



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

September 9, 2015

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 6 p.m. on September 9, 2015 at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, second floor, Roxbury, Massachusetts.

For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O’Neill; Vice-Chair Dr. Hardin Coleman; Meg Campbell; Michael Loconto; Jeri Robinson; Regina Robinson; and student representative Savina Tapia.

School Committee Member Absent: Dr. Miren Uriarte.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

School Committee Meeting Minutes: July 15, 2015; and the executive session minutes of April 27, 2011, May 22, 2013, May 28, 2013, December 4, 2013, April 30, 2014, December 3, 2014, December 10, 2014, March 3, 2015, and March 11, 2015.

Grants for Approval Totaling \$103,111,790.

- CBHM Research and Data Grant - \$180,000.
- Early Intervention Literacy - \$47,059.
- English for New Bostonians - \$25,000.
- Expanded Learning Time – Dever - \$418,400.
- Expanded Learning Time – Young Achievers - \$401,600.
- Implemented Expanded Learning Time - \$1,053,722.
- Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp (JROTC) - \$870,000.
- McKinney Homeless - \$60,000.
- Quality Full Day Kindergarten - \$1,801,607.
- School Lunch - \$36,720,000.
- School Redesign Grant – Channing & Winthrop - \$832,030.
- School Redesign Grant – Mattahunt & English High - \$1,233,262.

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- School Redesign Grant – Grew & Dorchester Academy - \$727,339.
- SPED 94-142 Entitlement - \$ 17,752,254.
- Summer Food Program - \$1,616,987.
- Title I District-wide - \$31,014,575
- Title IIA - \$5,802,607
- Title III - \$2,555,348.

Memo from Michael O’Neill, Chair and Dr. Hardin Coleman, Vice Chair to Boston School Committee dated September 9, 2015 re: Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force Recommended Membership

Back to School Presentation: Enhancing Transportation Services, Enrollment Services, Facilities Summer Work, and the Off-Cycle Facilities Master Plan

Approval of Admissions Policy at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. O’Neill led the pledge of allegiance and called the meeting to order. He then welcomed Savina Tapia as the new student representative to the School Committee. Ms. Tapia is a senior at Boston Latin Academy and an active member of the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC).

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the July 15, 2015 School Committee meeting, as well as the following executive session minutes: April 27, 2011, May 22, 2013, May 28, 2013, December 4, 2013, April 30, 2014, December 3, 2014, December 10, 2014, March 3, 2015, and March 11, 2015.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

The start of the new school year has been successful despite unusually hot temperatures. The Superintendent thanked school leaders, teachers and staff for helping to keep students safe, hydrated and focused on learning.

Mayor Walsh, Mr. O’Neill, Boston Teachers Union President Richard Stutman and the Superintendent joined a team of more than 400 city employees who greeted students and handed out pencils at schools across the district on the first day of school. The Superintendent also personally visited with yellow bus drivers at BPS bus yards.

The district has incorporated 86 propane-fueled buses into its fleet, most of which are serving students in wheelchairs.

The district is providing students with more nutritious food options, such as whole grains and fresh fruit; the Superintendent thanked the Department of Food and Nutrition Services for

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providing samples at the Committee meeting. The Superintendent recently visited the Culinary Innovation Lab at Fenway High School where chefs are working with BPS staff to develop, test and refine school meals that are healthy and appetizing. Fenway High School is now situated at a newly renovated building on Alleghany Street in Roxbury.

This weekend, Mayor Walsh will host a ribbon cutting ceremony at the newly renovated athletic fields at the West Roxbury Education Complex.

The Superintendent and his leadership team are working to build instructional leadership teams at schools as a way to raise student achievement.

Ms. Campbell encouraged the district to increase student participation in the meals program.

Mr. Loconto thanked the Dudley Street Neighborhood Association for greeting BPS students on the first day of school.

Mr. O'Neill praised the district for taking precautions against the extreme heat during the first days of school, calling it another example of the "Culture of We" in BPS.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Carolyn Kain, chair, Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac), testified regarding special education issues.

John St. Amand, vice-chair, SpedPac, testified regarding special education issues.

Barbara Rosa, BPS parent and co-chair, Citywide Parent Council, testified regarding the impact of weekly early dismissals.

Kenneth Hawkes, BPS parent, testified regarding safety issues at Boston Latin and the Henderson K-12 Inclusion School.

ACTION ITEMS

Ms. Campbell requested data detailing the percentage of Title I funding that is allocated to schools. Mr. O'Neill provided a brief update on Congressional actions that will impact federal education funding.

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent grants for approval totaling \$103,111,790.

Approved – Following a brief discussion, the Committee unanimously approved, by roll call, the membership of the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force.

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REPORTS

Back to School Presentation: Enhancing Transportation Services, Enrollment Services, Facilities Summer Work, and the Off-Cycle Facilities Master Plan – Assistant Superintendent of Operations Kim Rice presented an update on a variety of operational issues as BPS kicks off a new school year. BPS continues to partner with the MBTA and Boston Police to monitor the implementation of seventh graders now riding the MBTA instead of taking yellow buses. BPS is now using environmentally friendly propane buses for all wheelchair students. Ms. Rice explained that software glitches caused delays with student assignment notifications earlier this year but noted that many students who are waitlisted have school assignments. Ms. Rice introduced the district’s new Ombudsperson Carolyn MacNeil. BPS completed \$16 million in facilities projects this summer at schools across the district. Later this fall, the Superintendent will present the Committee with facilities recommendations for Another Course to College and the Margarita Muñiz Academy.

Committee members asked questions about middle school transportation waivers, the availability of K-1 seats, the role of the Ombudsperson, family engagement and communication, alternative transportation and pending applications with the Massachusetts School Building Authority, all of which were answered by Ms. Rice and the Superintendent. Responding to questioning from Mr. O’Neill, Ms. Rice explained that glitches with a new software system caused delays with student assignment notifications earlier this year, a problem she does not foresee repeating itself.

Ms. Campbell requested that school demand data be posted on the BPS website. She also requested that the Committee engage in a discussion about the future location of the Muñiz Academy. Dr. Coleman requested a report presentation in the near future on the Home-Based school choice plan, which the Superintendent agreed to provide.

Proposed Admissions Policy at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School – Madison Park Technical Vocational High School (MPTVHS) Executive Director Kevin McKaskill and MPTVHS Grants Manager Fran Smith presented a proposal for the school’s revised admissions policy. State law requires all vocational technical schools to have a state and district-approved admissions policy. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has approved the proposed policy, which calls for an admissions team to review applicants using a rating system based on the following criteria: academic achievement, attendance, conduct and a counselor’s recommendation.

Several Committee members cautioned that the proposed policy could unintentionally create barriers or discourage students from applying to MPTVHS. Mr. O’Neill and Ms. Campbell specifically expressed concern about the policy’s reliance on student discipline history and recommendations from guidance counselors. Ms. Geri Robinson requested graduation data on students who selected MPTVHS as their first choice. The Superintendent reaffirmed his commitment to access and equity for all students and said district leaders would make revisions and return to the Committee with a new draft in the near future.

School Committee Meeting
Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building
School Committee Chamber

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PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Boston City Councilor Tito Jackson testified regarding the proposed admission policy for Madison Park Technical Vocational High School.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. O'Neill congratulated Ms. Campbell on the grand opening of the Codman Academy Charter School's new K-8 building. Ms. Campbell serves as the school's executive director.

ADJOURN

At 8:50 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary