



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

**September 17, 2014**

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 6 p.m. on September 17, 2014 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 of the September 10, 2014 School Committee Meeting

Grant for Approval: Special Education IDEA - \$18,158,620

Superintendent's Memo: Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)

Membership Vote: Community Academy and Dearborn 6-12 STEM Academy

Superintendent's Memo: Code of Conduct Update

UP Education Network Memo: Proposed Charter Amendments: UP Academy Boston and UP Academy Dorchester

Report: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)

Report: School Quality Working Group Framework

### **ATTENDANCE**

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 student representative Ayomide Olumuyiwa.

School Committee Member Absent: None.

**September 17, 2014**

## **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 September 10, 2014 School Committee meeting.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Effective and equitable student schedules have been put in place at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. Last weekend, the Superintendent accepted the resignation of the school's headmaster Dr. Diane Ross Gary. Former BPS headmaster Albert Holland will serve as Acting Headmaster in the short-term until the District can engage the community in a broader discussion regarding leadership. The Superintendent thanked the administrative team that has been working long hours at Madison Park to resolve outstanding issues.

The Superintendent is recommending to the School Committee that BPS move toward the PARCC assessment this year. The recommendation is based on feedback from school leaders. Moving to PARCC this school year would position BPS schools for success in conducting next-generation assessments.

The District currently uses two different methods to designate school quality, both of which rely on MCAS: (1) the state Level designation, one through five, which is used for accountability purposes, and (2) a BPS designation called "MCAS Tiers," which is based on two years of performance and growth. But during the External Advisory Committee (EAC) process that led to the Home-Based school choice plan, many parents expressed that MCAS is not the only measure they look for when considering school quality, calling on the District to establish a better method to measure quality. The School Quality Working Group (SQWG) has been working for nearly a year and half to fulfill that mission. The resulting framework will serve as a road map for all schools, showing them what they are doing well and what they can improve upon. The District must create support structures that target the areas that parents have communicated are important. The Superintendent thanked the members of the School Quality Working Group, including co-chairs Meg Campbell and Rahn Dorsey, for their groundbreaking work as well as District staff Nate Kuder, Laura Dziorny, Mary Ann Crayton, Lauren Milord and Erin Cooley for providing support.

The District has submitted an intervention proposal to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for the Dearborn 6-12 STEM Academy which was informed by the District's conversations with the Roxbury community and other stakeholders. The proposal called for a short-timeline RFP process to identify an external operator, reporting to

**September 17, 2014**

BPS, that has demonstrated experience in STEM as well as in supporting all learners in a culturally proficient way. The District expects to choose an operator by late November.

September 15<sup>th</sup> – October 15<sup>th</sup> is Latino Heritage Month. Yesterday, the Boston Latino Heritage Project distributed DVDs to schools showing how Latinos have positively impacted the Boston community. Deputy Superintendent of Academics Dr. Eileen de los Reyes is featured in the video, along with Mayor Walsh.

On September 18<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, will visit the Mildred Avenue K-8 as part of a nationwide tour to discuss the My Brother's Keeper initiative which aims to rapidly boost outcomes for African American and Latino males in urban school districts.

Today at the Nathan Hale Elementary School, Heart of America and Capital One announced that they are donating 2,000 e-books and 25 laptops. The Superintendent thanked Boston City Councilor Tito Jackson for the role that he played in bringing together the school and Capital One.

Today at the Mather Elementary School, Google and Donors Choose surprised students with an announcement that Google has funded all of the Donors Choose requests made by teachers in Boston and Cambridge – a gift worth \$185,000.

This weekend, BPS officials will join City Year at the Condon Elementary School to kick off “Red Jacket Weekend,” an annual celebration of idealism in the Boston community.

On September 19<sup>th</sup>, DESE will release updated MCAS scores, as well as school level designations. The District will present a full update to the Committee on October 1<sup>st</sup> and post the information at [www.bostonpublicschools.org](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org).

Mr. O'Neill noted that the Committee and Superintendent have received a letter from the Winthrop Street Coalition requesting a meeting to discuss the planned demolition of the Henry Dearborn School building and will follow up.

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

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carolyn Kain, Chair, Boston Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac), testified the Henderson K-12 Inclusion School and other special education issues.

John St. Amand, Vice Chair, SpedPac, testified regarding SpedPac's outreach efforts.

Naima Hernandez, Massachusetts Advocates for Children, read a statement on behalf of Tom Melia and Susan Maze-Rothstein regarding the proposed amendments to the Code of Conduct.

**September 17, 2014**

Jim Costello, instructor, Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, testified regarding the need for strong leadership at the school.

Ayele Shakur, NAACP, testified regarding the admissions process for Madison Park Technical Vocational High School.

The following people testified regarding their happiness with the educational experiences being provided at their schools:

Tameka Grouse, parent, UP Academy Dorchester  
Daphne Lopes, parent, UP Academy Holland  
Aren Williams, student, UP Academy Holland  
Marv Neal, parent, UP Academy Dorchester  
Jennifer Deeble-Stewart, parent, UP Academy Dorchester

## **ACTION ITEMS**

***Approved*** – As part of the consent calendar, the School Committee approved by unanimous consent a Special Education IDEA grant in the amount of \$18,158,620.

***Approved*** – As part of the consent calendar, the School Committee approved by unanimous consent membership in the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) for Community Academy and the Dearborn 6-12 STEM Academy.

The Chair tabled the Committee's vote on revised field trip transportation providers to provide the District will additional time to examine the vetting process.

Mr. Loconto presented a brief update on a meeting he held with Code of Conduct Advisory Council C-Chairs Tom Melia and Susan Maze-Rothstein and District leaders to

***Approved*** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved updates to the Code of Conduct.

***Approved*** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a major charter amendment for UP Academy Charter School of Boston related to maximum enrollment.

***Approved*** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved minor charter amendments for UP Academy Charter School of Boston related to its enrollment policy and a memorandum of understanding with the Boston Public Schools.

***Approved*** – On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved minor charter amendments for UP Academy Charter School of Dorchester related to its enrollment policy and memorandum of understanding with the Boston Public Schools.

**September 17, 2014**

## **REPORTS**

***Superintendent Search Update*** – Dr. Coleman, co-chair of the Superintendent Search Committee, announced that 14 sitting superintendents have applied for the superintendent position and search firm HYA continues to actively recruit candidates. The Search Committee plans to select three finalists in December. The finalists will be publicly interviewed by the School Committee, which will make its final decision by mid-February. The next meeting of the Search Committee will take place on October 2, 2014 at 5 p.m. in the Winter Chambers at 26 Court Street.

Rev. Groover stated the importance of community input in the process. Mr. Martinez said the next superintendent should have proven experience working with English Language Learners and students with disabilities. He also requested that the School Committee receive regular updates on the progress of the Superintendent Search Committee.

***Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)*** - Deputy Superintendent for Academics Dr. Eileen de los Reyes, Chief Data & Accountability Officer Dr. Kamal Chavda, Chief Data & Accountability Officer, Chief Information Officer Mark Racine, and Assistant Superintendent for Engagement Michele Brooks presented the Superintendent’s recommendation to transition the District from the MCAS assessment to the PARCC assessment in all schools beginning this school year. The presenters explained that the PARCC assessment is a more comprehensive tool than MCAS as the BPS shifts to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, which set new expectations for student learning. In addition, Massachusetts will soon adopt a next-generation assessment that is aligned with Common Core standards and online learning. Transitioning to PARCC now will allow BPS to transition to a new assessment well in a low-stakes environment. The District is making significant investments in technology to support next generation learning and assessment as well as developing engagement strategies to educate and support families about the possible transition.

School Committee members asked clarifying questions about the PARCC assessment and the implications of switching to PARCC versus continuing with MCAS or selecting a combination of the two. Dr. Coleman cautioned that schools must not “teach to the test.” Mr. Loconto requested data on the number and types of assessments used by the District. Mr. Martinez called for equity in the distribution of PARCC technology and support as well as accountability by school leaders. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the recommendation on October 1.

***School Quality Working Group Framework*** – School Quality Working Group (SQWG) Co-Chairs Meg Campbell and Rahn Dorsey presented a comprehensive school quality framework for use in BPS. The External Advisory Committee on School Choice (EAC) envisioned a comprehensive quality measure structure that would quantify school quality in a better way than the current MCAS Tier structure in the Home-Based school choice plan. After 16 months, 40 meetings and extensive community outreach, the SQWG created a system that uses Quality Tiers on a 1-4 scale. The Tiers attempt to quantify several factors, including student performance; teaching and learning; family, community and culture; leadership and collaboration; and proficiency and growth. The Superintendent expressed strong support for the Quality Tier

**September 17, 2014**

framework developed by the SQWG, calling on the School Committee to adopt the framework this fall for implementation for the 2016-17 school choice process, which begins one year from now. The timeline would allow the District to develop and execute an extensive communication and engagement strategy to help families, school leaders and the community understand the new framework.

School Committee members expressed support for the School Quality framework and thanked the SQWG and District staff for the countless hours dedicated to the process. Mr. O'Neill called the framework a revolutionary method of measuring school quality and stressed that the District must do a great deal of work to prepare for implementation, pending Committee approval. The Superintendent will provide the Committee with an implementation update in January. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the recommendation on October 1.

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

John Mudd, education advocate, testified regarding the School Quality Working Group's proposed framework.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Dr. Coleman requested an annual report detailing SMART goal outcomes for grants accepted by the Committee. He also requested data that shows whether the District's early hiring initiative has produced more quality teachers,

Rev. Groover congratulated Mr. O'Neill on being elected to the Executive Committee of the Council of Great City Schools.

Mr. Loconto congratulated former Deputy Chief of Staff Laura Dziorny for being a contestant on Jeopardy. The episode will air on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

#### **ADJOURN**

At 9:49 p.m., the School Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary