



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

**April 29, 2015**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 6 p.m. on April 29, 2015 at the Bruce C. Bolling Building, 2300 Washington Street, second floor, Roxbury, 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: April 15, 2015

Grant for Approval: Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant - \$90,000

Superintendent's Memo: Interim Salary Payment Order for External Funds

Superintendent's Memo: Naming Madison Park/O'Bryant Building 4 after Nelson Mandela

Report: Proposal to Modify Middle School Pathways for Dearborn STEM Academy and John W. McCormack Middle School

High School Redesign

### **ATTENDANCE**

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

School Committee Member Absent: student representative Ayomide Olumuyiwa.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

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## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

The Superintendent welcomed everyone to the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, the new home of Boston Public Schools. He noted that the room pays homage to the rich history of the famed Ferdinand furniture showroom through the preservation of the porthole-shaped windows, which provide stunning views of the Boston skyline and of Roxbury; the colorful 80-foot mural that brightens the meeting room was painted by a former Jeremiah Burke High School student; and the new, state-of-the art broadcast equipment is used to televise these meetings to the public at-large.

The Superintendent extended his thoughts and prayers to the people of Nepal as they try to recover from Saturday's devastating earthquake.

With the eyes of the nation focused on events in Baltimore following the death of Freddie Gray while in police custody, Boston Public Schools is engaging students in dialogue on the underlying issues of race and culture, and the tensions that have existed at times in our nation between communities of color and law enforcement. The Superintendent has asked school leaders to make sure teachers work with students to ensure they learn from these events, and channel their thoughts and feelings in constructive ways.

The issues in Baltimore featured prominently in a seminar April 28<sup>th</sup> with BPS leaders and the Mayor Walsh's Education Chief Rahn Dorsey on critical equity issues in our schools. Consistent with the recommendations of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Opportunity and Equity reports on black and Latino male achievement, the first session focused on race. It was led by Baltimore native Glenn Singleton, whose key message in the first of many ongoing conversations was: "Courageous leadership on issues of equity begins with courageous conversations on race." This was followed by a second session in the afternoon with several principals, and the entire BPS human capital, academics and engagement teams.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, School Committee members, Superintendent and city councilors joined Mayor Walsh in the ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the official grand opening of Bolling building. Several hundred community members and civic leaders toured the building, which was designed to inspire collaboration.

More than 2,000 students participated in April Acceleration Academies, which provide academic support and enrichments activities during school vacation week.

The Superintendent thanked Boston Children's Museum VP and School Committee member Jeri Robinson for reading to students at the Nathan Hale School on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Also on April 25<sup>th</sup>, more than 500 volunteers volunteered to repaint the Lee K-8 School in Dorchester. Comcast Cares and City Year are generous partners in the effort.

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Eighteen imaginative kindergartners had their models of a “Better Boston for Children” displayed in City Hall last week, showcasing their ideas about how to make Boston a fairer, more interesting place for kids. “The Our Boston project, part of the new Focus on K2 curriculum for kindergartners, has been selected to receive the 2015 Excellence in Energy and Environmental Education Awards by the Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

Boston Arts Academy is being celebrated in a new book co-authored by *New York Times* best-selling author, Sir Ken Robinson, touting the benefits of building curriculum around students' interests.

At Boston Latin Academy, a group of 20 advanced Japanese language students recently had the opportunity to practice their skills with Akie Abe, the wife of the Japanese prime minister, who visited their class and participated in a lesson on Japanese folklore.

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, about 30 BPS employees participated in a Boston Shines clean-up in Dudley Square.

The Superintendent introduced and congratulate seven BPS school leaders who are taking on new roles:

*Patricia Lampron, Henderson Inclusion K-12 School*  
*Christine Connolly, Grew Elementary School*  
*Rochelle Valdez, Mather Elementary School*  
*Courtney Sheppeck, Murphy K-8 School*  
*Akosua Osei-Bobie, Shaw Elementary School*  
*Alison Hramiec, Boston Day and Evening Academy*  
*Eugene Roundtree, Snowden International High School*

He also introduced Kevin McCaskill, the new executive director of Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. An administrator with Hartford Public Schools, Kevin previously served as principal of the Roger L. Putnam Vocational High School in Springfield from 2004-2010, helping turn around the once underperforming school.

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

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carolyn Kain, chair, Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac), congratulated Patricia Lampron on her appointment as principal of the Henderson Inclusion K-12 School.

John St. Amand, vice-chair, SpedPac, testified regarding special education issues and invited parents to join SpedPac.

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Palma Koenig, parent, Henderson K-12 Inclusion School, testified regarding her experience with the school's leadership.

## **ACTION ITEM**

**Approved** – The Committee approved by unanimous consent a Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant in the amount of \$90,000.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved an Interim Salary Payment Order for External Funds.

**Approved** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved proposal to rename Building #4 on their shared campus “The Nelson Mandela Physical Education Complex.”

## **REPORTS**

**Proposal to Modify Middle School Pathways for Dearborn STEM Academy and John W. McCormack Middle School** – Chief Operating Officer Kim Rice presented the Superintendent's proposal for the Perkins Elementary School and the Tynan Elementary School to feed into the McCormack Middle School in lieu of their current pathway to the Dearborn STEM Academy. This change would raise the McCormack's enrollment projections. This proposal, if approved, would take effect in School Year 2016-2017. The Superintendent is also recommending the creation of a middle school pathway for the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School to the Dearborn STEM Academy for School Year 2015-2016 to increase the likelihood that students living in the Roxbury community have a pathway to the Dearborn. Under the Home-Based student assignment plan, all students in a K-5 program have a guaranteed seat at a designated middle school or K-8 school, referred to as a Middle School Pathway. Students are not required to attend their Middle School Pathway, however, and have the option to choose a different school that offers 6<sup>th</sup> grade as long as the school is on their Home-Based list.

Ms. Campbell requested a facilities master plan update and urged the district to create a dedicated website. Dr. Uriarte expressed concerns about English Language Learners (ELL) programs at the Dearborn, particularly the Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Cape Verdean strand. The Superintendent said he plans to meet with the Cape Verdean community at the Dearborn before presenting his final recommendation to the Committee. Ms. Regina Robinson urged the district to widely engage with families about the proposal. Ms. Jeri Robinson and Mr. O'Neill requested enrollment and demographic data on each of the impacted schools, which Ms. Rice agreed to provide.

**High School Redesign** – The Mayor's Chief of Education Rahn Dorsey and High School Network Superintendent Mary Skipper discussed a new initiative to recreate the vision for Boston's public high schools. Mr. Dorsey explained that a 21<sup>st</sup> Century high school should provide critical skills such as digital-age literacy, inventive thinking and effective communication. The Mayor's Office and BPS will host a series of community discussions in

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May about high school redesign. In addition, a tool kit is available for groups who wish to lead their own session and submit feedback. Recommendations will be incorporated into Superintendent Chang's strategy and execution plans as well as Boston's master facilities plan. For more information, visit [www.highschoolredesign-boston.org](http://www.highschoolredesign-boston.org).

Ms. Campbell encouraged the high school redesign team to use evidenced-based research and take a holistic approach to the work. Dr. Uriarte encouraged a partnership with UMass Boston. Mr. Loconto, Ms. Jeri Robinson and Ms. Regina Robinson encouraged the redesign team to engage a broad range of stakeholders and solicit feedback.

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

No speakers.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. O'Neill apologized for technical difficulties that occurred during the meeting, explaining that staff is actively working to address the issues.

#### **ADJOURN**

At 8:18 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary