
MEMORANDUM

TO: School Committee

FROM: Dr. Samuel DePina, Deputy Superintendent, Operations

CC: Superintendent Mary Skipper
Monica Hogan, Assistant Superintendent, Data Strategy and Implementation

DATE: Wednesday, January 18, 2023

RE: Council of Great City Schools Report on Safety

Tonight, Ray Hart, Executive Director of the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS), will summarize findings and recommendations from the CGCS report on Student and Staff Safety: “*Review of Safety Program of the Boston Public Schools.*” This report is required as part of the Systemic Improvement Plan.

The presentation will cover some key findings and recommendations from the CGCS. The recommendations fall into two major areas: Safety Services, which includes our relationship with the Boston Police Department (BPD), and the staffing, retention, and ongoing development of our Safety Services team, and Emergency Management, which will be discussed in executive session at a later date to ensure the safety and security of our students and staff.

Recommendations that will be shared this evening include:

- Encourage the Superintendent and BPD Commissioners to work collaboratively on developing and implementing a shared MOU/IGA that involves input from community stakeholders. At a minimum, the agreement should --
 - Prioritize opportunities for police to build positive relationships with students; and
 - Design a process for sharing information.
- Create a focus group of appropriate stakeholders and administrators to consider if BPS should form an internal, sworn police department.
- Require BPS Security Services to be more involved with the hiring process to help reduce the time it takes to select and onboard candidates.

- Mandate that law enforcement records, as identified by FERPA, reside under the management and supervision of Safety Services.
- Acquire an anonymous reporting system hotline or software product to encourage the reporting of inappropriate and anticipated dangerous behaviors.
- Address low morale issues in the Safety Services department by encouraging team building, skip-level meetings, and professional development opportunities.
- Prioritize roles and responsibilities in all department units to ensure that personnel focus on school-based safety and policing practices, not duties customarily associated with municipal or county policing functions. Recruit or promote mid-level management who will champion school-based policing approaches.
- Partner with the Human Resources to --
 - Monitor turnover rates, establish exit interview protocols for department employees who voluntarily separate from BPS, and identify and track the causes for leaving to identify opportunities to make or recommend changes in policy;
 - Revisit, rewrite, update, and distribute job descriptions to reflect current roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability and performance;
 - Invite the Communications and Human Resources Departments to plan and staff ongoing recruitment opportunities and leverage mass communication and social media approaches so the district can successfully fill current vacancies

The district has begun work in these areas in the past year, which includes the following:

- MOU with BPD: We are currently in discussions with the BPD regarding an MOU.
- Safety Specialist Recruitment: The Safety Services team has been engaging with the community on an ongoing basis. We are currently exploring recruitment opportunities through more formal channels such as career fairs.
- Team Morale: Team building activities have been ongoing throughout the year. In addition, the department holds partnerships with community organizations, and Specialists have the opportunity to engage in meaningful work with students through activities such as mentoring.
- Adopting Best Practices: The district routinely engages in conversations with other districts in the country through forums like national conferences.

The district is deeply committed to improving the safety of our schools for both students and staff and values the CGCS's insights, recommendations, and partnership. Tonight's presentation from CGCS will provide the School Committee with an understanding of these

recommendations from an external partner. The Council for Great City Schools will then present the remainder of the report in Executive Session at a later School Committee meeting.

The District Team will update the School Committee regarding implementation of the work at future meetings, including the use of the Racial Equity Planning Tool for any recommendations and decisions made.

The report has been submitted to DESE and the slides from tonight's presentation and a redacted version of the report will be made available on the BPS website at www.bostonpublicschools.org/strategicprogress.