



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

**December 4, 2013**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on December 4, 2013 at 5 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**

Report: Update on the Superintendent's Recommendations for Facilities Actions

Report: Innovation Plan Proposals: Charlestown Diploma Plus Innovation Academy and Dr. William H. Henderson K-12 Innovation Inclusion School

Report: FY14-15 Budget Update

### **ATTENDANCE**

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Meg Campbell; Rev. Gregory G. Groover; Margaret McKenna; Mary Tamer.

School Committee Members Absent: Vice-Chairperson Claudio Martinez and Dr. Hardin Coleman (arrived during executive session).

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. O'Neill called the meeting to order.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. O'Neill led the pledge of allegiance.

On roll call, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to executive session to discuss collective bargaining. Mr. O'Neill explained that having such discussion in an open meeting

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could have a detrimental effect on the Committee's bargaining position. He announced that the Committee would return to public session at 6 p.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

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

School Committee Members Absent: Vice-Chairperson Claudio Martinez.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

At 6:11 p.m., Mr. O'Neill called the meeting to order and announced that the Committee had just returned from executive session to discuss collective bargaining. 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 November 20, 2013 School Committee meeting.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The Superintendent led a moment of silence in memory of Brianna Rosales, a student at the Holland Elementary School who was struck and killed by a car last week. He also expressed his condolences to the family of the late Michael Thompson, beloved administrator at Greater Egleston High School.

The Superintendent explained that he would not be requesting a School Committee vote on any facilities recommendations this evening to allow more time for discussions with school communities.

District enrollment this year appears to be the same as last year, which is lower than what BPS had projected. As a result, many schools have lower enrollment projections for the 2014-15 school year than they had received for the 2013-14 school year.

The Superintendent outlined the challenges the district will face in Fiscal Year 2015 when costs are expected to increase and external resources are expected to decrease. Fixed costs, such as salaries and benefits, will grow by approximately \$50-\$60 million, in part due to contractual salary increases for educators, employee benefits and higher transportation costs. External grants will decrease by approximately \$30 million. In addition, BPS will continue to invest in school quality initiatives, such as expanding inclusive opportunities and extending hiring autonomies for schools. The Superintendent pledged to focus on core priorities and identify what works for

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students so that the district can continue to serve all students well.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, BPS held the first of four “School Preview Times” in schools, and the Citywide High School Showcase of Schools will take place on December 5<sup>th</sup> at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. Later this month, BPS will launch on-line pre-registration for next school year. The first enrollment period begins on January 6, 2014. BPS is also producing a 30-second public service announcement about school registration that will air on Comcast cable stations in English and Spanish in January.

The district will launch its upgraded, more user-friendly web site, [www.bostonpublicschools.org](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org) later this month.

In the spring of 2014, 81 BPS schools will conduct a field test of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment, allowing BPS to better evaluate students’ readiness for college and careers, and better inform instruction. BPS will not provide MCAS exemptions to students taking the PARCC field test; students taking the PARCC exam will still be required to take the MCAS exam.

Today the Boston City Council voted 12 to 0 to approve a request for an approximately \$4 million loan order, which allows BPS, the City of Boston and the Massachusetts School Building Authority to move forward with schematic design considerations for a proposed combined site for the Josiah Quincy Upper School and Boston Arts Academy.

Two schools - the John F. Kennedy Elementary and Dorchester Academy - did not reach the required two-thirds faculty vote threshold today to approve innovation status. The district will continue to work with these schools and will update the Committee on any new developments.

The Superintendent and his staff are working closely with Mayor-Elect Walsh and his transition team to respond to several requests for information, such as the External Advisory Committee report on the Home-Based school choice plan, and the Gaston Institute report on ELL progress.

For the first time in 15 years, The English High School football team defeated Boston Latin at the annual Thanksgiving Day game by a score of 14-12. It’s the oldest continuous high school football rivalry in the United States.

Rev. Groover offered his condolences on the passing of Mr. Thompson.

Ms. Tamer requested information on the amount of time dedicated to formal testing. She also offered a reminder that schools seeking a name change must adhere to the process put in place by the School Committee.

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

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## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

Emmanuel Tikili, member, Grove Hall Youth Alliance, testified regarding enrollment projections for the Lilla Frederick Middle School.

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

Caroline Corcoran, teacher, Kenny Elementary School, testified regarding the importance of equitable resource allocation.

Rhiannon Varmette, teacher, Orchard Gardens K-8 School, testified regarding the importance of equitable resource allocation.

Dianne Lescinkas, parent, Henderson and Harbor Schools, testified regarding the Henderson K-12 Innovation Plan.

Gloria West, parent, Lilla Frederick Middle School, testified regarding the school's enrollment projections.

Deross Jordan, student, Dorchester Academy, testified regarding the Boston Ed Truth Town Hall event on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

Maura O'Toole, BPS parent, testified regarding implementation of the Home-based school choice plan.

Kathy Hamilton, Boston Private Industry Council, testified regarding the Charlestown Diploma Plus Innovation Academy.

Jack Sinnott, BPS parent, testified regarding inclusive learning at the Haley Elementary School.

Heather Cochran, parent, Conley Elementary School, testified regarding the proposed expansion of the Haley Elementary School.

Linda Freeman, BPS parent, testified regarding enrollment projections for the Lilla Frederick Middle School.

## **REPORTS**

*Update on the Superintendent's Recommendations for Facilities Actions* – The Superintendent presented an update on the second phase of his Grow with Boston facilities recommendations. The district is currently engaged in discussions with school communities regarding possible new

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locations for Boston Adult Technical Academy, Dearborn Middle School, Haley Elementary School, Another Course to College and Boston Green Academy. The district will not move forward with a proposed K-8 expansion for the Condon Elementary School for the 2014-15 school year. Instead, the district will begin planning for a future expansion. The Superintendent will present the second phase of his facilities recommendations to the Committee for a vote on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Tamer requested data listing the average square foot per student at the Margarita Muniz Academy and the Mission Hill K-8 School.

Mr. O'Neill thanked the Superintendent for presenting a thoughtful facilities plan and urged the district to hire a third party to conduct a comprehensive long-term facilities plan.

***Innovation Plan Proposals: Charlestown Diploma Plus Innovation Academy and Dr. William H. Henderson K-12 Innovation Inclusion School*** – Jill Conrad, Senior Advisor for Human Capital Strategy, presented a brief overview of two Innovation Plan proposals. The Charlestown Diploma Plus Innovation Academy would expand the existing Diploma Plus program for off-track students at Charlestown High School by adding additional seats at the Charlestown location and establishing a satellite campus at the Bird Street Community Center in Dorchester. The Dr. William H. Henderson K-12 Innovation Inclusion School would create the district's first-ever fully inclusive, single school pathway from pre-K to grade 12. School administrators Nadia Cyprien, Isabel DePina Patricia Lampron, Sung-Joon Pai and parent Joanne Blake provided the Committee with details of the proposals. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the Innovation Plan proposals on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

School Committee members asked questions about handicapped accessibility, staff training, and vocational education, and Youth Build, all of which were answered by the presenters and the Superintendent. Ms. Campbell urged the administrators to strengthen their proposals by including additional information. Rev. Groover requested more information on the Innovation Plan proposals for the John F. Kennedy Elementary School and Dorchester Academy, which failed to achieve the required two-thirds faculty vote that would allow the plans to move forward.

***FY14-15 Budget Update*** – Chief Financial Officer Donald Kennedy presented an budget update for the current and next fiscal years. He expressed confidence that the district will end the current fiscal year (FY14) on budget by taking corrective steps to address an anticipated \$10 million shortfall. Rising costs and decreases in external funding could present significant funding challenges in FY15. The Superintendent will present his preliminary FY15 budget recommendation to the Committee on February 5<sup>th</sup>; the Committee will vote on the final budget recommendation on March 26<sup>th</sup>.

School Committee members asked detailed questions about the drivers of the rising costs and reductions in funding, all of which were answered by Mr. Kennedy and the Superintendent. Ms. McKenna suggested that now is the time to leverage all of the district's resources by galvanizing the funders and partners, stressing that BPS should lead the effort. Ms. Tamer requested enrollment projections for schools sorted by school grade configurations. Ms. Campbell

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requested the district's capital budget and a list of deferred maintenance projects. Mr. O'Neill requested more detailed enrollment projections comparing projected with actual enrollment. He also thanked Mr. Kennedy for reconstituting monthly budget updates to the School Committee which will be posted on the [www.bostonpublicschools.org](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org).

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

Sherman Zemler Wu, parent, Mather Elementary School, testified regarding the absence of a pathway school for the Mather.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Rev. Groover requested a response from the Superintendent regarding concerns that were raised during the general public comment period about the Lilla G. Frederick Middle School and the Grove Hall community.

Ms. Tamer requested school choice data for the Frederick School by school and neighborhood. She also requested an update on the implementation of the district's Health and Wellness policy.

Mr. O'Neill stated that the Committee will provide an update on the district's strategic planning process on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **ADJOURN**

At 9:28 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary