



## OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REMOTE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

September 1, 2021

The Boston School Committee held a remote meeting on September 1, 2021 at 5 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; Quoc Tran; and Alternative Student Representative Tiffany Luo.

School Committee Member Absent: Student Representative Xyra Mercer.

### DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

#### Agenda

Meeting Minutes: August 4, 2021 Boston School Committee Meeting

Grants for Approval Totaling \$77,941,811

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

Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) Reform Update PowerPoint

BSAC Update Equity Impact Statement

Memo from Jenny Fernandez, Student Engagement Coordinator, to Boston School Committee re: BSAC Updates, Aug. 24, 2021

FY 22 Budget: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funding Update PowerPoint

ESSER Fund Recovery Strategy Equity Impact Statement

Memo from Eva Mitchell, Chief Accountability Officer, to Boston School Committee re: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funding Plan, Aug. 27, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. Ms. Mercer was absent. Vice Chairperson Michael O'Neill arrived shortly after roll call; Mr. DeAraujo arrived during the Preparing for School Year 2021-2022 report; and Alternative Student Representative Tiffany Luo arrived shortly after roll call. All other members were present.

Ms. Robinson said that tonight's meeting was being streamed live on Zoom. It will be rebroadcast on Boston City TV. It will also be posted at [bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee](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.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the August 4, Committee 2021 meeting.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

*As prepared for delivery.*

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you all for joining us this evening. We are just about a week away from the beginning of a new school year. We are so excited to see our students in grades 1-12 next week on Thursday, September 9th and our pre-K and Kindergarten students on Monday, September 13th. Following my report, my team and I will provide another update on our preparations, as we have throughout the summer. I'd just like to briefly cover some recent highlights and updates.

Last week we hosted our first Back to School Community Meeting on Tuesday, August 24 to provide families with the opportunity to hear from me and district leaders about our plans for the new school year. We know many parents and caregivers were not able to attend our meeting last week because we reached capacity on our Zoom license. We apologize for that inconvenience and are holding two additional community meetings tomorrow, September 2nd and Tuesday,

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September 7th. Both meetings are from 5:30 to 7:00 pm. Details are available on our Back to School webpage at [bostonpublicschools.org/BackToSchool](https://bostonpublicschools.org/BackToSchool). We have since worked with Zoom on expanding the audience capacity for these meetings. For the future meetings we are able to offer 5,000 spaces for participation and still provide simultaneous interpretation services for our families. In addition, the August 24 community meeting was recorded and is available to watch in multiple languages on the [Back to School webpage](#). We will also stream the upcoming meetings on YouTube. The YouTube stream is only available in English, however on Zoom we will provide interpretation services in Arabic, Cabo Verdean Creole, Cantonese, Haitian Creole, Mandarin, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The meetings will feature a live question and answer session, with frequently asked questions during our first meeting answered, as well as discussions on health and safety protocols and COVID-19 vaccination resources. Again, meeting information is available at [bostonpublicschools.org/BackToSchool](https://bostonpublicschools.org/BackToSchool). We look forward to seeing our families tomorrow evening or Tuesday, September 7th.

Over the last couple weeks, we've had various conferences and institutes for our staff to come together and prepare for the new year. I want to thank our ALI team, Central Office staff and our school leaders for an amazing August Leadership Institute this year. School leaders met for three days, August 16-18th, to discuss equitable literacy instruction, creating and sustaining strong instructional leadership teams, and strategic planning for change management. I want to thank Mayor Janey, Boston Teachers Union President Jessica Tang, Chair Robinson, and our keynote speakers, Dr. Alfred Tatum and Dr. Gholdy Muhammad for joining us and supporting our school leaders and academic teams as we prepare for a successful school year.

Last Wednesday, we celebrated the newest members of the Class of 2021 at the district-wide Summer Graduation Ceremony at White Stadium. We celebrated 50 graduates from 21 schools, joined by family, friends, and BPS staff at the outdoor event. Across the district, more than 200 students received diplomas through BPS summer programs, and many schools hosted their own ceremonies. I want to thank our Secondary Schools Team, in particular Lindsa McIntyre for MC-ing and Gene Roundtree for his inspiring remarks. Thank you also, Chair Robinson, for speaking, and of course thanks to our amazing student speakers from the Burke, The English High School and CASH. Again a special shout out to the entire Office of Secondary Schools and all the volunteers at White Stadium for their work to make this event such a success. It was so nice to see even more students cross the stage this year. We are coming off our highest graduation rate on record in 2020, and we continue working to increase the district's overall 4-5 year graduation rate. The Class of 2021 persevered through this difficult time with class! It is awe-inspiring and I'm so proud of our most recent graduates! Congratulations!

Speaking of BPS graduates, last night I was honored to attend Boston University's Menino Scholars and BPS Community Service Awards Ceremony & Reception. This is a wonderful annual event and it was so great to be there in-person this year instead of on Zoom! Last night we celebrated 27 recent BPS graduates who received the Menino Scholarship. The four-year full-tuition scholarship is offered each year to around two dozen BPS students nominated by their high school principal or guidance counselor. Established in 1973 as the "Boston High School Scholars" program, the Thomas M. Menino Scholarship has become one of the largest scholarship programs for urban high schools in the country.

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Since its inception, the Scholarship Program has awarded close to \$190 million in scholarships to over 2,000 students. Over the next four years, this cohort will receive more than \$6.4 million in scholarship funds from Boston University. We also honored the 58 BU Community Service Award recipients, also a program exclusively for BPS graduates, representing a financial commitment of \$12.2 million from BU for the next four years for these students. I am so happy for these scholars and so are their families, who were beaming with pride at last night's event. And we are all so appreciative of Boston University for supporting our graduates throughout their college careers.

We've had a lot of Back to School events over the past few weeks including our Countdown to Kindergarten K Days. I was able to get to the one in Mattapan last Friday and it brought me so much joy to see our little Kindergartners in their yellow shirts, excited to start the new school year! We still have one more K Day in East Boston on Friday, September 10th.

As a reminder, our pre-K and Kindergarten students start a few days later than the other grades, on Monday September 13th. I also had a lot of fun at the Back to School Celebration hosted by the Salvation Army and TD Garden at the Kroc Center in Dorchester. The 10th annual event resulted in 3,000 free backpacks distributed to families from across the city. I also attended Roxbury's Ready Yourself Back to School Bash last Saturday. There were some fun activities for the kids and our Countdown to Kindergarten staff were on hand for that event distributing backpacks. We are so thankful to our Bolling neighbors, Dudley Cafe, for hosting this annual event. And thank you to Mayor Janey, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, Senator Chang-Diaz, Councilor Campbell and our Countdown Team for bringing the joy to the Square! I know many of our schools have had their own celebrations as we prepare to welcome our students back to school. I want to thank all of our staff and the many, many community partners who help us prepare our students and families for the new year and, most importantly, get them excited to go back to school!

Many of these celebrations have featured pop-up vaccine clinics as we continue our citywide efforts to get as many members of our community vaccinated as possible. I was able to stop by the clinic at BINcA last week and it was great to see the community come out in support of this public health initiative. There was food, music, raffles, and information for families, including immigration legalization counseling and booths for community health partners to explain the safety of the vaccine. I chatted with members of ACEDONE and members of the Haitian community about vaccine hesitancy and how events like the clinic at BINcA help reinforce that vaccines are safe and are our most effective tool to combat the pandemic. Our amazing BINcA students canvassed the neighborhood surrounding the school in the week before the event to encourage people to come out and get vaccinated. This is an all-hands-on-deck effort and I'm so thankful for our health partners, including Boston Medical Center and CIC Health for all their support with our mitigation strategies.

Check out [bostonpublicschools.org/calendar](https://bostonpublicschools.org/calendar) for dates, times, and locations of upcoming clinics and other important information for families.

My team and I will provide an update on our Back to School planning shortly, but before I end my report I'd like to briefly reiterate our masking and testing policies for the 2021-22 school year. All BPS students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear masks while inside school buildings, during yellow bus transportation, and when attending school or

watching athletic events when they return to school in September. A face mask that covers the nose and mouth must be worn. You'll see [here](#) the guidelines on acceptable masks, courtesy of the CDC. Face masks will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- while outside

A student's face mask is to be provided by the student's family and staff members are responsible for providing their face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face coverings for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one. If students are in violation of this policy, the school leader will consult with the parents/guardians, Health Services, and/or the Office of Special Education in order to ensure compliance and the student code of conduct will be applied if appropriate to the situation. Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of Boston Public Schools policies. Visitors permitted in school buildings who are in violation of this policy will be provided an acceptable mask to wear while in the school or other BPS facility. Visitors who refuse to wear a mask or who remove the mask during their visit will be asked to leave the premises. As for testing, all students will have access to free and voluntary COVID-19 Pool Testing. Regardless of vaccination status, we encourage everyone to participate. Parents must consent to this testing and we sent out the consent forms last week. To date, we have received over 10,000 affirmative consent forms so far. Testing is such an important tool to prevent the spread of COVID and we are encouraging all parents to provide this consent so that we can all remain healthy and safe.

Chief Martinez is with us tonight and I am so grateful for his partnership over the past 19 months. We could not have done it without his guidance and support. He will bring us through our most recent Covid report and he will also speak to contingency decision making concerning- the hopefully- unlikelihood of having to close a classroom or school.

Lastly, I wanted to provide an update on our search to find Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers (EMK) a new space. Over the past few weeks, in partnership with the school leader, we have toured multiple buildings at a variety of locations around the city. In addition to seeing many potential options at academic institutions and non-profits, my team has made over 50 calls to different locations to see if they have space available. EMK leadership has agreed that moving to the former Endicott School building is the best option for now so we can start the school year. My team is committed to following through on some of the leads we have now. I will continue to keep the school community and the committee informed on our progress.

That is my Superintendent's Report for this evening.

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Mr. O'Neill noted that the district's masking policy is aligned with the City of Boston's indoor masking policy and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)'s requirements for masking in schools. He expressed appreciation for the Superintendent's diligence seeking an alternative site for EMK and asked about difficulties with the process. The Superintendent explained that she and her team had looked at many sites and are working with a

realtor to find suitable space in the Longwood Medical Area (LMA). She said that the Endicott building is empty and is being prepared for temporary use. She added that the district will continue to seek more appropriate space. Mr. O'Neill encouraged people to offer suggestions for potential locations. The Superintendent said that the district could relocate the school from the Endicott building during the school year if an appropriate space is found.

Ms. Luo asked if parental permission is required for student COVID testing. Djenny Lobo Lopes, Senior Director of Health Services, confirmed that parental consent is required. She explained that the test involves a shallow nasal swab.

Ms. Lopera asked about health and safety protocols and strategies. The Superintendent said that the deadline for BPS staff to confirm their vaccination status is September 20th, after which time the district will have more data on both staff and student vaccination rates. She explained that BPS is working to increase the number of families who opt-in to weekly COVID pool testing by communicating with families via text reminders, the BPS Weekly Newsletter, family liaisons and teachers.

Dr. Coleman asked what contributed to the increase in hiring teachers of color. The Superintendent spoke about the advantages of people of color teaching students of color. She said that BPS is committed to diversifying its workforce to better represent the racial and linguistic background of its student body. She said she moved the Office of Recruitment, Cultivation and Diversity Programs to the Division of Equity, Strategy & Opportunity Gaps and increased funding. School leaders are reflecting on their hiring practices and hiring committees are more diverse. BPS is also offering affinity groups to increase staff support.

Dr. Coleman asked about the district's partnerships for recruitment and cultivation efforts. Chief Equity and Strategy Officer Dr. Charles Grandson cited Boston University/Wheelock School of Education as a valuable partner, as well as Boston College's Donovan Urban Teaching Scholars Program. The Superintendent said that her team will provide a BPS hiring update to the Committee in October.

Ms. Polanco Garcia asked if there is a mask requirement for special education students. The Superintendent said that some students may qualify for a medical exemption, adding that it will need to be documented in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Mr. Robinson praised the district for hosting a series of welcoming Countdown to Kindergarten events. She asked if classrooms will be well equipped. The Superintendent said that teachers will feel well supported by ESSER funding. She also thanked partners including Cradles to Crayons and the Salvation Army for providing school supplies for families. She encouraged families in need of supplies to speak with their child's teacher or school leader for assistance. The Superintendent clarified that the state requires parents and guardians to opt-in their child for COVID testing, rather than opt-out.

***Approved*** - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent's Report.

## REPORT

***Preparing for School Year 2021-2022*** - The Superintendent and her team presented an update on the district's plans to prepare for the 2021-22 School Year. The Superintendent was joined by Marty Martinez; Chief of Health and Human Services for the City of Boston; Djenny Lobo Lopes, Senior Director of Health Services; Drew Echelson, Deputy Superintendent of Academics; Jon Barrows, Director of Human Resources; Monica Roberts, BPS Chief of Student, Family and Community Advancement; Laura Benavidez, BPS Executive Director of Food and Nutrition Services; Brian Forde, Executive Director, Facilities Department; Delavern Stanislaus, BPS Transportation Director; and Mark Racine, BPS Chief Information Officer.

Boston Covid-19 Metrics (as of August 24, 2021):

- 3,234 Covid-19 tests performed (7-day moving average)
- Boston's Covid-19 positivity rate is 3.6 %
- 131 adult COVID-19 patients in Boston hospitals
- 69.5% of Boston residents have received at least one vaccination dose
- 50% of residents in every neighborhood have received at least one vaccination dose
- More than 60% of Boston residents ages 12 to 15 have received at least one dose
- For more information, visit [BPHC.org](http://BPHC.org)

Attendance:

- Return to pre-COVID attendance reporting
  - Students must be in school every day
  - Note required for an excused absence
  - Attendance Success Plans in Panorama
- Modified Home and Hospital Process for High Risk Students vulnerable to COVID-19
  - Not for students who may require isolation or quarantine due to COVID-19

Academic Plans:

- Children with medical conditions which prohibit in-person learning for short or long-term (only available in limited cases based on a child's medical condition)
- Children with a confirmed COVID diagnosis
- Academic Recovery
- Creating safe, healthy, & affirming learning environments

The district will offer alternative learning options for students in need. BPS will approve access to online learning for students who meet a very narrow set of criteria defined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and approved by the students' doctor. Students who need to quarantine will have access to the same materials taught in the classroom. BPS Health Services will conduct contact tracing and provide instructions to students and staff who may have been exposed to COVID-19.

BPS will provide immediate investments to best support students and families:

- High-quality core instruction for all students
  - Accelerate learning
  - Focus on engagement and community through relevant materials

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- District-wide professional learning about equitable literacy
- Data-and research-based targeted interventions for students when they need them
  - Universal intervention tools available to all schools in ELA and Math
  - High-quality compensatory services for students with special needs
  - Individualized EL plans based on ELD levels
  - Mentoring and tutoring

BPS is committed to creating safe, healthy and affirming schools and classrooms by:

- Building community within classrooms and throughout the school using Transformative SEL practices (ex. welcoming activities, morning meetings, restorative practices, storytelling, project based learning)
- Fostering joy through opportunities for movement and play as well as arts and physical education
- Building students' knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy to advocate for their health and the health of others through health education
- Attending to staff well-being through adult SEL practices and staff wellness initiatives

#### Hiring

BPS currently has the following vacancies: 69 teachers; 96 bus monitors; 15 custodians; 100 food service; 3 nurses; and 79 paraprofessionals. Sixty percent of teachers and guidance counselors hired identify as educators of color compared to 54% of educator hires at this point last year. 230 teacher and guidance counselor hires are external candidates and 56% of them identify as educators of color, compared to 49% of external hires in the same group last year.

#### Enrollment

As of August 18, 2021, 51,869 students are enrolled for SY21-22. All four Welcome Centers (Dorchester, Roslindale, Roxbury, East Boston) are open for appointments and walk-in services.

#### COVID-19 Screen Testing

Three new updated options are available for students and school based-staff: pooled testing with follow-up testing; testing for students with symptoms; "Test and Stay" (close contact testing). All testing is free, confidential and managed by the Massachusetts DESE's approved vendor CIC Health. Parents must consent in order for their student to participate. BPS strongly encourages participation. Consent forms were sent digitally and paper forms are available at <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/8754>.

Vaccines are the most powerful tool available to protect from COVID-19. Students 12+ are eligible for a Pfizer Vaccine. In Partnership with Boston Medical Center, BPS is offering vaccine clinics at many schools.

#### Food & Nutrition Services

##### Planning

- Finalizing plans with School Leaders to determine the best operational meal plan
- Back to School Training for Staff on:
  - Safety protocols
  - Emergency meal service plans
  - Menus and supply chain issues



### Challenges

- Procurement
  - Grocery contract status
  - Update on produce contract
- Staffing
  - Vacancy rate is at 24.14%
    - 86.5% in new My Way Cafe schools

### Eating Protocols for All Students (K0-12)

- Students will be permitted to remove their masks only while eating and shall put them back on when finished eating, to leave the table area or in general when walking through the cafeteria.
- When eating indoors, windows/doors should be at least slightly opened to improve air circulation.
- Lunch can occur in cafeterias, outdoor spaces, or classrooms following CDC guidance and in line with a school's established plan with Food and Nutrition Services.

### Grades K0-6 Students

- Students will be seated at assigned spots with their classmates.
- Lunch monitors will work with teachers and administrators to establish and maintain assigned seating
- Outdoor spaces may be utilized for snack time and/or lunch to increase spacing

### Grades 7-12 Students:

- We are working with School Leaders to continue to understand how to best implement lunchtime safety precautions based on the number of students, the limitations of each facility and other factors.

### Facilities

#### Personal Protective Equipment & Sanitation

- PPE still on track for first delivery to be completed before schools reopen
- Sanitation stations will be provided with at least 2 per classroom and in common areas.
- Summer cleaning is on track to be completed for students' return.

#### Air Quality & Ventilation

- 1,835 Indoor Air quality (IAQ) sensors have been installed across 48 schools as of 8/25/21
- 3,242 filters in Air Purifiers have been changed in 98 schools as of 8/25/21
- Additional Fans and Air Purifiers are available upon request for all schools.
- Air conditioning installation is scheduled to start this fall.

### Transportation

#### Bus Health and Safety Protocols:

- Rider, driver, and monitor safety is our first priority
- All students and staff will be required to wear masks on buses this fall. Students with approved exceptions will be accommodated.
- Buses will be disinfected once per day

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- Per DESE guidelines, every other window will be opened 2 inches for air exchange.

### Anticipated Challenges

- Traffic Delays: Avoidance of public transit is contributing to new traffic patterns and unusually high traffic volume
- Drivers CBA currently in negotiations
- We continue to hire bus monitors, but we are short of our goal of 150 new hires
- Late transfer of student assignment data
  - Less efficient routing and scheduling
  - Higher than usual number of drivers required to complete same work
  - Hiring and training will need to continue into the fall

### Student and Family Support

- Families can track their student's bus using Where's My School Bus at <https://schoolbus.bostonpublicschools.org/>
- If families have any questions or need support with Transportation, they can call the BPS hotline at 617-635-9520.

### Routing and Bus Assignments

- Buses are routed and assigned, and bus assignments have been sent by email and mail (Aug. 25)
- Drivers will complete practice runs before school starts

### MBTA Passes

- MBTA passes for eligible students in grades 7-12 will be available for pick up by students at their school on the first day.

### Bus Monitors

- Bus monitors will be provided to all students who require them, in accordance with student IEPs.
- BPS continues to actively hire bus monitors; currently short of the goal of 150 new hires and predict some fall staffing issues.

### Transdev

- Summer bus maintenance is ongoing and on-track for reopening. With support from City Hall, BPS is in negotiations with Drivers' Union on fall school reopening and for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement.

### Core COVID Mitigation Strategies

- Testing
- Vaccines
- Masks
- Ventilation

Ms. Lopera requested data on the vaccination rate for BPS staff. Mr. Martinez said that the City is requiring staff to be vaccinated or comply with weekly testing. The Superintendent said that BPS staff have until September 20, 2021 to verify their vaccination status.

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Ms. Robinson asked if more 12-17 year-old students are being vaccinated now that the Pfizer vaccine has been approved. Chief Martinez said that as the new school year gets closer, more school aged children are getting vaccinated.

Chief Martinez clarified for Mr. O'Neill that 69.5% of all Boston residents have received at least one dose of the vaccine. He said that the state's target of achieving an 80% vaccination rate in school buildings is potentially achievable.

Ms. Luo asked about the timeline for the installation of air conditioners. Mr. Forde said that ACs are being delivered and BPS has issued an RFP for installation services. Some schools will require electrical upgrades to support the ACs. Chief Alvarez agreed to provide an update in the fall. Ms. Luo asked about plans for outdoor eating. The Superintendent said that her team is looking to provide schools with tents for outdoor eating. Mr. Racine confirmed for Ms. Luo that students are allowed to bring personal devices to school, noting that some applications are connected to BPS devices.

Ms. Lopera expressed concern about attendance due to the lack of remote learning options for families. She encouraged BPS to track and share disaggregated attendance data. She asked about the district's strategies to combat chronic absenteeism. Brian Marques, senior director of Opportunity Youth, said that BPS is focused on relationship building with students and families and offering support. School leaders can conduct virtual or in-person home visits and offer resources to families. BPS is also conducting a door-knocking campaign to connect with students. MS. Lopera emphasized the importance of having families and guardians opt-in to COVID pool testing and test and stay testing. Ms. Lobo Lopes reviewed protocols for COVID testing and quarantining. Ms. Lopera asked about plans to mitigate the anticipated school bus driver shortage. Ms. Stanislaus said that BPS does not yet know how many drivers are still needed but pledged that BPS will communicate the impact with families within the next day or two.

Mr. DeAraujo suggested that BPS consider making the COVID vaccine a requirement for students. He expressed concern with DESE's requirement for families to opt-in to pool testing, saying the process should be more family friendly. Dr. Lopes said her team will work to improve communication with families but cannot make changes to the form itself. Speaking about enrollment, Ms. Roberts said that, consistent with national trends for large urban school districts, BPS has not seen large enrollment numbers from out of state or out of the country since the start of the pandemic.

Mr. O'Neill spoke about the challenges of uncertainty among families and nationwide staffing shortages. He encouraged brainstorming and called for creative solutions. Ms. Stanislaus spoke about partnering with the Boston Police Department and communicating with families to identify transportation efficiencies.

Ms. Polanco Garcia said she has heard concerns from families about the Delta variant, citing the importance of social-emotional support. She asked for clarity about the hiring of counselors. The Superintendent said that all high schools have counselors and every school now has a full-time social worker. She agreed to follow up with the specific number of counselors in elementary and schools.

Mr. Tran requested that hiring information be presented to the Committee including the percentage of hires who have completed licensure and who are on waivers. The Superintendent said that data will be part of her October hiring presentation.

Mr. Robinson asked if BPS will be increasing the number of licensed health educators. The Superintendent said that the district is working towards quality health guarantee, adding that health education is a MassCore requirement. Ms. Robinson asked about ventilation in schools. Ms. Alvarez said that every school is being prepared for ventilation improvements. Mr. DePina expressed confidence that ventilation at schools will be sufficient, saying that the BPS has taken steps above and beyond what's required. Every school will have fans and air purifiers and windows will be open. Ms. Robinson encouraged people to apply for these critical positions with BPS. She asked the Superintendent to comment about national concerns about youth violence. The Superintendent said that her team is working on safety prevention measures.

## GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Jorge Lluberes, student, Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers (EMK), Allston resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Yolanda Oliveira, EMK student, Brighton resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Erinayo Omisore, EMK student, Mattapan resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Atticus Lim, Piedmont High School student, Piedmont, CA resident, testified regarding resources for the prevention of traumatic brain injuries.
- Jihad Wallace, EMK alumni, Dorchester resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Ymaris Matias, Orchard Gardens K-8 School parent, South End resident, testified regarding health and safety concerns related to in-person learning.
- Sughey Scannell, Hurley K-8 School parent, Roslindale resident, testified regarding health and safety concerns related to in-person learning.
- Sonia Medina, Orchard Gardens K-8 parent, South End resident, testified in favor of providing families with a virtual learning option for the upcoming school year.
- Mike Heichman, Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA) member, Dorchester resident, testified regarding the 2021-2022 School Year.
- Sean Cray, EMK teacher, Roxbury resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Edith Bazile, advocate, Dorchester resident, testified regarding special education and BuildBPS.
- Ruby Reyes, BEJA executive director, Dorchester resident, testified regarding school reopening.
- LaTonia Pettie-Simpkins, EMK teacher, Dorchester resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Gabe Avruch, EMK teacher, Brookline resident, testified regarding concerns about the

location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.

- Christina Biggins, EMK parent, Charlestown resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- John Mudd, advocate, Cambridge resident, testified regarding ESSER fund priorities and guidance.
- Angela Cappucci, EMK teacher, Stoneham resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Courtney Feeley Karp, Henderson Inclusion School parent, Roslindale resident, testified in favor of providing families with a virtual learning option for the upcoming school year.
- Roy Karp, Henderson Inclusion School parent, Roslindale resident, testified in favor of providing families with a virtual learning option for the upcoming school year.
- Alicia Piedalue, Eliot K-8 parent, Charlestown resident, testified about the need for more high quality high school options that include inclusion programming.
- Alexander Fatato, EMK teacher, Roxbury resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Francis Duncan, EMK teacher, Back Bay resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Peter Kovach, EMK teacher, Quincy resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Elizabeth Barron, EMK teachers, West Roxbury resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.
- Brittany Hampton, Eliot K-8 parent, Charlestown resident, testified in favor of strong and equitable high school options.
- Janet Guarino, Boston Teachers Union Pilot School parent, Roslindale resident, testified in favor of providing families with a virtual learning option for the upcoming school year.
- Damian Aufiero, EMK teacher, Canton resident, testified regarding concerns about the location of a school building for 11th and 12th graders for School Year 2021-2022.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

Mr. O'Neill spoke about the tremendous value Boston receives as a member of the Council of Great City Schools, noting that Boston will host the Council's annual fall conference in 2025. Dr. Coleman praised the Council's focus on education equity and encouraged members to attend their events. Ms. Robinson spoke highly about her involvement with the Council attending weekly meetings.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved the payment of membership dues to the Council of Great City Schools for School Year 2021-22 in the amount of \$40,868.

**Approved** - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$77,941,811.

Mr. O'Neill thanked Mr. DeAraujo for his willingness to take on this role of co-chair of the English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force.

*Approved* - On roll call, the Boston School Committee unanimously approved the appointment of Ernani DeAraujo to serve as co-chair of the Committee's ELL Task Force.

Mr. DeAraujo thanked ELL Task Force co-chair Suzanne Lee and coordinator Jen Douglas for their support. He said that is looking forward to advancing important issues.

## REPORTS

***Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) Reform Update*** - Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) members Dorian Levy and Tiffany Luo presented an update on BSAC's reform efforts. The students were supported by Interim Chief of Student Support Neva Coakley Grice.

The Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) is a body of selected high school student representatives from across the Boston Public Schools (BPS). Student leaders represent their respective high schools, serving as the primary vehicle for student voice and engagement within the district. The council works to amplify student voices across the city. The Council has three main purposes: Environmental Justice; Student Rights and Student Voice; and School Climate & Culture Improvement. BSAC works to bring students from all over the district to address these issues.

BSAC recently engaged with stakeholders to draft new bylaws with an aim to:

- Amplify youth voice by increasing youth decision-making power.
- Increase student representation on BSAC particularly for historically marginalized populations, including students who are Black, Latinx, Asian, Native American, English learners and/or from low-income families, as well as students with disabilities.
- Construct an equal partnership with adults: co-planning, co-executing and sharing responsibility for outcomes.
- Achieve equal representation of high schools

The new bylaws will:

- Ensure that the Council is youth-led
- Ensure more engagement with families by giving them quarterly updates on BSAC members and activities and inviting them to BSAC events
- Provide members with leadership opportunities, public speaking training and opportunities, college & career support, health & wellness workshops, and skills to be successful beyond high school.
- Ensure BSAC will accurately represent both schools, the district, and the city if needed
- Gather intentional feedback from every school.
- Add an application to join the council to further advance equity.

To assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the new bylaws, student engagement coordinator and staff support will conduct one-on-one interviews; feedback forms; and quarterly reviews; mid-year; and end of the year reports.

Ms. Luo read a statement of appreciation from Boston School Committee representative and BSAC member Xyra Mercer.

Ms. Lopera thanked the students for their work and spoke about the importance of student voice.

Mr. O'Neill praised the students' thoughtful approach to the work and for setting a positive example for conflict resolution within their group. Ms. Robinson praised BSAC for modeling cooperative behavior.

***FY 22 Budget: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funding Update*** - The 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. Chief of Accountability Eva Mitchell and Chief of Finance Nate Kuder presented the district's plan for leveraging the ESSER II funds awarded to BPS. The district's application for \$123 million dollars in federal relief funding has been formally approved for BPS. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) informed BPS on August 31 that the district's ESSER II funding request can be spent immediately.

BPS is currently in the final stages of finalizing its ESSER II plan that the Superintendent released on July 8, 2021 for public comment. The district's ESSER II plan is grounded in the community-driven, five-year BPS Strategic Plan. BPS leveraged additional feedback received from engagements with over 1500 stakeholders, including 35 sessions with families and the broader BPS community, six meetings of the ESSER Commission, and four meetings of the Student Commission to continue to shape the ESSER Fund strategy.

The desired outcome of the district's ESSER Fund strategy is to recover from pandemic losses - academic, social emotional, and physical health-related - in ways that accelerate learning and close opportunity gaps, while reimagining BPS systems and practices in ways that set the stage for equity and excellence for all students in the longer term.

Dr. Coleman requested that the district create a logic model to help track the impact of the ESSER investments. He spoke about the importance of a cycle of continuous improvement. The Superintendent said that the district will make amendments to the plan if needed.

Mr. DeAraujo thanked the City of Boston for contributing \$23 million of CARES Act funding. He spoke about the importance of targeting resources towards high needs populations as well as the value of native language instruction. Mr. Echelson spoke about the importance of ensuring that native language instruction is embedded in content and creating the central office infrastructure to support English learners with disabilities.

Ms. Lopera echoed the importance of native language instruction and spoke about the need for before and after school programs. The Superintendent said that the district will strive to provide before and after school programs. Ms. Roberts spoke about some of the challenges the district is facing to provide that programming in light of health and safety concerns related to the pandemic and how BPS is working with partners to address those challenges in a sustainable manner.

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**Zoom**  
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Mr. O'Neill cautioned against spending one-time funding on new positions that cannot be sustained financially. The presenters confirmed for Mr. O'Neill that all BPS schools are receiving ESSER II funding. Mr. O'Neill requested that the Committee receive a list of ESSER funding appropriations by school. He encouraged the Superintendent and her team to seize this opportunity to reimagine schools. He said that the federal government will be watching districts closely looking for results.

Ms. Robinson asked about the impact the funds will have at the school level and opportunities to share best practices. Ms. Mitchell spoke about professional learning that the district provides for school leaders and how plans developed by instructional leadership teams are reviewed by school site councils and equity roundtables. Ms. Robinson suggested that BPS consider creating an internal program similar to Donors Choose that would provide teachers with choices. The Superintendent spoke about the need to increase equity in school fundraising, noting that the Boston Education Development Fund recently hired a new executive director. She said that teachers and school leaders should be having conversations about classroom needs and how best to support student recovery.

The Committee is scheduled to vote to receive the ESSER funds on September 22.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS**

None.


**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURN**

At approximately 11 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan  
Executive Secretary