



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

April 30, 2014

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 5 p.m. on April 30, 2014 at the Edward Winter Chamber, 26 Court Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

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

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Minutes of the April 9, 2014 School Committee Meeting

Grants for Approval Totaling \$307,398

- Academic Support Services, Allocation Grant Program, Summer 2014 - \$198,000
- Sustainable Materials Recovery Program Municipal Grant - \$15,000
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention: Partners for Youth Success Continuation - \$3,380
- Title I, Part A - \$91,018

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

Boston School Committee's Strategic Vision: Aspirational Goals and Priorities

Boston Public Schools Superintendent of Schools Desired Characteristics (Draft)

Report: Round 1 Results and the Home Based Assignment System

Report: Update on Special Education

Report: Introducing the BPS Office of Engagement

ATTENDANCE PRIOR TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael O'Neill; Meg Campbell; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Rev. Dr. Gregory G. Groover; and Michael Loconto.

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School Committee Members Absent: Vice-Chairperson Claudio Martinez; Margaret McKenna (arrived during executive session); and student representative Ayomide Olumuyiwa.

CALL TO ORDER

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On roll call, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn to executive session to discuss strategy for collective bargaining. Mr. O'Neill explained that having such discussions in an open meeting 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 AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

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

School Committee Member Absent: student representative Ayomide Olumuyiwa.

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:19 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.

CITATION

The School Committee and Superintendent presented a citation to the New Mission High School Boys Basketball Team who recently won the 2014 Division 2 State Championship. They also recognized the New Mission High School Girls Basketball Team, who made it to the state finals but were defeated.

APPROVAL OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

The School Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the April 9, 2014 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

On May 1st, BPS will convene the first meeting of the Safe Transport Multi-Stakeholder Group as the District prepares many 7th and 8th grade students for MBTA transportation starting this fall. The

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Transportation Department has spent the last few weeks soliciting input from students about how the District can successfully and safely make the transition.

U.S. News and World Report recently named nine BPS high schools as among the best in the nation. Boston Latin School received the “best high school in Massachusetts” award, and Boston Latin Academy and the John D. O’Bryant School for Math and Science were also in the top 15. Other high schools that received top honors are Boston Arts Academy, Boston Community Leadership Academy, Fenway High School, New Mission High School, TechBoston Academy and Another Course to College.

Six BPS high school students recently competed in the finals of the “Adobe Youth Voices” competition. The English High School, Boston Latin School and Madison Park Technical Vocational High School were all represented.

On April 29th, BPS celebrated the contributions of the Boston Scholar Athlete program at the annual BSA Gala at Boston University’s Agganis Arena.

BPS is in the process of reorganizing central office departments as part of the Fiscal Year 2015 budget implementation. The new structure will allow BPS to build an organization that is sharper, smarter, more responsive and more in-tune with what schools, students, teachers and families need.

The School Quality Working Group (SQWG) is preparing to launch an online survey at www.bostonschoolquality.org, and will host a community meeting on May 8th at the Shelburne Community Center in Roxbury. The SQWG will discuss the draft framework for measuring school quality, which will ultimately be used as part of the Home Based school choice system. The SQWG expects to bring a proposal before the School Committee later this year.

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

John Mudd, education advocate, testified regarding the superintendent search.

Peggy Wiesenberg, former BPS parent, testified regarding the superintendent search.

Mr. O’Neill recognized a staff representative from the office of City Councilor Ayanna Pressley.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved – The School Committee approved by unanimous consent grants totaling \$307,398.

Approved – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved an interim salary payment order for personnel who are paid through external funds.

Approved – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved revised aspirational goals and priorities as part of the District’s Strategic Vision.

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Approved – On roll call, the School Committee unanimously approved revised criteria to be sought in the next superintendent.

REPORTS

Round 1 Results and the Home Based Assignment System – Chief Operating Officer for Programs and Services Kim Rice presented the results of the first round of the school choice process for School Year 2014-15, the first year of the Home Based system. Round 1 results showed that the average distance for students to travel to school decreased significantly, while the number of students in K1 and K2 who received their top choice schools remained the same as last year. Ms. Rice explained that while the technical implementation of the Home Based system is going well, the District will continue to analyze data to study the impact of the new system on equity and access to quality.

School Committee members asked clarifying questions about the results presented and requested a deeper level of analysis across all categories, which Ms. Rice agreed to provide. Ms. Campbell requested that demand data by school be posted online. Mr. Martinez requested that every data point in all presentations to the Committee be broken down by race, ethnicity and free and reduced lunch. He also urged the District to have the school choice data validated by an external party.

Update on Special Education – Deputy Superintendent for Individualized Education Eileen Nash presented a brief update on the work of the Office of Special Education and Student Services. The District has successfully implemented the second year of its Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Plan, increasing internal staff capacity and professional development hours and providing ABA services in 69 schools. In the past two years, BPS has increased the number of early childhood inclusion classrooms by 46 percent. The District is also developing inclusive pathways by opening 27 new K2 inclusion classrooms in 20 schools in September 2014.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac), Carolyn Kain and John St. Amand, then presented their annual update on SpedPac's work with parents of students with disabilities. SpedPac's key priorities include increasing inclusion programs district-wide, reducing the number of students in substantially separate settings, improving transition services and expanding highly specialized strands to high schools. Several Committee members expressed support for SpedPac's request for the District to assist with parent outreach. The Superintendent agreed to return to the Committee with a work plan. .

Introducing the BPS Office of Engagement – Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Engagement Michele Brooks provided an overview of the new BPS Office of Engagement, which unifies the former Office of Family and Student Engagement, Welcome Services and the Office of Engagement/Circle of Promise. With a focus on long-time sustainability, the unified office aims to leverage the resources of each individual office to build capacity with families, students, community and schools. The new structures will allow BPS to support more schools as they establish the culture and conditions for engagement and implement effective engagement practice.

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The District will return to the Committee in the near future with a revised family engagement policy recommendation as well as a new public/community engagement policy proposal.

Mr. Loconto requested data on the impact of the Play to Learn initiative on student achievement, which the Ms. Brooks agreed to provide. Mr. O'Neill asked about the impact of the District's decision to phase out the Family and Community Outreach Coordinator (FCOC) positions. Ms. Brooks explained that while painful, the change will allow the District to build capacity in all schools, noting that seven network liaisons will support the new structure.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

The following people testified regarding the Home Based School Choice System:

Peggy Wiesenberg, former BPS parent
Megan Wolf, BPS parent and member of Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST)
Mary Battenfeld, BPS parent and member of QUEST

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Martinez requested a legal opinion regarding the process for establishing admissions procedures for autonomous schools. He also requested data on students who are accepted to Boston Latin School.

Ms. Campbell noted that the Boston Municipal Research Bureau recently published a report, *A City in Transition: Managing Change and Retaining Financial Stability in Boston*, and invited BMRB President Samuel Tyler to present at a future Committee meeting.

Mr. O'Neill congratulated Boston School Committee secretary Victoria Mitchell, who is celebrating 20 years of service.

ADJOURN

At 9:44 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary