



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

May 13, 2015

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 6 p.m. on May 13, 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, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

School Committee Meeting Minutes: April 29, 2015

Grant for Approval: Alternative Education State Grant: Education Pathways to Support Students Most At-Risk of Not Graduating from High School - \$2,040.

National School Boards Association Membership Dues for School Year 2015-16: \$12, 975

International Travel Request: Boston Community Leadership Academy and Excel High School – Malawi, June 19-29, 2015

UP Academy of Dorchester Minor Charter Amendment Proposal: School Year 2014-15

UP Academy of Boston Minor Charter Amendment Proposals:
School Year 2014-15 Calendar
School Year 2015-15 (and beyond) Dismissal Times

Boston Public Schools 10 Year Facilities Master Plan

Student Academic Outcomes and state of Access and Achievement Gaps

Office of Academics Update

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ATTENDANCE

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

School Committee Members Absent: Meg Campbell; and Jeri Robinson.

CALL TO ORDER

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

HUNTINGTON THEATRE COMPANY STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Meggie Noel, junior, Boston Latin School recited “Caged Bird” by Maya Angelou.

Maria Gonzalez, sophomore, Another Course to College recited a monologue from *King Hedley II* by August Wilson.

CITATION

The School Committee and Superintendent presented a citation to Ms. Audrey Jackson, a 5th grade teacher at Joseph P. Manning Elementary School in Jamaica Plain, who was named 2016 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

The Superintendent congratulated Audrey Jackson, who became only the 7th BPS instructor to be named Massachusetts Teacher of the Year since the program began in 1960.

Jennifer Milia, a psychologist at Higginson-Lewis K-8, Kilmer and BTU schools, was named School Psychologist of the Year by the Massachusetts School Psychologists Association.

The Josiah Quincy Upper School, under the leadership of co-headmasters Richard Chang and Stephen Cirsuolo, has skyrocketed in the rankings of elite high schools across the state and country. According to *The Washington Post’s* most recent rating of “America’s Most Challenging High Schools,” which gauges how much schools encourage students to take college-level courses, the Quincy Upper now ranks 7th among all public, and a select number of private, high schools in Massachusetts. This is a dramatic rise from its 45th spot last year. The Quincy Upper also ranks second among Boston high schools just below Boston Latin School, which ranked third overall. Altogether, seven BPS high schools were listed in *The Washington Post’s* top 50 schools in Massachusetts list, including New Mission High School and Snowden International School at Copley.

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The Quincy Upper also scored high in U.S. News and World Report's annual report card, ranking 4th among BPS high schools. The Quincy Upper also finished 23rd among the 352 schools in the state, while Boston Latin School ranked second in the state.

The John F. Kennedy Elementary School in Jamaica Plain is the first school in the Commonwealth to be honored as a Certified Welcoming School, a designation given to schools for their respectful and supportive environment for LGBT students, families and staff. The school will receive the Welcoming Schools Seal of Excellence from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation on June 16.

The JFK School also received a visit last week by Celtics Forward Evan Turner, who made good on a previous promise and returned to the school with 100 pizzas. When Turner visited JFK School last December as part of the team's "Read To Achieve" program, he vowed to come back if the students kept up their grades and continued devouring books. With the JFK topping 11 other schools in the reading program, with a whopping 98 participation rate, the Celtics star came back to treat its students and teachers to lunch, discuss basketball and books, and play kickball.

The Bradley Elementary School in East Boston received a special visit last week by Japanese Consul General Tsutomu Himeno who helped lead the ceremonial planting of five cherry trees made possible by a donation from the Fish Family Foundation. The students, who made paper fans for the occasion, learned about the significance of the ornamental tree in Japanese culture and the gift, in 1912, of 3,000 cherry trees by the then mayor of Tokyo to the city of Washington, D.C. The event was organized by BPS Japanese language teacher Tim Nagaoka, who this week also worked with students across six schools to create 1,000 paper cranes to honor the victims of the recent earthquakes in Nepal.

Boston Latin student Christy Jestin will compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C. later this month. Jestin won first place in this year's BCYF Citywide Spelling Bee.

In observance of Bus Driver and Bus Monitor Appreciation Month, the Superintendent asked school leaders to encourage families to reach and thank those among our 720 bus drivers and 400 bus monitors who go out of their way to make their children's ride to and from our schools a safe and positive experience.

School Committee Chair Michael O'Neill received a haircut when he visited the cosmetology program at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School today. Members of the public can get haircuts by Madison Park cosmetology students for a small fee from 10 a.m. -2 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

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The Superintendent introduced and congratulated the following newly appointed principals:

- Emily Bryan, Thomas J. Kenny Elementary School
- Cynthia Soo-Hoo, Josiah Quincy Elementary School -- Interim
- Darlene G. Ratliff, Higginson Lewis K-8 School
- Lisa Gilbert-Smith, Dearborn STEM Academy
- Melissa Malone Sonjeh, Dorchester Academy
- Jeff Cook, Urban Science Academy

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The following BPS teachers and members of the Boston Teachers Union (BTU) testified regarding programming for English Language Learners:

Dan Rosenfeld, teacher, UP Academy Boston
Laura Delgado, teacher, Boston Teachers Union K-8 Pilot School
Andrea Devine, teacher, Kenny Elementary School
Judith Randolph, Haynes Early Education Center
Ann O'Halloran, teacher, Boston Teachers Union K-8 Pilot School
Eduardo Rojas, teacher, East Boston High School
Jonathan Rodriguez, BTU organizer

Edward Kotomori, parent, Another Course to College, testified about finding a permanent location for the school.

Eric Esteves, BPS parent, testified regarding the Achievement Gap

Kenny Jervis, BPS parent, testified regarding Innovation Schools, governance and evaluations

Yvonne Powell, volunteer, testified regarding the relationship between the Boston Plan for Excellence and the Dearborn 6-12 STEM Academy.

ACTION ITEMS

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the April 29, 2015 School Committee meeting.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an Alternative Education State Grant: Education Pathways to Support Students Most At-Risk of Not Graduating from High School in the amount of \$2,040.

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Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved membership dues for the National School Boards Association for School Year 2015-16 in the amount of \$12,975.

Approved – As part of the consent calendar, the Committee unanimously approved an International Travel Request for student and chaperones from Boston Community Leadership Academy and Excel High School to travel to Malawi from June 19-29, 2015.

REPORTS

UP Academy of Dorchester Minor Charter Amendment Proposal: School Year 2014-15 Calendar – Scott Given, Chief Operating Officer of UP Education Network, presented a proposal to amend UP Academy Dorchester’s charter to allow the school to hold 180 days of school during SY14-15 instead of the 185 days required by the school’s charter. This would be a one-time request related to the unprecedented eight days of snow that all Boston Public Schools were required to hold this winter; UP Academy Dorchester intends to continue to hold at least 185 days of school during SY15-16 and beyond.

UP Academy of Boston Minor Charter Amendment Proposals: School Year 2014-15 Calendar and School Year 2015-15 (and beyond) Dismissal Times - Scott Given, Chief Operating Officer of UP Education Network, presented a proposal to amend UP Academy of Boston’s charter to allow the school hold 180 days of school during SY14-15 instead of the 185 days required by the school’s charter. This would be a one-time request related to the unprecedented eight days of snow that all Boston Public Schools were required to hold this winter; UP Academy Boston intends to continue to hold at least 185 days of school during SY15-16 and beyond. Mr. Given presented another minor charter amendment proposal to shift the dismissal times of the school’s daily schedule so that all students are dismissed at the same time each day, and have more opportunities for extracurricular engagement. The specific proposed change is:

	Current Dismissal	Proposed Dismissal
Monday-Thursday	3:20pm Regular Dismissal 4:15pm Late Dismissal	4:00 pm All Dismissal
Friday	1:15pm Regular Dismissal 2:15pm Late Dismissal	12:00pm All Dismissal

If approved, these changes would be effective beginning in the 2015-16 school year. The School Committee is scheduled to vote on the three minor amendment proposals at its next meeting.

Facilities Master Plan Update – Ramon Soto, Director of External Relations for the Mayor’s Education Cabinet, and Kim Rice, BPS Chief of Operations, presented an update on the BPS 10 Year Facilities Master Plan Process, which will include a facilities assessment, educational programming and funding strategies. In May, the BPS selection committee unanimously chose SMMA, an architectural and engineering firm based in Cambridge, MA, to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the district’s 133 buildings. BPS and the Mayor’s Education

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Cabinet will partner with Mass Insight, Pinck & Co. and others to host community conversations that will help shape the final plan, which is expected to be finalized in fall, 2017.

School Committee members asked a variety of clarifying questions, all of which were answered by the presenters and Superintendent. Mr. Loconto and Dr. Uriarte stressed the importance of a robust community engagement process.

Office of Academics Update –Chief Data and Accountability Officer Dr. Kamal Chavda presented a brief update on student achievement outcomes and the state of access and achievement gaps. The district’s graduation rate is at an all-time high while the dropout rate is at an all-time low. Unfortunately proficiency gaps persist between Black and Hispanic students and white and Asian students. Chief Academic Officer Eileen de los Reyes then presented an update on the Office of Academics, which uses a data-driven approach to identify and resolve instructional problems. Working with a theory of action that focuses on excellent instruction, the Office of Academics provides a tiered structure of supports with a differentiated approach that’s specific to school needs. The District is also working to implement the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore), which aims to prepare high school graduates for college or the workplace and reduce the number of students taking remedial courses in college.

Mr. O’Neill requested a comparison between the data presented and the targets set by former Superintendent Johnson in her Acceleration Agenda. Ms. Regina Robinson emphasized the importance of schools facilitating conversations with students about current events.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

Megan Wolf, BPS parent and member, Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), testified regarding the Facilities Master Plan Update.

John Mudd, education advocate, testified regarding the Office of Academics Update.

NEW BUSINESS

The Superintendent announced that the Boston Teachers Union and Boston Public Schools have approved a revision to the 2014-15 school year calendar, making June 29th the last day of school.

ADJOURN

At 9:13 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary