a row and then a winner of the prestigious Broad Prize for Public Education. In addition, in 2004, Dr. Payzant was presented with the Green-Garner Award, the nation's highest honor for urban education leadership. We are all so grateful for his contributions to the Boston Public Schools community. On behalf of Team BPS, I extend my condolences to his wife Ellen and all of his family.

As we near the beginning of the new school year, BPS is welcoming some new school leaders. We had only a few vacancies this year, many created by School Leaders taking on new assignments, either at other schools or in central office, and a few retirements. While I will present a full update on the School Leaders who are new to their positions in the coming weeks, I

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did want to note one appointment that the Committee has asked about in the past. We have welcomed Dr. Sidney Brown as the new Head of School at Madison Park. You know that Madison Park has been a point of particular focus for me and I am grateful to the team that worked to bring Dr. Brown to our community. This was a deliberate and thoughtful process that yielded Dr. Brown and I look forward to formally introducing him to the Committee. Dr. Brown comes to us from Alabama where he earned his Bachelor of Science from Tuskegee University in Alabama and later obtained a Master of Education from Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University in Normal, Alabama. Dr. Brown also completed his Ph.D. in Agricultural Education & Studies, with a minor in Administration from Iowa State University of Science & Technology. Among his many accomplishments, Dr. Brown has served as a transformational school leader at Anniston High School in Anniston, Ala., and has been engaged in educational leadership at both the school level and the college level. I want to again thank Kevin McCaskill for his steadfast leadership and partnership. I am thankful that he will be bringing his talent and skills to helping BPS build out our vocational education to a broader set of schools, and starting earlier in the middle grades. I'd also like to thank Jim Rooney and the Boston Chamber of Commerce for funding our first search and the many parents, staff, students, Friends of Madison, Alumni and other key community members who helped in the search. We will provide a full update on our new school leaders at a meeting in September.

I want to take a moment to recognize the students who are graduating later this summer after their sustained effort to complete all graduation requirements. BPS is hosting a Summer Graduation for all students who have wrapped up their work. It will take place on Wednesday, August 25th, from 6:00 - 7:30 pm at White Stadium. We anticipate 200 students to graduate at this event and I hope you will join me in congratulating the students, their families, and their teachers for this great accomplishment. There are a few high schools that will also host their own Summer Graduations and we will have all this information up on our summer graduations page once the dates are finalized. BPS summer graduation began in 2007 to celebrate the achievements of students who needed a bit more time to complete their high school graduation requirements. Following our highest graduation rate on record in 2020, we continue working to increase the district's overall 4-5 year graduation rate. The Class of 2021 has encountered so many challenges and we are so proud of our students for their perseverance and dedication. Congratulations to the graduates!

The BPS Summer experience will wrap up for most students this coming Friday. We've had a great five weeks of engagement, learning, and fun. I have visited some of our programs and seen firsthand the creativity of our educators and partners. More than 13,000 students participated in summer engagement through a wide range of programs, many run by our schools and many operated by our nonprofit partners. BPS utilized our full suite of outreach tools to drive summer engagement. School staff made phone calls and targeted outreach to families to inform them of programs at their schools as well as other opportunities. Our Communications Office sent text messages and robocalls in the 10 most commonly spoken district languages, and we produced billboards in multiple languages that were placed in strategic locations throughout the city. We also shared information on social media, in our family newsletter, and with public information officers from fellow city agencies who pushed out info through their channels. Over the course of the summer, students have engaged in physical activities, sports, arts, and academic acceleration. Thank you to the teachers and educators and partners who powered our summer

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programming and all at BPS who made this happen. I'm so grateful to Chris Smith and everyone at Boston After School and Beyond for their continued partnership in expanding opportunity for our students. I also thank the Boston Private Industry Council and all our other community organizations for their incredible support. As I mentioned during our last meeting, I have had many opportunities this summer to engage with families and I've received some critical feedback on our summer options. Though we are just wrapping up this year's summer programs, this feedback is already guiding our plans for next summer.

I am so excited to announce that our very own Director of Transportation Delavern Stanislaus, is one of the recipients of the 2021 Henry L. Shattuck Public Service Award! Recipients are awarded by the Boston Municipal Research Bureau for their integrity, initiative, leadership and commitment to the public good. Delavern has demonstrated all of these qualities, particularly as the Transportation team rallied and adapted to the challenges presented by the pandemic. Delavern is a former BPS student and proud graduate of the Jeremiah E. Burke High School. She has worked at BPS for 10 years and fearlessly stepped into her leadership role in the Transportation Department in 2018. She's also a BPS parent, and understands deeply the trust that BPS families place upon us to provide safe and reliable transportation for their children. Delavern has worked so hard to improve the performance of our Transportation team over the last few years, and I have detailed their substantial progress in my report many times. She is so loved and respected by so many of us here at BPS. We are incredibly proud of her and happy that she has received this well-deserved recognition. Shattuck Award winners will receive their award at a ceremony at the Seaport Boston Hotel in October. Congratulations, Del, and thank you for your service to the City of Boston.

Last Friday, BPS submitted our preliminary spending plan for the ESSER II funds. As a quick reminder, we have already started spending ESSER I funds, with expenses in PPE, health and safety, and summer programming as part of our Return, Recover, Reimagine framework. ESSER II is the next step and covers this academic year, while ESSER III will cover the following year. In total, we expect more than \$400 million in one-time funds, which, as we've discussed, will be allocated to projects that support our overall budget and implementation of our strategic plan.

We have been deliberate in our public engagement and have worked hard to gather feedback from our BPS community. Starting with the WikiWisdom page where we collected information from teachers and school-based staff, we have heard loud and clear of the need for additional support and funding to ensure students and staff have the time and space to reconnect with each other and their learning. We heard from more than 2,000 stakeholders through our Community Engagement sessions and public meetings hosted by the ESSER Commission - and I'm happy to report that we have launched a Student ESSER Commission to discuss the ESSER III funds.

Based on those priorities, and what we heard from students, families, teachers, staff, and partners, we released a plan in July that represented our overall vision for ESSER funding. That plan was open for public comment and we heard from nearly 200 additional individuals. The proposed spending plan we submitted to DESE last week added detail to our spending priorities, which were driven by our public engagement. We are committed to allocating 50% of the funding to go directly to schools, calculated based on the student population they educate. School leaders have been engaging with their communities via Equity Roundtables and public meetings

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to gather feedback so they can direct these funds to their specific needs. The other 50% will be allocated to address additional school needs but funded through the central office so that schools will not have to direct their resources to items that we should fund.

The majority of the feedback we collected, which helped to direct our spending plan for that 50%, focused on three areas:

- Social and emotional engagement and support
- Academic acceleration and equitable recovery
- Facilities improvements

As a preview:

- For social and emotional support, we are proposing the funding be directed to supporting counselors and social workers to supplement the investments we have made through the BPS budget
- For academic acceleration and equitable recovery, we are proposing funding to purchase access to district-wide technology platforms, funding for compensatory services, training and support for administrators and staff, additional staff to change classroom environments; instructional materials and technology
- And for facilities improvements, we are purchasing air conditioning units, installing air quality monitors in all schools, investing in libraries, and upgrading access to drinking water

We will submit an updated plan with specific spending levels later this month and continue to report out to the public.

I wanted to provide a quick update on our work to find an emergency home for juniors and seniors at the Edward M. Kennedy School for Health Careers. As was mentioned earlier, we have been working with the school community to identify a space for the students and staff - and as we know, space often presents challenges here in the City. We announced back in March of 2021 that Wentworth Institute of Technology has stepped up and provided space to temporarily locate EMK students interested in in-person learning onto their campus and were interested in collaborating on a long-term prospect of a permanent home. It has been a great partnership for the students and staff of EMK, providing them access to new classrooms and infrastructure and exposing high school students to a college campus experience where they can interact with students and faculty, access technology and other assets, and begin to take classes.

We are grateful for the leadership at Wentworth and are excited for the partnership. We learned this summer that due to needed construction on-campus, an accelerated timeline for upgrades, and limited time to plan accommodations for the EMK community as soon as we originally hoped. I met with the President of Wentworth this morning and we are talking through the possibility of collaborating on a long-term plan.

In the meantime, we have identified a temporary space for the 2021-2022 school year for the 200 students at the former Endicott school building. This space, which is designed to educate almost

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400 students, is in the process of renovations to be ready for students and staff of the EMK in September. I personally just met with the EMK staff and parents today to hear their concerns with the emergency swing space for EMK. My team has been in regular and close contact with the school leader and I heard many concerns about this temporary location. I have committed to speaking with them again next week. We will continue to seek out any new ideas, but to be safe, we are continuing to prepare the Endicott as swing space for this year. We are committed to listening to the feedback and having an ongoing dialogue with the community.

In a moment I will turn it over to the team to present the back to school update. I am excited to welcome students and staff back to school for the 2021 - 2022 school year and look forward to seeing the smiling faces of all as we launch in September. The school year starts on Thursday, September 9 for grades 1 - 12 and Monday, September 13 for prekindergarten and kindergarten. As you will hear in the presentation, we have taken no breaks and have been planning all summer to get ready for the new school year. We'll cover health and safety protocols, facilities updates, and more on our operational readiness. We will also share more about efforts to ensure students are welcomed into a joyful and engaging learning environment. Using some of the ESSER I funds just mentioned, we will also have additional access to counseling and other support for both students and staff. We want the message this year to be about joy and community, while recognizing that the past 18 months have created challenges that will take far longer to process. Yes, there will be COVID protocols in place but we want to focus on creating an excellent student experience while also following the best advice from the experts. To help to paint the picture of how this school year will look, I want to present a hypothetical experience for a fifth grade student, who we will call Ren.

- Ren is dropped off at school early and joins the before school program to connect with fellow students and school staff.
- During class, Ren works on reading in small groups with his teacher at a table right next to his friends, all wearing masks.
- At recess Ren plays outside on the play structure next to friends without masks.
- After lunch, the school social worker joins his class and some classmates talk about how they are feeling about being back at school.
- Ren only uses a computer once during the day to use a personalized learning program that develops his reading skills.
- At the end of the day, Ren gets tutoring with some of his peers in an afterschool program.
- Ren then boards the school bus, wearing a mask throughout his ride home.

As we resume in-person learning, working to ensure the health and safety of school communities must be the top priority. Second, we will support the cultivation of all students' social, emotional, and mental health. And of course another priority for BPS will be addressing lost



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instructional time by ensuring every child is engaged in a culturally responsive classroom and excelling academically. Working with our partners in public health, we want the topline message to be that our best approach to a safe, healthy, and happy school year is Masks, Vaccines, and Testing. Those are the three most effective methods we have to stop the spread of COVID in our schools and you will hear us repeat them often.

Madam Chair, that concludes my Superintendent's report.

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Mr. DeAraujo asked the Superintendent if the state has granted her a grace period to continue to operate as superintendent until she receives her license. The Superintendent said that she is in talks with the State Education Commissioner about the matter and is scheduled to take the exam on Saturday, August 14. Mr. DeAraujo suggested that the Committee should have verified the Superintendent's licensure during its recent Superintendent's performance evaluation process for School Year 2020-21. Ms. Robinson said that the Office of Human Capital tracks staff licensure should have alerted the Committee, calling it "a lesson learned." She said that the Committee will put a checklist in place going forward.

Dr. Coleman requested that district reports articulate how investments are connected to stated goals.

Ms. Mercer asked what schools will be receiving air conditioning units. The Superintendent said that all classrooms in schools without HVAC systems will receive air conditioning units. All classrooms will receive air quality monitoring units. Ms. Mercer asked if the BPS will provide transportation for EMK students if they move to Endicott building. The Superintendent said that she and her team are working to address transportation concerns, adding that the district will support EMK's existing partnerships.

Ms. Polanco Garcia requested a list of BPS facilities that are in need of or undergoing repairs. The Superintendent agreed to follow up.

Ms. Lopera asked when the air quality monitors would be installed. Deputy Superintendent of Operations Sam DePina said that units will be installed in all schools by the end of September. Ms. Lopera echoed Ms. Polanco Garcia's request for a list of outstanding facilities projects.

Mr. O'Neill noted that at the time the Committee voted on the Superintendent's performance evaluation in June, she held a valid license. He expressed confidence that she will pass the MTEL exam and spoke about the importance of preparing for the reopening of schools in September. He requested that the Office of Human Capital provide the Committee with an update on the licensure status of BPS employees.

Ms. Robinson asked if the distribution of ESSER funding to schools will be made public. The Superintendent said that there will be full transparency in all ESSER spending, adding that she is working with the Finance team and Office of Engagement to align ESSER spending with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 budget so the public can see how BPS is making investments to accelerate

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learning and create a more equitable experience across all schools. Ms. Robinson asked about the disconnect between the district's intent planning summer learning opportunities and the outcomes. The Superintendent said that families have communicated to her that transportation and programming hours presented barriers to participation.

Mr. DeAraujo asked when the Committee will vote on the district's distribution on ESSER funds. The Superintendent and Chair said that the Committee will vote on ESSER in September. Mr. DeAraujo suggested better tracking of requests made by Committee members.

Ms. Lopera asked about the processes for recovery and acceleration in out-of-school time programming. The Superintendent spoke about the complexity of providing before and after school programming during the pandemic. She said that not every school will be offering before and aftercare this year, but it's something that the district is working towards. Ms. Lopera encouraged the district to communicate that with families.

Ms. Robinson asked if schools will be responsible for helping families connect with before and after school opportunities regardless of whether they host them. The Superintendent said that currently different schools use different systems to track this information, adding that the district must use one system to collect the data in order to ensure accountability.

## GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The following people testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders at the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers (EMK) for School Year 2021-2022:

- Yolanda Oliveira, Brighton resident, EMK student
- Cindy Ramirez, Roxbury resident, EMK student
- Ariana Arroyo, Charlestown resident, EMK student
- Sharina Castillo, Dorchester resident, EMK student
- Alex Fatato, Roxbury resident, EMK teacher
- Lisette Sanitago, Hyde Park resident
- Kimberly Frazier-Booth, Medford resident, EMK teacher
- Christine Biggins, Charlestown resident, EMK parent
- Angela Cappucci, Stoneham resident, EMK teacher
- Any Wyeth, West Roxbury resident, EMK parent
- Christine Baumgarten, Mendon resident, EMK teacher
- Lauren Lopez, Jamaica Plain resident
- Siobhan Dooling, West Roxbury resident, EMK teacher
- Alison Mosher, Reading resident, EMK teacher
- Jaelyn Roche, Allston resident, Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts
- Mobolaji Omisore, Mattapan resident, EMK parent
- Thomas Price, South Boston resident, EMK teacher
- Sean Cray, Roxbury resident, EMK teacher
- Vicky Rodroques, Wakefield resident, EMK teacher

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- Gabe Avruch, Brookline resident, EMK teacher
  - Sade Cantave, Brockton resident, EMK teacher
  - Mary Alyce Witham, Stoughton resident, EMK Special Education Coordinator and Student Support Facilitator
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- Hui Qun Ma, Mission Hill resident, Quincy Elementary School parent, testified regarding health and safety concerns related to in-person learning in September
  - Kelly Wang, South End resident, BPS parent, and member of the District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), requested additional Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) opportunities
  - Alfonso Rubio, Dorchester resident, Blackstone Elementary School parent, testified regarding facilities concerns
  - Celia Suazo, South Boston resident, Hurley K-8 School parent, testified regarding social-emotional support for students
  - Lucy Perez, Dorchester resident, Blackstone Elementary School parent, testified regarding facilities and health and safety concerns
  - Karina Paulino, Charlestown resident, Umana Academy parent, testified regarding back to school concerns
  - Mike Heichman, Dorchester resident, Boston Education Justice Alliance member, testified regarding exam schools admissions and Covid health and safety measures
  - Sharon Hinton, Hyde Park resident, Black Teachers Matter founder, testified regarding summer learning.
  - Melanie Allen, Hyde Park resident, Roosevelt K-8 parent, Hernandez K-8 teacher, testified regarding Covid vaccinations.
  - Edith Bazile, Dorchester resident, community advocate, testified regarding Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Education Relief (ESSER) funds.
  - Ruby Reyes, Dorchester resident, Boston Education Justice Alliance executive director, testified regarding BuildBPS.
  - Susan Moir, Jamaica Plain resident, BPS parent, testified regarding student support and staff accountability

## **ACTION ITEMS**

***Approved*** - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved in-kind donations with a total estimated value of \$19,820.

Dr. Coleman requested that the district provide (1) quarterly reports on how grants align with the strategic goals and (2) data on equity in terms of distribution of grants to schools with the greatest needs. The Superintendent said that Chief of Student, Family and Community Advancement Monica Roberts and her team are working with the Boston Educational Development Fund (BEDF) to develop a tracking system that would address those matters. She said that she would report back to the Committee with additional information.

Ms. Lopera applauded the district's investment in Universal Pre-Kindergarten.

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*Approved* - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$17,868,972.

*Approved* - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved the temporary suspension of the district's Maximum Age Assignment and Enrollment Policy for School Year 2021-2022.

*Approved* - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved the following UP Academy Charter Amendments: Memorandum of Understanding between the Boston Public Schools and UP Academy Boston (2021-2026); and UP Academy Boston and UP Academy Dorchester Management Contract with UP Education Network.

## REPORTS

*Preparing for School Year 2021-2022* - The Superintendent presented a report on the district's plan to return to safe, in-person learning five days a week for the 2021-22 school year. Co-presenters included Dr. Jennifer Lo, Medical Director, Boston Public Health Commission; Monica Roberts, BPS Chief of Student, Family and Community Advancement; Djenny Lobo Lopes, Senior Director of Health Services; Indira Alvarez, Chief of Operations; Mark Racine, Chief Information Officer; Laura Benavidez, Executive Director of Food and Nutrition Services; Avery Esdaile, Director of Athletics; Drew Echelson, Deputy Superintendent of Academics; Neva Coakley Grice, Interim Chief of Student Support; Teresa Neff Webster, Deputy Director of Operations; Dan Rosengard, Customer Service Representative, BPS Transportation Department; and Brian Forde, BPS Executive Director of Operations.

### Covid-19 Update:

Metric #1: Daily COVID-19 Emergency Department Visits

- Average of 174.9 COVID-19 ED Visits daily
- Threshold of concern: 7 or more days of increase from previous week
- Number of consecutive days higher than same day previous week: 1

Metric #2: Number of Adult COVID-19 Patients in Boston Hospitals

- 39 adult patients hospitalized across Boston
- Threshold of concern: 200 COVID-19 patients or more
- Number of Consecutive Days above 200: 0

Metric #3: % of Non-Surge Adult ICU Beds Occupied

- 88% of non-surge adult ICU beds are occupied
- Threshold of concern: 95% or more of non-surge adult ICU beds are occupied for five consecutive days.
- Number of consecutive days higher than 95%: 0

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Currently, 60.6% of Boston residents are fully vaccinated. Vaccination rates in youth aged 12-15 are below the citywide average.

Vaccination rates in specific communities remain below the citywide average

- Dorchester 02121-02125
- Dorchester 02122-02124
- Mattapan
- Fenway

### Enrollment:

51,929 students are enrolled for SY21-22 (as of July 26). Additional registrations are anticipated throughout the month of August.

### Health & Safety COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies for 21/22:

- Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19
- Wear face masks while in school buildings and on the bus (even if fully vaccinated)
- Practice good hand hygiene
- Continue with school cleaning and disinfecting schedules and ventilation strategies

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. Promoting vaccination can help schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular activities and sports. The CDC recommends everyone 12 years and older should get a COVID-19 vaccination to help protect against COVID-19.

### Facilities

- Indoor Air quality sensors are in process of being installed across the district. Work began July 12th. These sensors will provide real time reporting on the quality of the air in room
- Air Purifiers Filters are being replaced per the specifications of being changed every six months. To date 1,529 purifiers have had filters replaced in 36 schools. The project is on track to be completed prior to students' return.
- MERV-13 filters will be replaced as part of the regular maintenance of the systems.
- BPS custodial crews are completing sanitation of buildings and are on track to be complete for students' return.
- Schools have sanitation stations in hallways and classrooms with ample supplies in stock for replacement.
- PPE will be delivered to schools in August.

### Transportation

- Actively routing buses. All bus-eligible students will receive bus assignments sent via mail & email the last week of August.
- Alternative Transportation, Transportation Reinstatements, and other requests can be submitted on our Support Portal
- Before school starts, drivers will complete dry runs of routes

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- MBTA passes for eligible students in grades 7-11 will be distributed to schools before school starts.
- Bus monitors will be provided to all students who require them, in accordance with student IEPs.
- We are actively hiring bus monitors and pursuing candidates during the summer. However, we are currently short of our goal of 150 new hires this fall. Due to this shortage, we predict some fall staffing issues.
- Students will be required to wear masks on buses this fall. Buses will be disinfected once per day.

### Technology

- Emergency Connectivity Fund - federal funding to help close the digital divide
- BPS is applying for additional Chromebooks for take-home as well as teacher laptops
- Continued support for hotspots & Comcast vouchers
- Emergency Broadband Benefit Program provides \$50 per month for home Broadband to all BPS families
- Continue support for many of the tools adopted during COVID and as part of our ESSER investments: Lexia, TalkingPoints, Nearpod, and SeeSaw

### Food and Nutrition Services

- Return to cooking at all cafeterias (80 sites)
- Rollout of My Way Cafes (34 sites)
- New menu items feature vegan recipes, homemade muffins, specialty sauces and more Partnerships with local businesses and farms to provide fresh produce, local pizza, grains and fish to our sites
- Continued recipe development and testing to incorporate student preferences and cultures
- New Chef in School program
- Staff Training on safety protocols, menus and policies and procedures
- Preparing for provision of evening and grocery distribution
- Challenges: staffing; high vacancy rates impacting operations; procurement and access to grocery items

### Athletics

- Boston Public Schools Return to Normal Calendar Year
- Interscholastic Athletics (9-12)
  - Fall (Aug 20- Nov 25)
  - Winter (Nov 29-March 19)
  - Spring (March 21- June 19)
  -
- Middle Level Athletics (6-8)
- Special Olympics/Unified Sports (K-12)

### Summer Engagement/ Physical Activity

- Girls Volleyball Clinics (5 Sites/190 students)
- Outdoor Strength & Conditioning

Fall Athletics/ Health & Safety Guidance

- Masks required for all indoor activities
- Additional athletic guidance developing
- BPS will follow the most up-to-date State MIAA guidelines

Academics

- Provide robust intervention support for English Learners with explicit focus on English Learners with disabilities.
- Ensure high-quality compensatory services for our Students with Disabilities
- Expand UPK opportunities and options
- Utilize digital literacy platforms most especially for ELs and SWDs
- Assess EL students for ELD levels and create individual plans to support acceleration
- Launch robust district-wide priority focused on PreK-12 equitable literacy
- Leverage 74 new family liaisons and 100 new social workers
- Offer high-quality professional learning for educators focused on academic priorities and student recovery
- Develop BPS Academic Framework
- Ensure Academic Framework drives facilities decisions
- Lead H.S. redesign efforts and implement MassCore
- Academic Priority 1: Implement equitable literacy across the Pre-K-12 most especially for ELs and SWDs
- Academic Priority 2: Team structures to support implementation of equitable literacy w/ sharp focus on ELs and SWDs support and services
- Academic Priority 3: Use Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP) (an equity-based observation and feedback tool) to ensure equitable implementation of literacy practices especially for ELs and SWDs

Student Support

Chief of Student Support and the team conducted an extensive process of community engagement to solicit input with regards to the impact of the Police Reform Roundtable Presentation/OSS.

Results include:

- Strengthen community relationships: Create a positive narrative that reflects improving community perception and understanding of police reform. Restore transparency and accountability by the Office of Safety Services. Updated name and uniform to create a more approachable image which will support community engagement
- Engagement: Office of Safety Services engaged stakeholders during school visits across 11 Boston neighborhoods; attended numerous community meetings and interacted with thousands of community members. Received enthusiastic support on social media.
- Operations improvements: Improved radio communications by installing radio system BAPER, increased reliability and compliance. Dedicated to improving staff training and professional development. Assigned to 23 high schools, 16 middle and K-8 schools. Ensure safe school time arrivals, class transitions, and dismissals. Mobile Personnel

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proactively visit schools every day and respond to location requests. Provide coverage support at 32 food service sites and 130 athletic games.

Mr. DeAraujo asked about the status of enrollment for School Year 2021-22. Ms. Roberts said that enrollment is up compared to the same time last year, adding that the district is monitoring enrollment very closely in light of residual impacts from the pandemic and federal immigration policy. Mr. DeAraujo asked how literacy improvements will be measured and how school leaders are being included in the process. Mr. Echelson said that the district's focus on literacy will assess both fluency and comprehension and is being implemented in deep consultation with a group of school leaders.

Ms. Mercer asked about the distribution of MBTA passes. The Superintendent clarified that M7 MBTA passes are provided for all students in grades 7-12. Ms. Mercer requested a list of My Way Cafe sites. The Superintendent agreed to follow up with the information.

Ms. Lopera requested more information on how safety specialists are assigned to schools. Chief Coakley-Grice explained that safety specialists are assigned to schools based on the number of incidents at a school or in response to incidents in the surrounding community. Schools can also request safety specialists. She refrained from discussing specific schools citing possible safety concerns.

Ms. Polanco Garcia praised the report and spoke about the importance of restorative justice.

Mr. O'Neill thanked Mr. Esdaile for opening White Stadium for graduation ceremonies. He asked when My Way Cafe rollout would be complete. Ms. Benavidez said that BPS is entering the fourth and final year of the My Way Cafe rollout, adding that all schools will now either have cafeterias or a My Way Cafe. Mr. O'Neill requested a hiring update. The Superintendent said that 647 positions have been filled; some are in progress; and there are currently 75 vacancies. She said that her team will follow up with the number of retirements. He spoke about the importance of social-emotional support. The Superintendent said that she will provide the Committee with more details in her next back-to-school presentation. Mr. O'Neill asked if the Superintendent is considering requiring vaccines for employees. The Superintendent said that she is working with the city on the issue, adding that while many BPS staff are vaccinated, rates are lower among African Americans and Latinx employees. Mr. O'Neill asked about facilities concerns raised by various school communities. The Superintendent said that she and her team continue to work to find solutions for the EMK community while preparing the Endicott building for use if needed. She said that she expects to announce a swing-space location for the Horace Mann School community next week. Mr. O'Neill expressed optimism that a long-term solution for EMK will be found in the Longwood Medical Area.

Ms. Robinson asked about the district's transportation preparations as traffic returns to pre-pandemic levels. Mr. DePina said that the transportation is routing students and is working closely with transportation provider Transdev to plan for the new school year. Ms. Robinson asked about the district's new literacy program and how the district is supporting 6th grade teachers with science and social studies now those subjects will be considered as part of exam schools admissions. The Superintendent said that she will present her Academic Vision to the



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Committee this fall. Ms. Robinson requested a list of schools with space needs or that are seeking to expand. The Superintendent said that an October presentation to the School Committee is planned.

***Wellness Policy Update*** - Jill Carter, Assistant Superintendent of Health & Wellness; Maryka Lier, Director of Wellness Policy and Promotions; and Dr. Jennifer Lo, Medical Director, Boston Public Health Commission presented the district's annual Wellness Policy Update to the Committee.

The District Wellness Policy is comprised of eight policy areas: 1) Cultural Proficiency, 2) School Food and Nutrition Services, 3) Comprehensive Physical Activity and Physical Education, 4) Comprehensive Health Education, 5) Safe and Supportive Schools, 6) Health Services, 7) Healthy School Environment, and 8) Staff Wellness. This quantitative annual report details School Year 2019-2020 findings by policy area, drawing comparisons to previous years when possible and highlighting success and challenges. Prior to examining each policy area, the report takes a closer look at district and individual school wellness council (SWC) functionality. Student outcomes related to health behaviors, perceptions and attitudes, and the prevalence of obesity and asthma across the district are presented at the end. The report concludes with a discussion of findings and recommendations for improved wellness policy implementation. The report is submitted to the Superintendent of Schools and School Committee by the District Wellness Council (DWC) per the Massachusetts Standards for School Wellness Councils annual report requirement and will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as a part of the reporting requirement for the DESE audit of the Food and Nutrition Services Department.

**Key Findings by Policy Area:**

**Council Section:**

- Functionality of School-based Wellness Councils: 85% of school submitted a Wellness Action Plan (106 WAPs submitted); 65% identified co-chairs for the councils to ensure coordination of the council and 94% delegated action steps to multiple members to build shared leadership and commitment to the work of the council; 76% identified goals that are specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, and time-bound (SMART).
- Saw a reduction in the number of councils working on Cultural Proficiency goals. While all schools must have Cultural Proficiency goals in their QSP, we would hope to see more CP goals specifically in the WAP, especially since family and student participation on the wellness councils is so low.

**Cultural Proficiency:**

- Need to increase family and student participation in the wellness councils: 4 schools engaged student representatives and 14 schools engaged with family representatives. Fifty percent of school leaders report engaging students' families to help develop or implement policies and programs related to school health in the past two years.

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- All schools and central office departments are incorporating goals to support the implementation of the OAG Policy and CLSP throughout the district.
- Cultural Proficiency standards and practices and equity protocols continue to be rolled out across the district through centralized training and school-based professional development; 79% of school leaders reported that all of their staff had received training in the past two years on addressing equity in education outcomes for students of color; however, only 38% of school leaders reported the same for training on creating a supportive learning environment for LGBTQ+ students in the past two years (2020 Profiles).

### **School Food & Nutrition Promotion:**

- 100% of schools providing Breakfast after the Bell, increased from 87% in SY17-18.
- 23% of schools receiving vended meals (15 out of 66) were converted to My Way Café to be able to provide bulk, freshly prepared, on-site meal service, an increase from 3% in SY17-18 to 21% of all schools (FNS Records).
- The FNS department is continuing to improve sourcing local foods and systems to plan and track meals at each school and continuously improve the cultural relevance of meals offered.
- Compliance with BPS nutritional guidelines for food sold in vending machines or at a school store, fundraisers, canteen, or snack bar is weak: 67% of schools reported these foods not meeting guidelines and only 47% of schools prohibit less nutritious foods and beverages from being sold for fundraising purposes.
- FNS was able to quickly pivot to continue providing meals to students and families as soon as schools closed in March of 2020 and throughout the summer, continuously improving their model based on feedback to reach our students and families.

### **Comprehensive Physical Activity & Physical Education:**

- Physical Education: 90% of schools serving grades PreK-8 reported meeting or exceeding the PE policy requirement of 45 minute of PE per week for each grade, though nearly all those schools are staffed to provide the required amount. 58% of high schools report offering at least 1 semester of PE in each grade; 75% of high schools are staffed to offer some PE and 33% are staffed to meet the policy requirements.
- Recess: There have been improvements in providing time for recess for grades 6-8. Across the district, 83% of grade 6 has recess and 77% of grades 7 and 8. However, only 42% of schools with grades 6-8 provide the minimum 20 minutes of daily recess for those grades. 75% of schools containing grades PreK-5 have at least 20 min of recess daily as required by the policy, though all students in those grades have some amount of recess weekly.
- Movement in the Classroom: 80% of schools report that all or many of their teachers implement movement breaks or classroom lessons that involve movement.
- The percentage of schools that report withholding PA as a punishment (22%) has not changed since SY17-18; the Code of Conduct was updated in Fall 2019 to reflect the language in the PA policy and was communicated to school superintendents and school leaders.
- Central Office continues to provide strong support for school PE programs, including in-depth instructional coaching for new and veteran teachers, as well as lessons,

curriculum, and equipment. The OHW PE-PA team worked with PE teachers to provide at-home lessons and activities to keep students and families moving during the remote learning.

#### Comprehensive Health Education:

- Staffing: Only 20% of middle and high schools have a lead health education teacher certified, licensed, or endorsed by the state to teach health education.
- Elementary Grades: 39% of all BPS schools with grades PreK-5 did not offer any health instruction to students; 36% provided health instruction in three or more grade levels with PreK-5.
- Middle and High School Grades: 42% of schools serving middle and high school grades did not require students to take any health education course; K-8 and middle schools were least likely to require any amount of health education instruction (55%) and high schools were most likely to provide some form of health education (73%).
- Policy Compliance: Only 18% of schools across the district followed the minimum required health education policy: 33% of elementary schools met the minimum requirements, 12% of SY19-20 DWP Annual Report | Page iv schools serving grades 6-8 required two semesters taught by a licensed health educator, and 8% of schools serving grades 9-12 required 1 semester taught by a licensed health educator.
- Central Office continues to provide strong support for school CHE programs, including in-depth instructional coaching for teachers, as well as lessons, curriculum, and materials. The OHW HE Team provided virtual lessons and resources for teachers and students to support caring for their physical, social, and emotional health during remote learning.

#### Healthy School Environment:

- BPS Sustainability trained 400 custodians on sustainability, environment, health, and safety issues during the 2017, 2018, and 2019 annual BPS Custodial Training. While in-person training was cancelled in summer 2020 due to COVID-19, all custodians still completed their annual mandatory 2-hour online AHERA training and received the BPS Sustainability presentation to remotely access individually.
- 78% of school leaders report reviewing their School Environmental Audit, 66% report coordinating with their wellness council to address needs raised in the report, and only 18 schools identified HSE goals in their WAP.
- Communication of Green Cleaner Policy and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Program to school staff: 73% of school leaders reported informing their staff about the green cleaner policy, which includes safer sanitizer for Early Ed Programs and 90% inform staff on how to record pest sightings to improve IPM.
- Zero Waste Programs are running at all schools and BPS Sustainability continues to build programming and support for schools and the district to move toward greater environmental sustainability.
- Investments were secured to improve access to tap water for drinking at all schools; Between 2021-2025 100% of schools will receive varying levels of first-time installations or upgrades to existing systems.

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- Strong district-wide commitment from school leaders to support student SEL with explicit systems in place to develop student's SEL competencies. There is a need for a district plan to fully articulate, implement and coordinate MTSS structures that support student and staff SEL and mental health and that are in alignment with our CLSP and equity vision.
- Only 28% of schools serving grades 6-12 identified an Expectant and Parenting Students policy liaison
- Only 28% of schools reported having at least two trained Bullying Prevention Liaisons, a decrease from 71% in SY17-18. Further, compared to SY 2017-18, the share of schools reporting all staff at their school completed an annual bullying prevention intervention training decreased SY19-20 DWP Annual Report | Page v from 42% to 22% while the proportion that said no staff were trained increased significantly from 7% to 39%.
- Most schools take a MTSS approach and have a student support team, and the district is investing in important mental health support services staff at the schools.
- BPS K-12 Transformative SEL standards are being rolled out through the district and embedded in health ed, physical ed, and the arts.
- BPS Homeless Education Resource Network continues to improve on systems to identify and support student experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity
- Behavioral Health Services provided remote services and connected students and families to mental health supports after schools closed in March; Opportunity Youth mobilized outreach and support services for homeless students and families experiencing house instability during the pandemic.

#### Health Services:

- Nearly all school buildings are staffed with at least 1 school nurse: 131 FTE school-based nurses making a 1:355 nurse to student ratio and there has been an increase in health screenings.
- 77 Schools with students in grades 6-12 participated in the Menstrual Access Pilot Program made possible by initial funding from the City of Boston. Products were chosen based on student focus group feedback. 3,767 school nurse visits for menstrual product distribution were recorded between September and March.
- All high schools have active Condom Accessibility Teams
- BPS continues to improve school nurse staffing capacity at school buildings and the Health Services Department is continuously improving systems to ensure student medical records are up-to-date and students are receiving the services and health care they need.
- 32 schools have a student immunization compliance rate of less than 85% and there has been no increase in the number of completed Individual Health Care Plans on file for students with chronic conditions.

#### Staff Wellness:

- 97% of school leaders agree their school actively supports staff members' social and emotional well-being, yet only 53% of schools report offering programs to promote the physical, social, and emotional well-being of school-based staff.
- Staff Wellness efforts have been largely happening in isolated pockets throughout the district and there has been a lack of collaboration with the District Wellness Council to

implement practices and initiatives to promote the physical, social, and emotional well-being of all BPS employees.

The report includes a number of recommendations, including:

- Improve communication of the policy to district leaders, schools, youth, and families;
- Strengthen District Wellness Council and subcommittees;
- All departments and offices responsible for the implementation of areas of the policy should include wellness policy implementation strategies and benchmarks into their work plans and strategic plans to improve alignment with department and district wellness goals; and
- All departments responsible for the implementation of areas of the policy should address key implementation issues to improve district and school-level implementation of the wellness policy.

Dr. Coleman praised the report's logic model and the presentation of transparent data demonstrating areas for improvement. He suggested that the wellness team consider the criterion reference for each category in order to identify gaps by race, class, language learning needs. He also suggested that the team consider how their work connects with My Career and Academic Plan (MyCAP), an initiative that engages students in authentic postsecondary planning through a continuum of learning focused on the individual student's interests, skills and talents.

Ms. Mercer emphasized the need for high school students to have opportunities for physical activity.

Ms. Robinson expressed disappointment in the gaps presented and asked how they will be addressed. Ms. Carter said that the district creates a wellness report to help school leaders construct wellness action plans. She noted that BPS has made great strides in many areas. Ms. Robinson asked if health education is part of MassCore. The Superintendent confirmed that it is, calling it a priority. She added that district leaders are working through issues related to implementation such as staffing and access to gymnasiums.

***English Language Learners Task Force Co-Chair Nomination: Ernani DeAraujo - Ms.***

Robinson nominated Ernani DeAraujo to serve as co-chair of the Committee's English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force. Mr. DeAraujo will fill the leadership role formerly held by Dr. Lorna Rivera, who stepped down from the Committee last June.

Established by the Boston School Committee in 2009, the ELL Task Force serves as a monitoring body and thought partner that supports BPS in addressing the needs of our increasingly multicultural and multilingual district in which nearly one in every two students speaks a language other than English at home and students come from 139 different countries.

A former BPS EL student, Mr. DeAraujo attended Bradley Elementary, Umana Academy and Boston Latin School (BLS), and went on to receive a B.A. from Harvard College and a J.D. from Washington and Lee University School of Law in Lexington, VA. He credits his mother, a widow who immigrated to East Boston from Colombia, with instilling in him a deep appreciation of the

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transformative power of education. Mr. DeAraujo serves as the Vice President of Regulatory Affairs and General Counsel of the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center (EBNHC), among the largest health centers in the nation with over 100,000 patients and 1,400 staff. In addition, he is the former President of NOAH Community Development Corporation, where he oversaw the East Boston-based community development corporation and worked to create affordable housing and community building, especially through youth development and environmental justice. He co-founded a program for East Boston High School, named the Mario Umana Public Service Fellowship that works to connect students with internship opportunities in government, summer programs and helps students apply to college. Mr. DeAraujo resides with his family in East Boston where he is very involved in the community through his work at EBNHC, and as a former neighborhood liaison for East Boston during the Administration of former Mayor Thomas Menino.

Mr. DeAraujo thanked the Committee for the nomination, saying he plans to focus on the intersection of ELL and special education issues. Dr. Coleman and Mr. O'Neill thanked Mr. DeAraujo for his willingness to serve as co-chair. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the nomination on September 1, 2021.

## PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Mr. O'Neill asked the new Committee members for feedback on their first meeting. Ms. Polanco Garcia thanked School Committee staff for providing translation and interpretation support. Ms. Lopera said it was powerful hearing her native language. Ms. Robinson said that the Committee plans to hold a retreat in the near future.

## NEW BUSINESS

None.

## ADJOURN

At approximately 10:50 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan  
Executive Secretary