



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

December 6, 2017

The Boston School Committee held a meeting on December 6, 2017 at 5 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, School Committee chamber, 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.

ATTENDANCE PRIOR TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Michael D. O’Neill; Vice Chair Hardin Coleman; Michael Loconto; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Jeri Robinson; and Regina Robinson.

School Committee Member Absent: Dr. Miren Uriarte (*arrived while executive session was in progress*).

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Grants for Approval Totaling \$225,000

Amount	FY	Grant Name	Status	Fund Manager	Focus Area(s)	Sites
\$121,000	2018	Children’s Pilot Funds	New	Jill Carter	Health and Wellness	Districtwide
\$52,000	2018	MassGrad Promising Practices - BATA	New	Benjamin Helfat	At-Risk Students	Boston Adult Technical Academy
\$52,000	2018	MassGrad Promising Practices - Charlestown	New	Alex Kalamaroff	At-Risk Students	Charlestown High School

Adjusting School Start Times

School Committee Presentation: BSC-AFSCME Tentative Agreement

BSC-AFSCME Tentative Agreement on a Four Year Collective Bargaining Agreement Equity Impact Statement

December 6, 2017

Build BPS Update I and Bibliography

Build BPS: Grade Configurations Equity Impact Statement

Internal Auditor in Boston Public Schools

CALL TO ORDER

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

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. O'Neill announced that the School Committee will immediately adjourn to executive session to discuss collective bargaining strategies related to the Boston School Police Patrolmen's Association and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME - Food Service Workers). To have such a discussion in an open session would have a detrimental effect on the Committee's bargaining position. The Committee will return to public session.

Approved – The Committee unanimously approved, by roll call a motion to adjourn to executive session.

PUBLIC SESSION

At approximately 6:05 p.m., with all Committee members in attendance, the Committee returned to public session.

Mr. O'Neill recognized Atlanta Board of Education member Byron Amos, who was in the audience.

MEETING MINUTES

The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the November 15, 2017 School Committee meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

**As prepared for delivery.*

Good evening. I hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving, and got to relax and enjoy spending time with your loved ones. I want to start tonight's report by discussing the recent IRS audit concerning student activity accounts.

First off, I want to reiterate what I emphasized in a letter I sent to the BPS community on Friday — the trust of our families, staff, and the public at large is of the utmost importance to me and

December 6, 2017

the rest of the Boston Public Schools. We are working really hard to implement stringent measures that we feel will greatly restore that trust. I also want to again apologize to the School Committee for not informing you earlier about the agency's review of our school student activity accounts. That was an oversight on my part. I assure you it will not happen again. I want to stress, however, that by no means were we trying to keep this quiet, as some have suggested. To the contrary, when we learned of the initial findings of the IRS audit, we took swift and decisive action to correct issues with decades-old account practices our student activity accounts. On June 5, 2017, I sent a memo to all school leaders across the district [A] notifying them of the IRS audit, [B] informing them of the need to reform our practices, and [C] instructing them to follow strict guidelines on the proper accounting and distribution of the student activity monies. In August, we held training sessions across the city with more than 200 BPS principals and teacher representatives, clarifying for them the rules governing student activity account practices. We shared with school staff a training video, a manual and a PowerPoint presentation outlining appropriate accounting practices related to student activity accounts. And we posted those resources on our website in August.

Additionally, we took a number of corrective measures last spring.

These include:

- Immediately implementing stopgap measures to ensure student activity funds are following proper accounting practices, such as:
- Requiring all payments to BPS staff to now go through our district payroll
- Prohibiting the use of debit cards associated with these accounts.
- Undertaking an extensive survey of all schools and their student activity accounts.
- Mandating that all student activity accounts now be held through a City of Boston Tax ID number at Citizens Bank — creating one master account — so that all funds can be monitored by the BPS and City finance offices. The City Treasurer has also worked with Citizens Bank to ensure all relevant accounts were identified.
- Moving school student activity accounts into a centralized system overseen by the BPS Finance Office, which now provides tighter fiscal controls that will allow for every deposit and expenditure to be tracked and linked to specific activities online.

We did not stop there. Last Thursday, I stood with Mayor Walsh as he announced the City would be utilizing global accounting firm Ernst & Young to conduct a comprehensive and independent review of all student activity accounts. We feel confident that this review will provide us the information we need to fully correct any outstanding issues with these accounts and restore the public's trust in the stewardship of these accounts.

Tonight, you will be voting on a policy we have proposed to restructure school start- and end-times to better serve the needs of our students and schools. For the past 18 months, we closely examined the effects of our start and end times at all schools across the district. We have developed a research-backed policy that will help us to improve academic performance and potentially free up significant reinvestment back into schools. The policy is based on extensive feedback from 10,000 students, family members and staff through 17 community meetings, an online feedback form, and a district-wide survey.

December 6, 2017

Additionally, BPS is proud to have worked very closely with the MIT Operations Research Center to optimize the best possible start times for our schools, creating a scheduling tool that ensures greater efficiency throughout the district. The proposal we are presenting tonight will not ask for a vote on specific start- and end-times for individual schools; but rather, for a vote on a policy that would prioritize certain factors into how we structure bell-times districtwide. This policy will move significantly more students to times better suited for their age levels and sleep patterns, while also making our transportation system more efficient.

It advises the district to set the following goals:

- Increase, where possible, the number of secondary school students starting after 8:00 AM, keeping in line with scientific research;
- Increase, where possible, the number of elementary school students dismissing before 4:00 PM;
- Where possible, assign schools with higher concentrations of medically fragile students or students with autism or emotional impairment to bell times more reflective of the needs of their student body;
- And, where possible, do all of the above while maximizing reinvestment in schools.

This is a very complex issue. School bell times have tangible impacts on the lives and daily routines of our students and their families, ranging from jobs to a student's academic performance. We are committed to working with the many out-of-school partners in Boston that are critical in providing educational programming for this city's youth. As a district, we must make sure that our students are set up for success, and they deserve nothing less. I am confident that next year's school bell schedules will be an improvement for the majority of families, and will be reflective of the feedback we have received from thousands of students, parents, and staff. If School Committee approves this policy, we will communicate all start and end-times for next year to students, families and staff starting tomorrow. These times will also be posted on our website at: bostonpublicschools.org/starttimes.

I would like to provide you a quick update on the Build BPS 21st Century Fund, which Mayor Walsh established to make immediate, tangible investments in every BPS building. The furniture bidding process has been issued. The bid was advertised this past Monday December 4th and this large furniture bid will be open until January 11, 2018. I look forward to sharing additional updates with about this investment in our schools in the new year.

Now onto some bright spots. I want to congratulate BINcA 11th grader Deina DaCosta Lopes on receiving the "We Are Boston Youth Action Award" last Thursday from Mayor Marty Walsh and the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Advancement. Deina truly is a model student and an inspiration to her classmates. She's co-captain of the girl's undefeated soccer team — scoring 41 goals this season; maintained an A+ average for 3 years, while taking demanding courses like AP Physics via dual enrollment at BU; serves as a student rep on the School Site Council; and is actively involved with the Student Government, for which she was elected president last year. She has also helped promote immigrant advancement within her school community and to bring Computer Science to girls at BINcA.

December 6, 2017

After spending the summer learning through the Girls Who Code program, she felt inspired to create a Girls Who Code club in her school. Each week she works with her teacher planning lessons and co-teaching a group of 14 immigrant girls about the basics of computer science. Her personal story is equally impressive. This highly self-motivated 18-year-old left her parents in her native Cape Verde two and a half years ago, at age 16, to live with three older siblings in Boston so she could get an education here. Like her siblings, she's worked at a Cape Verdean restaurant in Dorchester to help support herself. In the words of BINcA's Toni Jackson, who nominated her for the award: "I have never met a more gentle, cooperative, competitive young woman. She fights to achieve all she can because she knows the value of those achievements and the benefit of the fight itself." Deina, you make us all proud. Keep up the great work.

I would like to highlight one of our Central Office staffers, Shakera Walker, the director of teacher development on the Instructional Superintendent team, for her extracurricular activities that landed her on the website of the Boston Partners in Education. A former BPS kindergarten and first-grade teacher at the Eliot and Young Achievers schools, Shakera was recently profiled by the organization in its "Volunteer Spotlight" feature for her role as an academic mentor at the Winthrop Elementary School in Roxbury. For the past three school years, Shakera has spent several hours each week supporting a kindergarten classroom by teaching small groups and assisting with classroom activities, such as *read-a-louds* and whole-group instruction, as well as mentoring kids. This is a great example of how BPS employees like Shakera use volunteering to still stay directly connected to the classroom. Way to go Shakera!

Lastly, I want to recognize our partner representatives from Operation Warm and Hollister clothing company for donating more than 500 winter jackets for every student at the Martin Luther King Jr. K-8 School in Dorchester today. They also provided 60 volunteers from as far away as Canada to hand out the coats, and organize interactive games for the students in the school's gymnasium. Stop and Shop from Grove Hall also supplied three employees who served yummy and healthy snacks to the students, while Dana Farber supplied hand-knitted hats. There were plenty of smiles as the students got to pick out their own coat. Operation Warm's mission is to provide students brand new coats to help boost self-confidence and stay warm. The organization works directly with manufacturers to create carefully crafted winter coats made just for kids in a variety of styles and colors. This is fourth year that BPS's HERN (Homeless Education Resource Network) has collaborated with Operation Warm. I want to thank Mary William from HERN and our corporate partners for all their work in helping keep our students warm each winter.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila congratulated BINcA student Deina DaCosta Lopes on her award. She also suggested that the district should involve students in the management of student activity accounts.

Mr. O'Neill said that he and Dr. Coleman recently met with the Superintendent to discuss the management of student activity accounts. He said that he and Dr. Coleman accepted the Superintendent's apology, calling it a learning moment, and noted that the Superintendent moved swiftly to address the situation.

December 6, 2017

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

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

**As prepared for delivery.*

I left early the last school committee meeting to head off to Albuquerque, New Mexico with several other Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) members to participate in the Youth Power 2017 "From Rooted Resilience to Rising Power" Conference, which held a strong focus on the importance of culture, listening, healing, and action with regards to youth empowerment and ally engagement.

Also, one steering committee member and staff member participated in the Obama Foundation training day with 150 other young leaders across Boston to learn and discuss how to make positive change in their communities.

BSAC Vice President Anthony Pina has joined the Nellie Mae Foundation Youth Planning Team.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in district conversations. The following student groups participated in School Start Time Conversations: BSAC; St. Peters Teen Center Program; BPS Office of External Affairs' Street Team; and Sociedad Latina.

BSAC also had the opportunity to meet and provide feedback on the Opportunity Index and we feel confident that our feedback and ideas were truly reflected in the update of the proposal.

Legislative Drops at the State House - Thursday, November 30th - 14 Students broke up into four teams and met with and/or visited more than 20 offices.

The Student Rights App has received more than 12,500 downloads/visits to date. BSAC is exploring how to include a menu of alternatives to suspension on the app. BSAC presented the Student Rights App and climate curriculum to the Boston Teachers Union membership at their monthly meeting

BSAC's membership currently consists of 56 students representing 28 schools. Representatives are still needed from the following schools: Boston Adult Technical Academy, Boston Arts Academy, Boston Green Academy, Dearborn STEM Academy, Greater Egleston, Horace Mann, McKinley, and Boston Collaborative High School.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Michelle Scansaroli, teacher, Manning Elementary School, testified in favor of expanding the school's grade configuration.

Jasmine Talbert, parent, Manning Elementary School, testified in favor of expanding the school's grade configuration.

December 6, 2017

Jennifer Boyd Herlihy, BPS parent, testified regarding her concerns related to K2 assignment notifications.

Rosemary Connors, school nurse, Ellison/Parks Early Education Center, testified regarding staffing concerns related to immunizations.

Nancy Garland, school nurse, Condon K-8 School, testified regarding staffing concerns related to immunizations.

Jonelle Johnson, school nurse, McCormack Middle School, testified regarding staffing concerns related to immunizations.

Heidi Winston, school nurse, Boston Teachers Union Pilot School, testified regarding staffing concerns related to immunizations.

Ann Kearney, BPS school nurse, advocated for more funding in the foundation budget for school nurses.

Paul Garcia, teacher, Boston Arts Academy, testified regarding student growth on MCAS.

Nicole Baltazar, Brighton High School graduate, advocated for returning former Brighton High School teacher Ellie-May O'Toole and her STEM programs to Brighton High School.

Yoskar Melo, student, Fenway High School, shared his concerns related to later start times for high school students and the potential impact it could have on after school programs and community partners.

Bette O'Gara, executive director, Key Steps, testified regarding the work of her program in supporting high need youth.

Peggy Wiesenberg, citizen, testified regarding her concerns around the proposed start time policy.

ACTION ITEMS

Dr. Coleman and Ms. Jeri Robinson asked clarifying questions about the Mass Grad Promising Practices grant, which were answered by Benjamin Helfat, headmaster of the receiving school, Boston Adult Technical Academy. Ms. Oliver-Dávila praised BATA's student-centered learning approach.

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent grants for approval totaling \$225,000.

December 6, 2017

The Committee engaged in a robust discussion about the school start times realignment proposal. Mr. O’Neill read the draft motion aloud and noted that BPS has been out of compliance with the current policy which calls for schools to rotate start times every five years.

Ms. Regina Robinson and Mr. Loconto, who served on district working group, expressed support for the proposal and thanked the BPS operations team for their work. Mr. Loconto commended the Superintendent for taking a bold step to address a complex, decades-old problem and for his commitment to reinvesting savings into the classroom. Ms. Oliver-Dávila encouraged the district to work with external partners and encouraged district leaders to think about redesigning the school day, particularly for high school students. The Superintendent agreed. Mr. O’Neill echoed the importance of the district working with partners to redesign the school day for high school students. Mr. McClay expressed concerns about high school students who have after school jobs or have to care for siblings. Dr. Uriarte asked how the policy will be implemented and measured. The Superintendent responded that the district will need expertise to evaluate the policy’s implementation, and said he plans to work with other school districts. Mr. O’Neill suggested that the start times working group provide guidance on what key performance indicators should be used to evaluate effectiveness. Ms. Jeri Robinson said that the all student should have high quality options and encouraged the district to look at the bigger picture. Mr. O’Neill said that school start time dissatisfaction is the complaint that he receives most often from parents. He added that research is clear on the benefits of later start times for high school students and noted that feedback on the proposal has been extremely positive.

Approved – The Committee unanimously approved, by roll call, a policy to realign school start times beginning in school year 2018-2019.

REPORTS

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Boston School Committee and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME - Food Service Workers) - Labor Relations Director Karen Glasgow and Food and Nutrition Services Executive Director Laura Benavidez are presenting highlights of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the AFSCME Council 93, Local 230 (Cafeteria Workers) and the Boston School Committee. The tentative agreement achieves significant reforms in the area of staffing of school cafeterias. It also includes a wage increase of two percent for FY17, FY18, FY19, and FY20. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the agreement on December 13th.

Build BPS Update I – Associate Superintendent Tommy Welch, Deputy Superintendent of Strategy Donna Muncey, and Executive Director of Strategy Dan Anderson provided an update on BuildBPS that focused on grade configurations. BPS currently has 20 different grade configurations, often creating multiple transitions for students, unclear pathways for families, and stretching thin the district’s resources when class enrollment does not reach capacity. Additionally, research shows that students in schools serving grades 6, 7, and 8 experience sharp declines in academic performance. The presenters explained the Superintendent’s vision for moving towards greater coherence in grade configurations within BPS. Becoming a district of

December 6, 2017

primarily K-6/7-12 and K-8/9-12 will increase predictability for families, minimize transitions for students, and still offer a portfolio of various options.

Mr. Loconto thanked the Superintendent's team for taking a research-based approach to the issue of grade configurations with the goal of improving student outcomes. He said that families want predictability and expressed interest in the district's potential to maximize dollars that follow the students. He also said that he looks forward to learning more about the district's plan to engage school communities about grade reconfigurations in future Build BPS updates. Mr. Loconto requested an update on pending tax legislation.

Ms. Jeri Robinson asked about impact on early childhood centers and early learning centers. The presenters explained that families would still have those options. Families would still have that option.

Dr. Uriarte encouraged district leaders to examine MCAC data for 8th graders across grade configurations.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila requested data on the demographics of families who leave BPS in grades 4 and 6. She encouraged district leaders to center the conversation around what is best for students and not the current building stock.

Dr. Coleman asked questions about the language used in the proposed policy, beginning a discussion around being aspirational vs. grounded and measured.

Mr. Loconto encouraged the Committee to agree upon an organizing principle.

Mr. O'Neill summarized the discussion, saying that the School Committee should drive the policy decisions related to Build BPS. He said that while middle schools are struggling, BPS should continue to recognize and leverage the expertise of middle school teachers. He also stressed the importance of parent choice and the value of offering a portfolio of schools. He asked the district to conduct more academic research and engage in additional outreach with school leaders, families, teachers and the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) to better understand how stakeholders feel about grade configurations. He added that BPS should be considerate of schools that have advocated for and chosen K-8 configurations.

Internal Auditor in Boston Public Schools – Chairman O'Neill proposed the creation of a School Committee Internal Audit Task Force made up of five-to-seven members who are experts on internal auditing. The Task Force would create a job description for an internal audit executive, approve annual audit plans, monitor the work of the internal audit executive, and report annually to the School Committee. Mr. O'Neill recommended that School Committee follow a Council of Great City Schools Fall 2017 report on best practice for internal auditing, and said he would provide the Committee with the report.

The Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer Eleanor Laurans expressed support for the proposal, and said that the FY 19 budget will support the work of the Task Force.

December 6, 2017

Ms. Oliver-Dávila suggested having a Task Force member from the non-profit community. Mr. Loconto suggested that the Task Force should examine what it means for BPS to be a dependent school district. The Committee is scheduled to vote on the creation of the Internal Audit Task Force on December 13th.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

The Superintendent said that BPS is partnering with the Boston Area Research Initiative (BARI) to conduct a comprehensive equity analysis of the district's home base student assignment system. He also announced that at the next School Committee meeting, he will formally recommend that (1) the Mattapan Early Elementary School add a second grade beginning in school year 2018-19; and (2) the creation of a pathway from the P.A. Shaw Elementary School to the Mildred Avenue K-8. The Superintendent said that he will present these recommendations to the Committee in writing and asked the Committee to consider taking a vote on these items at the next meeting. Ms. Regina Robinson asked the Superintendent to include feedback from families in the presentation.

Dr. Uriarte requested an update on the home base equity analysis for next week.

ADJOURN

At approximately 10:15 p.m., the Committee voted by unanimous consent to adjourn the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth Sullivan
Executive Secretary