



## **OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**December 18, 2013**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on December 18, 2013 at 6 p.m. at the Edward Winter Chambers, 26 Court Street, and Boston, Massachusetts.

For more information about any of the items listed below, contact the office of the Boston School Committee: [feedback@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:feedback@bostonpublicschools.org) or 617-635-9014.

### **DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

School Committee Meeting Minutes: December 4, 2013

Grants for Approval Totaling \$233,932:

- Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) - \$128,731
- Title III – English Language Learners Acquisition - \$16,067
- Turnaround Sustainability Grant - \$89,134

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School: France, February 12-23, 2014

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School: Germany, Poland and Czech Republic, April 15-27, 2014

Innovation School Proposal: Charlestown Diploma Plus Innovation Academy

Innovation School Plan: Dr. William W. Henderson Inclusion Innovation School

Superintendent's Memo: Second Phase of the Superintendent's Recommendations for Facilities Actions

Report: School Committee Strategic Planning Update

Report: Academics Vision and Plan of Action

### **ATTENDANCE**

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Vice-Chairperson Claudio Martinez; Meg Campbell; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Rev. Gregory G. Groover; Margaret McKenna; Mary Tamer; and student representative Ayomide Olumuyiwa.

School Committee Members Absent: None.

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## **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. O'Neill called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. He announced that the meeting was being broadcast live by Boston City TV (Comcast Channel 24 and RCN Channel 13) in cooperation with BNN-TV and would be rebroadcast at a later date.

## **APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

The School Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the December 4, 2013 School Committee meeting.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Today the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) released its 2013 report in which BPS students outscored most of their peers in large cities. BPS remains one of the only large districts to have met the national average in any grade or subject. Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools, called BPS' mathematics results "eye-popping." He also pointed out that Boston educates a far more diverse population of students than other large cities.

The Superintendent applauded Mayor Thomas M. Menino for his leadership on education during his 20 year tenure. He also thanked Mayor Menino's education advisor, Martha Pierce, for her unwavering dedication to BPS students and families.

The Superintendent encouraged BPS employees to contribute to the City of Boston Employees Charitable Campaign (COBECC), noting that donations can be made to benefit BPS schools.

Today the Boston City Council approved funding for schematic design of the proposed Quincy Upper/Boston Arts Academy combined facility, which allows BPS and the City to continue the process as the conversations continue with the Massachusetts School Building Authority and the community.

Last week, The English High School hosted a well-attended community forum on education sponsored by Mayor-Elect Walsh and his transition team.

Fiscal Year 2015 school budgets were released on December 13, consistent with the enrollment trends that BPS has shared with the School Committee. School leaders are currently working with their School Site Councils and Governing Boards to develop their plans which they will submit back to the BPS budget office on January 8.

The Superintendent stated that BPS could have done a better job clearing snow and ice on school property following the recent snowstorms. He pledged to follow up with the BPS facilities team to ensure a better performance in the future.

Ms. Tamer thanked the Superintendent for helping the BPS wrestling team gain membership in the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

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Ms. Campbell and Ms. Tamer recently attended a celebration for the Boston Schoolyard Initiative; they called on Mayor-Elect Walsh to designate city funds and identify partners to continue the program.

Mr. O'Neill and Rev. Groover also thanked Mayor Menino and Martha Pierce for their commitment to Boston's young people.

The Committee voted by unanimous consent to accept the Superintendent's Report.

## GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Carolyn Kain, chair, Boston Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPac), testified regarding inclusion.

John St. Amand, vice chair, Boston Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPac), testified regarding inclusion.

Edward Kotomori, guardian, Another Course to College, testified regarding the school's location.

Michael Koza, executive director, Project Right, testified regarding enrollment projections and budget implications for the Lilla Frederick Middle School.

Mardi Loeterman, teacher, Edwards Middle School, testified regarding the importance of early literacy.

Anita Sintes, teacher, Paul A. Dever Elementary School, testified regarding reading interventions.

Martha Pierce, education advisor to Mayor Thomas M. Menino, bid farewell to the School Committee and the Superintendent as she prepares to transition from the position she has held for 20 years.

Michael Potter, parent, Dennis C. Haley School, testified regarding the school's expansion.

## ACTION ITEMS

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the School Committee approved by unanimous consent grants totaling \$233,932.

**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the School Committee approved by unanimous consent an international travel request for students from Boston Latin School to travel to France from February 12-23, 2014.

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**Approved** – As part of the consent calendar, the School Committee approved by unanimous consent an international travel request for students from Boston Latin School to travel to Germany, Poland and Czech Republic from April 15-27, 2014.

**Approved** – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved the Innovation Plan proposal for the Charlestown Diploma Plus Innovation Academy.

**Approved** – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved the Innovation Plan proposal for the Dr. William H. Henderson K-12 Innovation Inclusion School.

The Committee engaged in an extensive discussion regarding the second phase of the Superintendent's facilities recommendations. Ms. Campbell and Ms. Tamer explained that, due to concerns about the district's excess capacity, they would not support the Superintendent's recommendations regarding Boston Green Academy, Boston Adult Technical Academy, and the Dearborn School. Dr. Coleman recused himself from the vote related to Boston Green Academy/Another Course to College, citing his wish to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest. Mr. O'Neill repeated his call for a comprehensive, long-term facilities plan. Mr. Martinez requested more accurate enrollment projections from the district.

**Approved** – On roll call, the School Committee approved the Superintendent's recommendation to relocate Boston Green Academy to the Taft Building, 20 Warren Avenue, Brighton, where it will be co-located with Another Course to College (ACC) for the 2014-15 school year. BPS will work with the ACC school community to obtain a permanent location in Brighton for school year 2015-16 and beyond. The order was approved by the following vote:

Mc. Campbell: No  
Dr. Coleman: Abstain  
Rev. Groover: Yes  
Ms. McKenna: Yes  
Ms. Tamer: No  
Mr. Martinez: Yes  
Mr. O'Neill: Yes

**Approved** – On roll call, the School Committee approved the Superintendent's recommendation to relocate Boston Adult Technical Academy to 20 Church Street, Boston. The order was approved by the following vote:

Mc. Campbell: No  
Dr. Coleman: Yes  
Rev. Groover: Yes  
Ms. McKenna: Yes  
Ms. Tamer: No  
Mr. Martinez: Yes  
Mr. O'Neill: Yes

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**Approved** – On roll call, the School Committee approved the Superintendent’s recommendation to relocate the Henry Dearborn School students and staff to the top floor of the Jeremiah E. Burke High School, 60 Washington Street, Dorchester, until the completion of a new Dearborn facility. The order was approved by the following vote:

Mc. Campbell: No  
Dr. Coleman: Yes  
Rev. Groover: Yes  
Ms. McKenna: Yes  
Ms. Tamer: No  
Mr. Martinez: Yes  
Mr. O’Neill: Yes

**Approved** – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent’s recommendation to continue the expansion of the Dennis C. Haley Pilot School to a fully inclusive K-8 program at its current location, 570 America Legion Highway, Roslindale, with the construction of modular classrooms for grades 6 and 7.

## REPORTS

**School Committee Strategic Planning Update** – John Kim, Chief Executive Officer of the District Management Council and facilitator of the School Committee’s strategic planning process, presented a draft of the Committee’s aspirational goals and priorities for the district. The goals fit into the following broad thematic categories: increased student outcomes; improved school quality, strong district leadership/high-quality, action-oriented teachers and staff; effective resources allocation; and greater community engagement. The Committee will solicit feedback on the strategic vision through targeted focus groups, School Committee presentations, possible joint hearings on the FY15 budget, and a dedicated BPS web page with a feedback email address. After the School Committee finalizes and approves its strategic vision, the Committee and Superintendent will work together to set measurable goals which will be executed by the Superintendent and his staff. Mr. O’Neill explained that the strategic vision is an important step as district prepares to embark on a superintendent search, which will be led by the School Committee and Mayor-Elect Walsh.

**Academics Vision and Plan of Action** – Dr. Eileen de los Reyes, Deputy Superintendent of Academics, presented the Superintendent’s vision of change and plan of action for the 2013-14 school year. Boston Public Schools is focused on implementing three simultaneous and transformational changes in Academics: eliminating the achievement/access gap; successfully implementing Common Core and Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments; and successfully increasing fully inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities. Dr. de los Reyes explained that BPS will take the following steps to achieve these goals:

- Increase principals’ leadership time and capacity to focus on academics by leveraging the liaison structure and refocusing central office supports and services on instruction
- Use quantitative and qualitative data to identify and resolve instructional problems

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- Construct a support and accountability structure that is transparent, collaborative, and appropriate for all BPS schools.

Cheryl Watson-Harris, Network Superintendent for Network D, and Mary Skipper, Network Superintendent for Network G, then shared information on their respective networks, including data, goals, and interventions.

School Committee members asked questions about the network structure, accountability, and technology access, all of which were answered by the Superintendent and his staff. Ms. Campbell requested that the Committee receive academic data updates on a monthly basis. Rev. Groove requested quarterly updates on the academic vision and plan of action. Ms. Tamer expressed concerns about social promotion, requesting that the Committee further examine the issue.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS**

John Mudd, education advocate, testified regarding achievement and opportunity gaps.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Campbell requested information detailing which BPS schools have separate admissions policies and the rationale behind them.

Dr. Coleman asked the Superintendent to share the challenges the district is experiencing with the implementation of the Home-based school choice plan and offer solutions.

Rev. Groover requested an update on family and student engagement and the Circle of Promise.

Mr. O'Neill thanked Dr. Coleman and Ms. Tamer for their work to date as they wrap up their terms as School Committee members.

#### **ADJOURN**

At 10:18 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary