



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

**March 25, 2015**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 6 p.m. on March 25, 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**

School Committee Meeting Minutes: March 3, 2015; March 4, 2015; and March 11, 2015

Grant for Approval: @Scale Project Initiative: Mathematics and Science Achievement – STEM Pipeline - \$61,925.

International Travel Request: Boston Latin Academy: Greece, Italy and Spain, June 29-July 10, 2015.

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School: Canada, May 22-25, 2015

International Travel Request: Boston Latin School: France and Spain, April 16-25, 2015

International Travel Request: TechBoston Academy: Germany, Czech Republic, Poland, Belgium and France, May 15-27, 2015

Massachusetts School Building Authority Statement of Interest: Carter Development Day Care School

Superintendent's Memo: Final FY16 Recommended Budget

Account, Program and Department and Details, FY16

Boston Public Schools FY16 Budget Collaboratives – Overview

Boston Teacher Residency FY16 Budget

**March 25, 2015**

FY16 Title 1 Allocation Analysis by School

FY16 Poverty

Frequently Asked Questions: School Closure Proposal

Rogers Middle School: Family Choices for 2015-2016 School Year

Elihu Greenwood Leadership Academy: Family Choices for 2015-2016 School Year

Summary of English Language Learners (ELL) Weight Changes

Overview of Allocations and Budgets for English Language Learners

BPS Weighted Student Funding: Changes in Weights from FY12 through FY15

Responses to School Committee Questions: March 24, 2015

Demographics, Performance and Graduation Outcomes of Students Impacted by School Closures and Mergers under the Redesign and Reinvestment Plan

## **ATTENDANCE**

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

School Committee Members Absent: None.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. O’Neill led the pledge of allegiance and called the meeting to order.

## **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

On March 21, the Boston Debate League (BDL) held its citywide spring competition at Charlestown High Schools. The Superintendent praised the BDL as a great district partner that provides valuable and enriching services to students.

Also on March 21, the Superintendent joined Mayor Walsh and Seattle Mayor Ed Murray to shovel snow as part of the “Service Bowl 2015” organized by St. Stephen's Church which supported the Blackstone School. The Service Bowl fulfilled a friendly bet between the two Mayors on the outcome of the Super Bowl.

**School Committee Meeting**  
Edward Winter Chambers

**March 25, 2015**

For the second year in a row 13-year-old Christy Jestin of Boston Latin School is the winner of the Citywide Spelling Bee. Christy now will represent Boston in the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington DC in May.

The Parent Leadership Conference, led by the City-Wide Parents Council and the Office of Family and Student Engagement, held at the Bolling Building on Saturday was a great success. Committee member Regina Robinson spoke as part of the event.

On March 24, the Superintendent attended a rally at the Dever School in Dorchester for UNICEF's Kid Power, a month-long fitness initiative in which students in grades 3-5 in 16 schools wear activity trackers. The more active students are, the more funds they unlock to help provide critically needed meals to malnourished children around the world. Isiah Thomas from the Boston Celtics was on hand.

BPS began its second-year trial of the PARCC assessment in schools this week. Early indications are that things are going well across the district. The Superintendent thanked Network Superintendents, the Office of Data and Accountability, teachers and staff for their efforts to ensure a smooth rollout this year.

Winter report card grades for students in grades K2 through Grade 5 are now available and will be sent home if they have not already been mailed. The reports can also be accessed online via the Family Portal on our Student Information System. If parents have questions, or don't know how to access the family portal, they should check in with their child's homeroom teacher or school principal.

BPS is in negotiations with the Boston Teachers Union to slightly move our start date up for the 2015/2016 school year.

Christine Connolly, who currently serves as Director of Network Academics for Network E, will begin her tenure as Principal of the Grew Elementary School in Hyde Park this summer. This appointment is important for this school as it begins its turnaround work to raise student achievement. Maudlin Wright will remain as the Grew's principal through the end of June, leading staff and students to the successful close of the year and supporting Ms. Connolly's transition. The Superintendent thanked Ms. Wright for her tireless efforts, her passionate commitment to students, and her hard work with educators and staff alike to ensure the Grew is a place where students and families feel welcomed, supported and appreciated.

The Superintendent has Kim Tsai to lead the work of our Office of English Language Learners through the end of the year, and OELL will report directly to Eileen de los Reyes, Deputy Superintendent for Academics. The move is being made at this time to ensure absolute alignment of all functions within BPS and united in both approach and direction of work related to and the reporting for the Department of Justice and Office of Civil Rights Settlement Agreement. Antonietta Bolomey will be reporting to me and working on assignments directed by the Superintendent's Office.

**March 25, 2015**

To ensure that Dr. Tommy Chang has the maximum flexibility to build his new leadership team as the next Superintendent, Superintendent McDonough has asked his Cabinet to submit their letters of resignation. This step will offer Dr. Chang important flexibility to make organizational decisions based on what is best for the District and the students it serves.

The Superintendent presented a brief update on former BPS employee Shaun Harrison. An internal inquiry has been completed and made public. At the suggestion of Committee members, the Superintendent has directed that a complete external and independent review of district policies and protocols related to employee discipline be undertaken. While it appears that proper protocols were followed, the Superintendent remains unconvinced that the district's standards are high enough to meet the basic expectations of students and families. BPS protocols must reflect that a higher standard is being reached. BPS must also create an environment that provides students and staff with a mechanism to report instances of conduct unbecoming of BPS staff confidentially and, in some cases, anonymously. Students and families deserve better and BPS will do better.

Ms. Campbell thanked the Superintendent for examining the school calendar and negotiating an earlier start date.

Ms. Regina Robinson said she was pleased to participate in the parent leadership conference hosted by the BPS Office of Engagement and Citywide Parents Council on March 21.

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

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following people testified regarding the Superintendent's final Fiscal Year 2016 budget recommendation:

Michael Heichman, Coalition for Equal Quality Education  
Susan Maze Rothstein, Code of Conduct Advisory Council  
John St. Amand, vice-chair, Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac)  
Jeffrey Klug, parent, Boston Latin Academy  
Heshan Berents-Weeramuni, parent, Curley K-8 School  
Barbara Rosa, co-chair, Citywide Parents Council  
Mary Murphy-Porcher, grandparent, Community Academy  
Vanessa Villanueva, student, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School  
Adrian Perez, student, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School  
Elizabeth Guzman, parent, Middle School Academy  
Jonathan Rodrigues, Sociedad Latina  
Kelly Welch, school social worker  
John Mudd, education advocate  
Fred Floreal, Boston School Bus Drivers Local 8751  
David Carlson, citizen

March 25, 2015

## ACTION ITEMS

*Approved* – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee approved by unanimous consent a grant for approval in the amount of \$61,925.

*Approved* – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee approved by unanimous consent an international travel request for students and chaperones from Boston Latin Academy to travel to Greece, Italy and Spain from June 29-July 10, 2015.

*Approved* – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee approved by unanimous consent an international travel request for students and chaperones from Boston Latin School to travel to Canada from May 22-25, 2015.

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*Approved* – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee approved by unanimous consent an international travel request for students and chaperones from TechBoston Academy to travel to Germany, Czech Republic, Poland, Belgium and France from May 15-27, 2015.

*Approved* – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a Massachusetts School Building Authority Statement of Interest for the Carter Development Day Care School.

The Superintendent presented a brief overview of his final Fiscal Year 2016 budget recommendation in the amount of \$1,013,500. He thanked Mayor Walsh for increasing City's allocation to BPS by four percent. The budget includes key investments in critical areas such as the expansion of early childhood and inclusion programs, extending the school day and early teacher hiring. Reductions in federal and state funding, together with rising costs and a structural imbalance that spreads BPS resources too thin necessitate a realignment of programmatic offerings and facilities. The Superintendent added that if the Committee approves the proposed budget, the district would renovate the Rogers building to accommodate the Margarita Muniz Academy for occupancy in 2016.

Ms. Campbell stated that without details on the costs related to the renovation of the Rogers building, it's difficult for the School Committee to exercise its fiduciary responsibility.

Ms. Regina Robinson suggested organizing a meeting with BPS officials and the Boston City Council to discuss the changing landscape of educational options in her home neighborhood of Hyde Park.

Ms. Jeri Robinson asked about the viability of merging the E. Greenwood Leadership Academy with the Rogers Middle School, both of which are proposed for closure. The Superintendent stated that such a merger is not a viable option.

**March 25, 2015**

Dr. Uriarte expressed frustration about the process through which Committee members received budget information and proposed the creation of a finance sub-committee. Mr. O'Neill explained that the Committee receives monthly budget updates and quarterly budget presentations, adding that the Committee will explore the possibility of establishing sub-committees. He also thanked Dr. Uriarte for asking the district to explain funding methodologies for English Language Learners.

Mr. Loconto noted that addressing the district's structural imbalance will be a multi-year effort and the master facilities planning process will take 18 months. He asked for a robust public engagement process related to these long-term efforts.

Dr. Coleman urged the district to strengthen its institutional advancement efforts to secure more private funding.

Mr. O'Neill explained that there is an unprecedented level of uncertainty around the amount of funding that BPS will receive from the federal government in the next fiscal year. He recently joined other urban education leaders from the Council of Great City Schools in a meeting with President Obama where he advocated for funding for urban school districts. State funding under the leadership of the new governor is also uncertain. Mr. O'Neill applauded the Citywide Parents Council for organizing a lobbying day at the State House on April 13<sup>th</sup> to advocate for education funding. He said the next superintendent, Dr. Tommy Chang, is fully informed of the district's budget challenges. Mr. O'Neill added that by state statute, if the School Committee fails to approve the Superintendent's final budget recommendation, the preliminary budget recommendation moves forward to the Mayor.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the Superintendent's final Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Recommendation in the amount of \$1,013,500,000.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Campbell requested a report on income disparities in high schools.

## **ADJOURN**

At 8 p.m., the School Committee voted by roll call to adjourn to executive session to discuss litigation strategy related to the Department of Justice. Mr. O'Neill explained that having the discussion in an open meeting could have a detrimental effect on the Committee's position. The Committee did not return to public session.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary