

THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF BOSTON



MEMORANDUM

To: Boston School Committee Members

From: Michael O'Neill, Chairperson
Hardin Coleman, Vice Chairperson

Re: Opportunity & Achievement Gaps Task Force Charge, Goals and Leadership

Date: June 23, 2015

Cc: Rahn Dorsey, John McDonough, Dr. Tommy Chang, Tanisha Sullivan

Below is a draft Charge and Goals for the proposed Opportunity & Achievement Gaps Task Force, which is scheduled for discussion at Wednesday's meeting. As per SC by-laws, it has been prepared by the Chair and Vice Chair, with input and advice from Rahn Dorsey and Tanisha Sullivan (representing the District).

Based on feedback from some SC members, we would prefer to consider the potential Charge, Goals and suggested Task Force leadership at the meeting on 6/24/15, then look to populate the Task Force (beyond the leadership), based upon School Committee input on the goals and charge, i.e. what expertise could be brought to the table to fulfill the charge and goals. We would then bring forward full Task Force recommended membership for consideration at our meeting on 7/15/15.

We expect that this Task Force would operate in two stages. First, review the current policy and recommend changes to the BSC by 12/31/15. The basis for the work would be the current policy, but the Task Force would be informed by the considerable amount of research that has been done on this topic since the formulation of said policy. Then, on an on-going basis, the

Task Force should act as a leadership and monitoring board, advising the BSC and District on actual implementation. This is exactly how the ELL Task Force has operated, quite successfully. As with the SC's strategic plan, we tried to keep the Charge and Goals as simple and straightforward as possible, using the minimum of words. The charge may be short, but the work is long – and important.

With regards to leadership of this Task Force, we recommend that it be co-led by the following:

- Jeri Robinson (BSC member and early education expert).
- Ayele Shakur (Regional Executive Director, BUILD Greater Boston and Chair, NAACP Education Committee)
- Samuel Acevedo (Executive Director, Boston HERC)

Lastly, we are thinking through the concept of asking several nationally known professors to act as “Senior Advisors” to the Task Force leadership. More on that to come.

Proposed Charge and Priority Goals for the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force

Proposed Charge

The Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force is charged with investigating and recommending to the Boston School Committee (BSC) system-wide policies, programs and practices designed to eliminate achievement and opportunity gaps for Boston Public Schools (BPS) students, including potential adjustments, improvements and additions to the existing BPS Achievement Gap Policy and Goals. Thereafter, this Task Force will provide on-going leadership and monitoring, including direction, metrics and support, for the implementation of said policy by the District, with regular reporting to the BSC on actual results.

Proposed Priority Goals

1. Provide a thorough review of the existing BSC Achievement Gap Policy and Goals, and develop additions, adjustments and improvements to include a more explicit focus on opportunity gaps for recommendation to the BSC by December 31, 2015.
2. Upon revision of said Policy and Goals, provide expertise, support, and resources to BPS staff for the development of an implementation plan for said revised Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Policy and Goals.
3. Provide the BSC with recommendations for ongoing monitoring and accountability of the implementation plan, including specific recommended metrics.
4. Provide recommendations to the BSC regarding the metrics and associated weights for the *Access and Opportunity* domains of the School Quality Framework.
5. On an on-going basis, review existing BPS policies and programs targeting the elimination of achievement, performance and opportunity gaps, and provide (i) an assessment to the BSC regarding the efficacy of the policies and programs in closing the gap(s), and (ii) recommendations for ongoing monitoring by the BSC of gap-related programs.
6. Coordinate with the English Language Learners (ELL) and Inclusion Task Forces in eliminating achievement, performance, and opportunity gaps for students receiving ELL and special education services.