

To: Boston School Committee
From: Laura Perille, Interim Superintendent
Date: June 19, 2019
Subject: **Proposed Changes to School Quality Framework**

In November 2014, the Boston School Committee voted to adopt the School Quality Framework (SQF) developed by the School Quality Working Group (SQWG) with input from a broad and diverse set of community stakeholders, as a holistic means to assess school quality. The SQF is a tool to promote equity and ensure all families have access to rich information about BPS schools. School level SQF data has been calculated three times utilizing six years of data:

2015 Tiers: 2013 & 2014 Data - Not Implemented for student assignment

2017 Tiers: 2015 & 2016 Data - Implemented for student assignment

2018 Tiers: 2017 & 2018 Data - Implemented for student assignment

SQF Tiers have been updated in November each of the previous two years, including in November 2018 utilizing Spring 2018 performance data. Over the years, we have continued to receive input from SQWG members—including, school leaders, students, families, and community partners. Based on this feedback, the proposed updates to the SQF policy will provide more transparency and predictability for schools and families with respect to when tiers will be updated, and more accurate information about school quality.

Update tiers every year while maintaining continuity of choice lists

SQF data will be calculated every year in order to provide up-to-date information for families (next calculation in Fall 2019) and inform the assignment process removing the need for ‘snapshot tiers’. In order to increase stability, families will receive all schools on their home-based list from the two most recent tier calculations (i.e., over a two-year period). The most current tiers will be displayed. The district will monitor this approach to generating school choice lists for overall effectiveness, including cost.

Remove Tier 4 Override Provision

Turnaround schools will no longer automatically be designated Tier 4. These schools will receive the tier, as calculated, like all other schools. State accountability status is noted in DiscoverBPS for all schools.

Update to Calculation Policy

The framework will continue to be calculated based on the four fully developed SQF Domains and associated outcomes. While the SQF provides families more comprehensive and meaningful information about school quality than the state accountability system, it is being continuously monitored so that potential improvements can be identified by BPS and the School Quality Working Group. As part of those efforts toward continuous improvement, we are proposing increased flexibility to adjust metrics based on data source changes and new opportunities to refine metrics. This will provide the ability to continue to improve the SQF. Examples of adjustments that would be attributable to this change in approach for Fall 2019 might include:

- **Climate survey participation metrics**: Currently schools receive zero points if their participation rate is below 30%. We could complete a sensitivity analysis to inform graduated penalties for low participation aligned with margins of error of the sample.
- **Attendance metric**: We could revise the attendance metric to focus on improving chronic absenteeism. The current target of 92% attendance is not differentiated by grade band and does not substantially reward growth.

The state has moved to chronic absenteeism as an accountability indicator, aligned with research around school improvement.

- Science proficiency metric: Currently the SQF does not incorporate data from the MCAS science assessment. We could determine how to incorporate a science proficiency metric. Including a science metric would broaden the performance data considered and better align with the state accountability system.

These policy proposals will increase equity by improving quality and frequency of data available to marginalized members of the BPS community. Annual update of tiers will increase transparency by providing parents and all members of the BPS community more up-to-date information on school quality. With increased ability to modify calculation and scoring methodologies based on data source changes the district will be more able to adjust the calculation to better capture more holistic measures and refine individual metrics to better assess schools. This will enable members of the BPS community with fewer resources to access better information about school quality. And the removal of the turnaround override provision will eliminate a barrier for schools that disproportionately serve traditionally marginalized populations and increase transparency about school quality.

For more information about SQF, visit: <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolquality>.

School Quality Framework

Giving families a more holistic understanding of school quality

In 2014, BPS developed a system for measuring school quality that looks holistically at what makes a high-quality school experience for students and families. The Boston Public Schools (BPS) believes that school quality is best determined by looking not only at how students perform on standardized tests but also how they grow from year to year, along with examining certain key areas of a school, such as its culture. The School Quality Framework (SQF) provides families more comprehensive data on how schools perform on a broad range of measures. Access to this expansive amount of data will help families make better-informed and more customized school choices. BPS has continued to improve the School Quality Framework each year to give families a clearer picture of their school choices.

Framework Score	
Tier 1	65-100
Tier 2	55-64
Tier 3	45-54
Tier 4	0-44

The School Quality Framework evaluates schools in five areas: student performance, teaching and learning, family, community and culture, leadership and collaboration, and access and opportunities (see Figure 1 below). Within each area, BPS has identified outcomes and measures relevant to these diverse aspects of school quality. Under the SQF, a school will receive a score from 0-100 based on measurements in the five areas. These scores correlate to a school quality tier from 1-4.

School Quality Framework Domains and Outcomes



New - Better School Climate Survey data

The calculation includes two years of survey data on the perceptions of students, teachers, and families about their current school. Additional indicators from the school climate surveys have also been included in the most recent SQF calculation in order to better incorporate the voices of students, teachers, and families.

Students, teachers, and families provide input on:

- *cultural sensitivity*
- *attitudes toward learning*
- *parent engagement*
- *teacher collaboration*
- *curriculum*
- *teachers' interest in students*
- *perceptions of the safety of schools*