



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

**February 4, 2015**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 6 p.m. on February 4, 2015 at the Edward Winter Chambers, 26 Court Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

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

### **DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Minutes: January 28, 2015 School Committee Meeting

Developing a Strategic Vision for the Boston Public Schools

Preliminary Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation

### **ATTENDANCE**

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

School Committee Members Absent: student representative Ayomide Olumuyiwa.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. O'Neill called the meeting to order and announced that the proceedings were being broadcast live by Boston City TV (Comcast Channel 24 and RCN Channel 13) 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 January 28, 2015 School Committee meeting.

**February 4, 2015**

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Boston has experienced record breaking snow fall over the last ten days, and more is expected.

The Superintendent thanked BPS students and families for managing the disruption with a concern for safety, a respect for learning, and an eagerness to return to normalcy. The decision to cancel school is a difficult one that's based on public safety.

To help ensure that students get to school on time, buses will leave the bus yard earlier. The City continues to remove snow from major roadways and clear streets in front of schools. Delays are posted on [www.bostonpublicschools.org](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org) and on social media. Families are encouraged to use the Where's My Bus app, so students can minimize the time they wait outside.

To date, BPS has cancelled six days of school this year due to weather. The Superintendent will begin discussions now to have a plan for opening school during non-scheduled school times to meet the district's obligation of providing 180 days of school.

The Superintendent thanked school custodians, facilities and transportation crews who have worked tirelessly to clear snow and ice from school grounds.

Due to the storms, BPS has extended once again the deadline for round one school registration until February 5. This impacts transitional grades, including K0, K1, K2 and Grades 6 and 9. Paper applications for students currently enrolled in Boston Public Schools were hand delivered to schools today. The deadline for families to return the paper form to their child's school has been extended from February 12.

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

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carolyn Kain, Chair, Boston Parent Special Education Advisory Council (SpedPac), testified regarding the budget and inclusion.

Erika Sanchez, parent, East Boston Early Education Center, testified about extending the school day.

Fernando Membrero and Elsa Flores, student and parents, respectively, Otis Elementary School, testified about extending the school day.

Yolanda Garcia, parent, East Boston Early Education Center, testified about early education opportunities in East Boston.

February 4, 2015

## ACTION ITEM

Ms. Campbell suggested that the School Committee establish a sub-committee to help implement the strategic vision. She also suggested the establishment of sub-committees to focus on the areas of finance, school quality, inclusion and English Language Learners. Mr. O'Neill said the Committee should consider the recommendation and discuss it at a future meeting.

**Approved** – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved a Strategic Vision for the Boston Public Schools.

## REPORTS

**Superintendent Search Committee Update** – Dr. Coleman, co-chair of the Superintendent Search Committee, presented a brief oral report on the search process. The Search Committee is currently interviewing candidates and will then recommend finalists to the School Committee for its consideration, kicking off a public interview process.

**Preliminary Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation** – Interim Chief Financial Officer Erika Giampietro, together with Deputy CFO Chris Giuliani and Budget Director Nathan Kuder, presented the Superintendent's FY16 preliminary budget recommendation for BPS. Mayor Walsh aims to increase the city's allocation to BPS between 3%-4% over the district's current year budget. This funding increase will allow for meaningful investments, including an increase in Weighted Student Funding (WSF) budgets directed to schools; 40 minutes of additional instructional time at 20 schools (first cohort of 60 over the next three years); adding 100 more pre-K seats; the early hiring of educators; and the expansion of inclusive classrooms.

At the same time, rising costs and reductions from external funding sources continue to create significant financial challenges for the district. The current budget gap stands between \$42-51 million. In the coming weeks, the Superintendent will identify multiple strategies to close this gap, including limited school closures reexamining central office services, increasing transportation efficiencies and realigning the department of Food and Nutritional Services.

The School Committee will hold several budget hearings during the month of March before voting on the Superintendent's final budget recommendation on March 25. For more information, please visit [www.bostonpublicschools.org/budget](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/budget).

School Committee members asked a number of clarifying questions about the budget proposal, all of which were answered by the presenters and Superintendent. Committee members suggested that the district explore potential cost savings through the reduction of out-of-district placements. Several members called for a more robust institutional advancement strategy.

## PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Peggy Wiesenberg, former BPS parent, testified regarding the budget.

**School Committee Meeting**  
Edward Winter Chambers

**February 4, 2015**

John Mudd, education advocate, testified regarding the budget.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business was introduced.

**ADJOURN**

At 8:41 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary