



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S OPPORTUNITY AND ACHIVEMENT GAPS TASK FORCE MEETING

March 5, 2020

The Boston School Committee's Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force held a meeting on March 5, 2020 at 4 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, 6th floor community room, Roxbury, Massachusetts. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org/gaps, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

Task Force Members Present: Co-Chair Jeri Robinson; Co-Chair Ayele Shakur; Dr. Carline Pignato, Kimberly Williams; Marinelle Rousmaniere; Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi; Dr. Gil Noam; and Rev. Willie Bodrick

Task Force Members Absent: Co-Chair Sam Acevedo; Jennifer Aponte; Dr. Carroll Blake; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Lisa Gonsalves; Dr. James Jennings; and Sherman Zemler Wu.

BPS Staff Present: Corey Harris, Chief Accountability Officer; Dr. Charles Grandson, Chief Equity & Strategy Officer; Dr. Colin Rose, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Opportunity Gaps; Harold Miller, senior director, Policy & District Transformation, Office of Opportunity Gaps; Ilyitch Tábora, executive director, Immigrant/Targeted Populations, Office of Opportunity Gaps.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

OAG Meeting Minutes: February 10, 2020

Strategic Planning Update, Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force, March 5, 2020

OAG Strategic Priorities BARR

Highlights of BARR in Boston Public Schools

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CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Robinson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Task Force members and members of the public introduced themselves.

Ms. Robinson announced that the Task Force would defer the approval of meeting minutes from February 10, 2020 due to the lack of a quorum.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Chief of Accountability Corey Harris presented an update on the district's Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan, which is expected to bring \$1.8 million to BPS. That funding has already been incorporated into the BPS FY21 budget. Mr. Harris will present the SOA Plan to the School Committee for approval in March before submitting the plan to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) by April 1.

There are four commitments to address in the SOA Plan: focusing on student subgroups; using evidence-based programs to close gaps; monitoring success with outcome metrics and targets; and engaging all families. Mr. Harris presented 17 evidenced-based program examples identified by DESE. He explained that the Superintendent's Strategic Plan is aligned with 8 of them. Mr. Harris asked the Task Force members to participate in an exercise to identify the most important priorities.

Mr. Santiago-Lizardi shared concerns about the Timilty Middle School having adequate resources to become an inclusion school. He expressed disappointment with the amount of SOA funding that BPS will receive. Ms. Rousmaniere spoke about the complexities of the Student Opportunity Act approved by the state legislature.

Ms. Shakur said that she was troubled by the proposed exercise and questioned its value. She said that the OAG Task Force is focused on monitoring the implementation of the OAG policy. Other members agreed. After some discussion, the members ranked their top priorities. The members overwhelmingly identified "diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention" as the top priority. Inclusion, standards alignment, and wrap around services also ranked highly.

Dr. Grandson provided an overview of the Superintendent's updated draft strategic plan, which she presented to the School Committee on February 26th. Mr. Miller suggested that the Task Force schedule a series of sessions at which time department heads will present their draft goals for the next OAG policy implementation plan for review and feedback. Ms. Robinson asked that all the department heads come prepared. Members suggested that each presentation include baseline data and context. They also suggested that the Task Force receive a status update on the progress and challenges of the first implementation plan before district leaders present their goals

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for phase two. The co-chairs asked Ms. Sullivan to send out a Doodle poll to identify meeting dates for April and May.

Dr. Grandson said that the final draft of the Superintendent's strategic plan is slated to be presented to the School Committee on March 18th, followed by a vote on March 25th. Ms. Robinson requested that specifics in the implementation plan be linked to department heads who are responsible for executing those items. Ms. Robinson emphasized the importance of receiving disaggregated data. Dr. Grandson said that the district is developing a data dashboard. He provided a summary of the changes from the previous draft.

Ms. Tabora presented the Task Force with the district's newly revised Racial Equity Planning Tool for discussion and feedback. Ms. Shakur said that the racial equity tool is thorough. She suggested adding more focus on ethnicity, culture, and language. Dr. Rose explained that the tool is a starting place for the conversation. Members suggested adding language about Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP) in the summary and listing other departments that need to be involved.

Ms. Rousmaniere asked how the tool is being used. Ms. Tabora said that this year, department heads are using the tool in the development of work plans. It will be used twice next year. Ms. Rousmaniere suggested that department heads presenting their goals to the Task Force should demonstrate how they are using the tool.

Ms. Robinson suggested highlighting whether the people engaged are reflective of the BPS population, showing who was engaged and how. Dr. Noam suggested going beyond the text to demonstrate where there are opportunities for growth. Rev. Bodrick asked about evaluation and accountability. The district is working on creating systems for supports. Ms. Tabora will share the new equity impact statement template with Ms. Sullivan for distribution to the Task Force.

Dr. Rose and Mr. Miller presented an update on the Office of Opportunity Gaps. Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR) is a nationally acclaimed program that is currently being offered in many BPS high schools. BARR is funded through I3 grants. Dr. Rose and Mr. Miller praised program. Dr. Noam suggested that the district work to embed the BARR model into BPS rather than offer it as another program.

Dr. Rose announced that he plans to transition out of BPS by the end of June. He and Hayden Frederick-Clarke, also of the Office of Opportunity Gaps, are starting a new education consulting firm called BlackPrint that will be based on Warren Street in Roxbury. He expressed confidence in the leadership of Ms. Tabora and Mr. Miller. Ms. Shakur praised Dr. Rose's leadership and impressive contributions to BPS. Dr. Rose thanked the Task Force for serving as valuable thought-partners. Dr. Noam suggested organizing a farewell celebration for Dr. Rose. Dr. Grandson pledged that the district will not go backwards.

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John Mudd, education advocate, expressed deep gratitude to Dr. Rose. He urged the OAG Task Force to focus on implementation and move beyond a departmental focus. He said that the biggest issues facing the district are inter-departmental in nature. He encouraged the Task Force to elevate language and culture, request disaggregated data, and continue to use achievement gap data.

Ms. Fields, member, Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts (BEAM), expressed concern about Dr. Rose stepping down as Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Opportunity Gaps. She thanked Dr. Rose for his leadership. She said that focusing on race is important. She encouraged the OAG Task Force to be more aggressive. She suggested that the Office of Opportunity Gaps should report directly to the Superintendent.

ADJOURN

At approximately 6:23 p.m., the co-chairs adjourned the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary