



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

January 11, 2023

The Boston School Committee held a virtual meeting on January 11, 2023 at 5 p.m. on Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members: Chairperson Jeri Robinson; Vice Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Dr. Stephen Alkins; Brandon Cardet-Hernandez; Lorena Lopera; Rafaela Polanco Garcia; Quoc Tran; and Student Representative Diego Mehta.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

Meeting Minutes: December 14, 2022 and January 4, 2023

Grants for Approval Totaling \$403,466

Memo re: Request to Approve Tentative Agreement between the School Committee and United Steelworkers, Local 2936 (Bus Monitors), January 9, 2023

Bus Monitors Memorandum of Agreement, Effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022

Bus Monitors Memorandum of Agreement, Effective July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025

Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) Transportation Review Report

CGCS Transportation Review Memo

CGCS Transportation Review PowerPoint Presentation

CALL TO ORDER

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Chairperson Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez and Mr. Mehta were absent at roll call but later joined the meeting at 6 p.m. All other members were present.

Ms. Robinson announced that the Committee would immediately adjourn to an executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the United Steelworkers on behalf of Local 2936 (Bus Monitors). To have this discussion in an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the Committee's bargaining position. She said that the Committee would return to public session at 6 p.m.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a motion to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the United Steelworkers on behalf of Local 2936 (Bus Monitors).

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Robinson reconvened the meeting in public session at approximately 6:03 p.m. All members were present. Ms. Robinson announced that the Committee had just returned from an executive session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the United Steelworkers on behalf of Local 2936 (Bus Monitors).

Ms. Robinson said that tonight's meeting was being streamed live on Zoom. It will be rebroadcast on Boston City TV. It will also be posted at bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee and on YouTube. She announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cabo Verdean, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin and American Sign Language (ASL) and provided instructions on how to access simultaneous interpretation by changing the Zoom channel. Translated meeting documents were posted at www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee prior to the start of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approved – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the December 14, 2022 School Committee meeting and January 4, 2023 annual organizational meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

As prepared for delivery.

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Thank you Madam Chair. Happy New Year everyone! Before I begin my report, I want to acknowledge and follow up on the model that the team is working on to add more resources to address the safety and student support needs we are seeing in schools across the district. While we are happy to read reports that violent incidents are down across the city, we also realize that any amount of violence in our communities affects our students and families. In recognizing and responding to this area of need shown in our schools, we realize that we need to continue to bolster our internal resources to provide safe, restorative and trauma-informed care for our students and by extension, our families.

To address this, and based on feedback we have received, a team was created by the Office of Student Support and Safety Services in partnership with Operations. This cross functional team includes representatives from the Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps, Division of Student Supports, Division of Schools, Office of Human Capital, BPS Labor Relations, BPS Finance, Office of Safety Services, and BPS Intergovernmental Relations.

One of the first tasks of this team was to review the Community Connection positions and to take them through a process so that we can receive input from members of the BPS community. We've already held a robust discussion during one of the latest Community Equity Roundtable. We look forward to receiving additional feedback on these roles as we continue to explore new ways to engage our young people and keep them safe.

The specific outcomes of the cross-functional team are to:

- Support our students and families from a public health and wellness lens, including addressing food insecurity, providing resources for stable housing, mental health support, and economic opportunity.
- Identify BPS staff who can work beyond the school day in order to be more visible in the community; make more authentic connections with students, families, community based organizations, and attend neighborhood specific meetings;
- And to keep school based staff informed of community based opportunities, and activities for our students, families, and staff as well as challenges that may be occurring in communities that impact student learning or safety.

We are currently seeking feedback through a community engagement process which is helping us to create a strategy that responds with the resources and tools necessary to address the deep issues around trauma with the goal of providing healing spaces for our young people. We thank those who have already provided feedback and look forward to hearing from others as we continue the process. Using the Racial Equity Planning Tool, we have heard from young people, different education advocacy groups, parents, along with others including a meeting with the faith based community scheduled for next week.

We have received feedback that supports our approach and framing of this work.

Given the height of travel and gatherings amid the spread of new COVID-19 variants, the flu, and other respiratory viral illnesses, we updated our health protocols for after winter break to

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maximize our ability to keep students healthy and minimize staff absences during this high-risk period. On Wednesday, January 4th, all BPS schools adopted temporary masking until this coming Friday- a total of eight school days. This is our ask and expectation of students and staff, not a mandate.

I want to thank our students, staff and families for their cooperation in meeting our masking expectations. I've been out to several schools since the return from break and it's been great to see so many students and staff masking during this heightened risk period. During this same time last school year, BPS experienced our largest COVID-19 surge, which resulted in significant staffing shortages that made it nearly impossible to keep all schools open—some days with 1,200 staff members and 8,500 students absent throughout the first two weeks of January 2022. This year, we've seen staff absences range from a high of approximately 500 on January 6th to a low of about 200 on January 9th with student absences ranging from a high of 8,700 on January 4th to a low of 5,200 by January 10th. This data shows us that our protocols are working. Masking is one tool, but it's also the weekly rapid tests we've provided students and staff, ensuring air purifiers are in every classroom, wiping down high touch surfaces, regular hand washing, and hosting vaccine clinics at all our schools, of which we have vaccinated over 2,500 BPS students staff and families.

In anticipation of any staffing shortages, our Schools division worked on a plan to have central staff ready to deploy to schools if there was a need for extra support. About 200 central staff were at the ready and a bench of 20-25 people were assigned to each region. The teamwork here was exactly what I expected from all our employees. We're here to serve our students—sometimes that means we literally jump in and help. I am so grateful to the central employees who were able to pause their work and disrupted their daily routines to ensure our students continued their learning. We will continue to monitor the numbers, but with staffing absences back to mostly normal numbers, we anticipate ending central staff support next week. Schools who do have any concerns will work with their School Superintendent for any coverage needs. The good news is that we have a system now in place to launch in a moment's notice if we find our staff absences in an upward trend. We also will continue to meet daily with the Boston Public Health Commission and our health services team to review the data and our protocols. I want to again thank the BPS community— students, families, staff and community partners— these past few years have been very challenging and disruptive and we have together as a community to work on this issue..

School Choice has opened and we are on day six of registration. I am happy to report that we are up in our numbers. As of the end of the day yesterday, 912 families have registered for school, which is an increase from last year at this time when 451 families registered. Virtual registration visits have been very popular with prospective parents, cutting down on live appointment wait times and crowds in centers. We have ads on MBTA trains and buses and have PSAs running in Spanish and other languages to promote this year's School Choice. Registration for Round 1 runs through February 3 and I will continue to keep you updated on the progress and any trends we are seeing.

Chef and restaurant owner Joanne Chang came to Madison Park Vocational High School to share her story about her food business with BPS students. She owns Flour Bakery. We were proud to

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have our very own Boston Arts Academy students perform the National Anthem at the inauguration for Governor Elect Maura Healey.

I am happy to share that thirteen Boston Public Schools (BPS) students have been awarded four-year, full-tuition merit-based scholarships by the Posse Foundation, totaling \$2.5 million. The 13 BPS seniors are among 51 Boston-area students who will be attending Bryn Mawr College, Bucknell University, Centre College, Rutgers University, and Union College.

I want to shout out Hasani Little, a third grader at the P.A. Shaw Elementary School in Dorchester. He was presented with a commendation for the Boston Fire Department for helping to lead his family and neighbors to safety from a house fire that happened in early December.

Tomorrow, we will hold the 40th Annual MLK Celebration at the Jeremiah Burke High School at 6:30 pm. We will highlight the life and legacy of Dr. King through the arts. BPS students will sing, dance and share poetry throughout the program, which will be streamed live through FOX 25, our event media sponsor.

Congratulations to the Boys and Girls Hockey Teams at Boston Latin School and Boston Latin Academy! These teams were a part of the roster that had the opportunity to participate in Frozen Fenway.

We have and continue to make good progress over the last six months on the Systemic Improvement Plan (SIP). I want to applaud the work of Assistant Superintendent of Data Strategy and Implementation Monica Hogan and her team for leading the charge and ensuring that we all work together on this important work.

Later tonight, you will hear another report from the Council on Great City Schools around their findings on transportation. This report was initiated as a requirement of the SIP, and we submitted the report to DESE this afternoon. We are also excited to announce that we are launching a Transportation Advisory Council. This idea originated from our work with parents and advocates over the past several months. This group will serve as a sounding board for transportation issues and help to inform strategy around our practices, and will include students, parents and BPS staff. This group will play a key role in informing our response to the recommendations from the Council of Great City Schools. We will make a formal announcement of this Council along with its membership later this month.

Additionally, I would like to provide a quick update on transportation on-time performance. In December, BPS averaged 93% on-time performance, and in the first week returning from winter break we averaged 91% on-time performance. Historically, the first week back from winter break has been challenging, with a much higher than normal number of driver absences. Although this continued to be a challenge this year, we have seen significant improvements from prior years, as we continue to work with our drivers and Transdev to implement operational changes in the new drivers union contract. For example, on the first day back from winter break this year, we had 43 trips without driver coverage, compared to 140 on the first day back from winter break last year in January of 2022. Although we have a long way to go, we are

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encouraged by this progress and will keep working hard with Transdev and our drivers to meet and exceed our benchmarks.

As we kick off a new year, I want to thank you all for your continued support and partnership. I hit a milestone last week of being in this position for 100 days. I had the pleasure of speaking with Jonathan Narsjo, a senior at the John D. O'Bryant, who interviewed me about my role. You can find the interview on our [BPS Youtube](#) page. He asked me a lot of great questions. As I shared with him, I am hopeful for the road ahead because I get to do this work with you, our staff, students and families and our community.

This concludes my report. I am happy to take questions.

Dr. Alkins requested an update on the district's efforts to partner with Lyft to expand transportation services.. The Superintendent said that following a pause in conversations that was initiated by Lyft, the district is once again in conversations with the rideshare company. She added that she hopes to present an update soon.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked for an update on the district's inclusion expansion work and communication to families.

The Superintendent said that her team is actively working with a cohort of 22 schools who are at a range of readiness with inclusion expansion. She said that next year will be a planning year, followed by thoughtful communication with families.

Ms. Lopera spoke about the challenges that the district's assignment notification timelines pose for families. The Superintendent explained the challenges of making changes with systems that are interconnected, adding that she is in discussions with the Boston Compact about cooperative alignment. She said that the overall goal is to move up timelines. Ms. Lopera asked about programming that the district is planning for February and April vacations. Chief of Family and Community Advancement Denise Snyder said that BPS will be offering Acceleration Academies during both school breaks. She offered to follow up with a list of partner organizations. The Superintendent added that her team is working with partners to put the same intentionality into year-round programming as summer programming.

Ms. Polanco Garcia said that she had heard some concerns from families about 18 proposed Community Connection positions. The Superintendent said that she and her team are engaging with the community and using that feedback to revise the job descriptions. Chief of Student Support Jillian Kelton explained that the district's intent is to create positions that will provide students with wrap-around services. Chief of Safety Services Neva Coakley detailed the engagement process.

Dr. Alkins asked how the district uses feedback from families to improve the registration process. Ms. Snyder spoke about the survey administered by the district.

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Mr. O'Neill urged the district to find ways to shorten the time frame for student assignment notifications across grade levels. The Superintendent agreed, noting that K2 is now in the first registration round. Ms. Snyder said that the exam school admissions criteria, which requires grades from two marking periods, makes it difficult for the district to send invitations sooner.

Ms. Robinson requested an update on before and after school surround care at elementary schools. The Superintendent said that her team is seeking better coordination with non-profit and community organizations to expand the menu of out-of-school time offerings. She agreed to follow up with more information.

Ms. Robinson asked for clarity about 18 proposed Community Connections positions. The Superintendent said that the positions are not currently in the BPS budget, adding that she would be asking for City funding to support the positions whose responsibilities would include working hours beyond the school day. Mr. Cardet-Hernandez spoke about lessons learned about the process.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The following people testified regarding COVID safety:

- Michael Heichman, Dorchester resident, member of the Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA)
- Nancy Lessin, Jamaica Plain resident and member of BPS Families for COVID Safety (FamCOSa)
- Sarah Horsley, Jamaica Plain resident and member of FamCOSa
- Elise Pechter, Jamaica Plain resident and member of FamCOSa
- Ruby Reyes, Dorchester resident and executive director of BEJA
- Cheryl Buckman, South Boston resident and member of FamCOSa

The following people testified regarding concerns about the proposed merger between the Sumner and Philbrick elementary schools:

- Elizabeth Ferrenz, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Lauren Peter, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Mimi Lai, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Justin Viglianti, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Rachel Young, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Rosy Hosking, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Parick Sewell, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Elizabeth Costello, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Katie Mendosa-Hayes, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Allison Friedmann, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent
- Jess Manna, Roslindale resident and Sumner Elementary School parent

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Stacey Kramer, Back Bay resident and John D. O'Bryant School parent, testified about the safety and cleanliness of the school's boys bathrooms.

ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez asked clarifying questions about the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Model (CBHM) grant, which were answered by Whitney Walker, Office of Health and Wellness. The Superintendent offered to have Andria Amador, senior director of the Office of Health and Wellness, follow up with more information about how the district can leverage data to dispatch the resources in a more systematic way.

Mr. Tran requested clarification about questions raised during public comment about racial equity analysis documents requested by Sumner School parents. The Superintendent offered to check with her team. Chair Robinson recommended that Mr. Tran raise the issue later in the meeting under new business.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved grants for approval totaling \$403,466.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a Fiscal Year 2023 Supplemental Appropriation Request to the Boston City Council in the amount of \$703,939 to support two Memoranda of Agreement For Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Period September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2024 between the Administrative Guild, SEIU Local 888 and the Boston School Committee.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a Fiscal Year 2023 Supplemental Appropriation Request to the Boston City Council in the amount of \$1,283,486 to support two Memoranda of Agreement for Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement for the period September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2024 between the Local Union No. 1952, Painters & Allied Trades, District Council No. 35 (Custodians) and the Boston School Committee.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a Fiscal Year 2023 Supplemental Appropriation Request to the Boston City Council in the amount of \$164,448 to support two Memoranda of Agreement For Successor Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Period September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2024 between the New England Police Benevolent Association, Local 160 Boston School Police Patrolmen's Association and the Boston School Committee.

REPORTS

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreements between the Boston School Committee and United Steelworkers Local 2936 (Bus Monitors) - Labor Relations Director Jeremiah Hasson presented highlights of two Memoranda of Agreement, effective July 1, 2020 through June 30,

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2022 and July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2025, between the United Steelworkers Local 2936 (Bus Monitors) and the Boston School Committee.. Local 2936 ratified these agreements on December 17, 2022, with a vote of 126-36.

Highlights:

Duration: MOA #1: July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2022; MOA #2: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2025.

Wage Increases:

9/1/20: 2%

9/1/21: 1.5%

9/1/22: Covid Market Adjustment

9/1/23: 2%

9/1/24: 2%

Covid Market Adjustment:

- Stand-by monitor rate: \$17.50 per hour
- Assigned monitor rate: \$19.00 per hour (Adjusted run rates to \$2 increase per run until it is managerially feasible to transition to hourly pay)
- Training rate: \$17.50 per hour

Reforms:

- Converted the payment system to hourly pay from “run rate.” Union agrees to participate in any time tracking systems as implemented by the District
- Members will be paid a minimum of 1.4 hours, or \$26.60, per shift worked
- Included paid days off during Winter break and the choice between February or April break

Mr. Hasson also presented a supplemental appropriation request in the amount of \$1,079,770 to the Boston City Council to support the costs of these agreements. The Committee is scheduled to take action on the MOAs and supplemental appropriation request on January 18, 2023.

Dr. Alkins spoke about the importance of offering competitive wages in order to attract candidates.

Mr. Tran said that he would like to see more content in terms and conditions of the MOAs beyond the financial aspect of the agreements.

Council of Great City Schools Transportation Review and Recommendations - Dr. Ray Hart, Executive Director, Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), and Willie Burroughs, the Council’s Director of Management Services, summarized the findings and recommendations of the Council’s report on Transportation: “Review of Student Transportation Program of the

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Boston Public Schools.” The report is required as part of the BPS - MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Systemic Improvement Plan (SIP).

The presentation covered some key points and the areas of recommendations from the CGCS.

The recommendations include:

1. Implement a consistent 3-tier bell schedule districtwide.
2. Update policies and procedures and regularly review and update routes to maximize fleet utilization.
3. Continue to use a systematic approach to create and update bus routes and bus stops that are effective and efficient without compromising safety.
4. Identify and fiscally quantify opportunities to reduce transportation costs.
5. Design a Department of Transportation (DoT) strategy for monitoring actual ridership throughout the school year to aggressively identify stops, runs, and routes that could be consolidated or eliminated to increase system wide capacity.
6. Establish cross-collaboration with school systems outside of BPS that receive transportation services to align calendars and schedules to the maximum extent possible.
7. Strengthen internal fiscal and management controls.
8. Create a committee of leaders from DoT and the Office of Special Education (OSE) to confer on issues of mutual concern.
9. Commence a comprehensive review of all routing practices and processes to identify opportunities to improve routing outcomes and route efficiency.
10. Update and fully implement the comprehensive business plan with goals, objectives, benchmarks, performance, accountabilities, and costs that support the district’s strategic plan.
11. Create an effective communications system throughout the DoT organization.
12. Implement a system for tracking progress and measuring outcomes on all initiatives.
13. Hold the next transportation vendor accountable to the key performance indicators in the new IFB that address on-time bus performance to ensure dependable student service.
14. Collaborate with city officials to address any shortfalls in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The recommendations broadly fall into three categories: internal transportation processes and procedures; policy work; and cost controls. The district has begun work in these areas in the past year, and will incorporate the recommendations from the Council of Great City Schools:

- Internal transportation processes and procedures: Although there is a long way to go, the Department of Transportation (DoT) has made significant progress on this front over the past few years. The DoT has weekly working groups throughout the year with the Assignment team, the Office of Special Education, and the Office of Instructional and Information Technology focused on (1) setting and maintaining timelines for collaboration and data-sharing, (2) identifying and problem-solving issues, and (3) making recommendations for improvements. The DoT implemented a Monthly Performance Review process in 2020 with Transdev, the current bus vendor, in order to drive and measure service improvements. Finally, the Invitation for Bids for the next

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transportation vendor contract introduces mechanisms to hold the vendor accountable and align incentives towards student-oriented results. While the current contract has essentially zero financial risk to the vendor, the new IFB ensures that any incoming vendor has “skin in the game” through a mix of performance incentives for improved performance and damages to compensate the district for non-performance. Finally, we are making progress in the area of transportation for athletics and field trips. In collaboration with the Athletics department, we have reviewed our processes, analyzed data on uncovered trips and late cancellations/added work to make targeted improvements, and taken efforts to improve advanced scheduling by sports teams and coaches. Additionally, we continue exploring the feasibility of alternative solutions (e.g. purchasing/leasing vans) to further improve athletics and field trips transportation.

- **Policy work:** The district sees the biggest opportunity for continued transportation improvements in this area. As highlighted in the report, BPS transportation operates under uniquely complex circumstances, driven by bell times and school assignment policies, special education policies and growth, as well as by the requirement that BPS Transportation adhere to non-BPS school calendars and schedules for the 105 non-BPS schools to which they transport students. The district has kicked off work internally and with charter schools to make recommendations for aligning school calendars and making incremental bell time changes that will move BPS towards a more uniform, evenly distributed three tier bell system in order to improve transportation operations, while minimizing impact on and ensuring engagement with school and community stakeholders. Effective implementation of any policy changes will require meaningful stakeholder engagement and will need to be guided by larger conversations across the district and community about how we want to reimagine BPS. The newly formed Transportation Advisory Council will play an important role in this work. BPS is committed to doing this work and doing it the right way.’
- **Cost controls:** This report highlights that BPS Transportation has one of the highest transportation costs in the nation, and provides several recommendations for better tracking, controlling, and reducing costs to free up assets for redeployment (e.g., additional technological solutions, reducing trip lengths for students by breaking up trips, etc.). While our first and most urgent priority needs to be making service improvements for students and families, BPS also needs to ensure that transportation is cost-effective. The district will closely review the cost-control recommendations in this report and take steps to implement the recommendations that will have the greatest impact on improving transportation services outcomes.

The district is deeply committed to improving the transportation experience for all BPS students and families, and values the CGCS’s insights, recommendations, and partnership. The district team will present at a later School Committee meeting on the work currently underway and the district’s implementation plan for the recommendations within the report. The report and slides will be submitted to DESE and made available on the BPS website at www.bostonpublicschools.org/strategicprogress.

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The Superintendent offered reflections on the report and recommendations, which she said will help the district focus its efforts to ensure that transportation is safe and reliable for students and families. She said that some of the recommendations are tied to work that's already underway.

Deputy Director of Transportation Dan Rosengard affirmed the district's commitment to addressing transportation challenges and engaging with stakeholders. He expressed enthusiasm for the role that the new Transportation Advisory Council will play in implementing the recommendations. In 2020, the BPS Transportation Department developed a five- year business plan outlining 24 strategic initiatives to improve transportation. Although the pandemic interrupted some of this work, the transportation team has been able to make progress implementing 18 of those 24 recommendations. Also in 2020, BPS implemented a monthly performance review process with its current transportation provider Transdev. When creating the invitation for bids (IFB) for the next transportation vendor contract, the team introduced new mechanisms to hold the vendor accountable, including aligning financial incentives towards student-oriented results. Mr. Rosengard said that BPS has also made improvements over the past few years tightening internal transportation processes and procedures.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez spoke about the importance of collecting accurate data to inform decision-making. He requested data on per pupil transportation spending. Mr. Rosengard agreed to follow up with the information..

Ms. Lopera raised questions as to whether BPS used to track ridership, and, if so, when and why it had stopped. The Superintendent agreed that the district needs to collect solid ridership data.

Dr. Alkins asked about the district's strategy for recruiting and retaining bus monitors. Mr. Rosengard spoke about the collaboration between the Offices of Transportation and Special Education. He said that he is in the process of hiring two program directors for transportation whose focus will be training and supporting bus monitors.

Mr. O'Neill stated that he serves as the Boston School Committee's representative to the Council of Great City Schools and as a member of the Council's board of directors. He said that reliable transportation service is a frustrating issue for families and must be a top priority for the district. complex issue. He asked the presenters for their thoughts on the order of priorities and what alternatives BPS should be considering. Dr. Hart recommended improving data collection, aligning calendars, and changing bus utilization rates to create efficiencies. The Superintendent noted that BPS is not permitted to outsource transportation for charter and parochial schools.

Ms. Robinson suggested studying the impact of the district's school choice system on transportation to provide families with meaningful choices. Dr. Hart agreed. Ms. Robinson raised a question about whether the district should consider separate transportation systems for BPS and non-BPS schools. The Superintendent said that operating two systems would not be effective. Instead, she recommended exploring the district's obligations versus its freedoms. Ms. Robinson asked what is causing chronically late buses. Dr. Hart said that his team did not study that particular issue in depth, adding that better data collection will help identify root causes.

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Mr. Cardet-Hernandez said that the School Committee missed an opportunity to drive change when it approved bus drivers' side letters of agreement last June. He spoke about bus monitors providing families with a sense of safety.

Mr. Mehta spoke about the importance of improving routing efficiencies. He shared his personal experience being assaulted on a bus when he was younger and stressed the importance of oversight.

Dr. Alkins said that assault is never acceptable. He asked about the Transportation Department's multilingual communication efforts. Mr. Rosengard explained that BPS provides a full service transportation hotline on school days from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. He said that while the transportation hotline is relatively well staffed with Spanish speakers, it is not as well staffed across the other languages. Dr. Alkins asked when and why the district stopped administering a transportation customer service survey to families. Mr. Rosengard agreed to follow up. He noted that BPS introduced a new customer service ticketing system in November 2020 that is now used across the district. He said that the new system has the capability of sending automated surveys to families.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

None.


NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Lopera requested more clarity on who is driving the school merger process. The Superintendent said that BPS is working together with the City. She offered to provide the Committee with a more detailed update in February.

ADJOURN

Approved - At approximately 10:22 p.m., the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn to the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary