



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
OPPORTUNITY AND ACHIEVEMENT GAPS
TASK FORCE REMOTE MEETING**

January 25, 2022

The Boston School Committee Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force held a remote meeting on Zoom on January 25, 2022 at 4 p.m. 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 Sam Acevedo; Co-Chair Jeri Robinson; Co-Chair Ayele Shakur (joined after roll call) Dr. Carroll Blake; Rev. Willie Bodrick; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Lisa Gonsalves; Dr. James Jennings; Dr. Carline Pignato; Marinelle Rousmaniere (joined after roll call); Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi (joined after roll call); Kimberley Williams (joined after roll call).

Task Force Members Absent: Jennifer Aponte; and Dr. Gil Noam. Student Representatives Dorian Levy and Catherine De Jesus were also absent.

BPS Staff Present: Dr. Charles Grandson, Chief Equity & Strategy Officer; and Yozmin Gay, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Opportunity Gaps.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

OAG Task Force Meeting Minutes: December 14, 2021

Office of Opportunity Gaps Budget Proposal FY22/FY23, January 25, 2022

Observations for OAG Task Force Based on December 2021 Meeting, January 25, 2022

CALL TO ORDER

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Ms. Robinson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approved - By roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the December 14, 2021 OAG Task Force meeting.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Dr. Gonsalves, Dr. Jennings, and Dr. Pignato shared a document they co-wrote containing their Observations for OAG Task Force Based on December 2021 Meeting. Dr. Jennings said that given persistent gaps, the OAG Task Force should redefine its role and advocate for issues that most impact academic achievement. He suggested that the Task Force strengthen its role as a monitoring body. He noted that data from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) demonstrates persistent gaps among BPS students. Dr. Pignato said that this is an opportunity for the Task Force to reset. Ms. Shakur thanked Dr. Pignato for calling out the deliverables in the documents. She spoke about the momentum of this work being lost in the past transition of superintendents. Mr. Acevedo spoke about the complexity of bureaucracy and implementation. Dr. Jennings said that the Task Force has an opportunity to address new issues that have emerged during the pandemic. Dr. Gonsalves suggested that the Task Force set its own agenda that is more intentional, collect data, and use existing frameworks.

Dr. Grandson expressed support for the proposed direction and vision of the Task Force. He briefly reviewed the evolution of the OG Office, its partnership with the OAG Task Force and the rubric designed to focus district presentations to the Task Force.

Rev. Bodrick expressed concerns about the district's lack of institutional continuity. He questioned the impact of the district's OAG policy implementation plan. He described the recentering of the Task Force's work as an important step. He echoed Dr. Jennings's comments about the need to address pressing issues that have risen during pandemic. He suggested better tracking of the goals that the Task Force has already laid out. Ms. Shakur spoke about loss of the OAG goal tracking system designed by former Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Opportunity Gaps Dr. Colin Rose. She suggested establishing subcommittees to move the work forward. She expressed concern about the OG Officer receiving the funding necessary to move the work forward. The co-chairs agreed to schedule a meeting with Superintendent Cassellius to discuss these concerns prior to the next Task Force meeting. Dr. Coleman said that the district needs to build a culture of accountability. He expressed support for the suggestions made by Dr. Jennings, Dr. Gonsalves, and Dr. Pignato. Dr. Grandson shared a [link](#) to the OAG goal tracker. Dr. Jennings expressed concern about an increase in student homelessness. He suggested that Task Force members ask specific, key questions about what departments are doing to reach their goals and objectives. Dr. Blake said that the Task Force has lost focus on the OAG policy which has been one of the few consistent things in BPS in recent years. He disagreed with the implication that the Superintendent is not fully supportive of the work. Ms. Williams expressed support for the suggestions to refocus the work. She called upon the Task Force to lead on this

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issue and take action, adding that the Task Force must hold itself accountable. Mr. Acevedo spoke about the disconnect between the implementation of the goals and student outcomes. Ms. Gay affirmed her commitment to the work. She spoke about the differences between holding central office and schools accountable and consciousness. She said that in her new role, she can see holes and opportunities to scale up. She spoke about the importance of finding a healthy balance between empathy and interrogation and moving beyond accountability to responsibility and consciousness.

Ms. Gay presented a PowerPoint: Office of Opportunity Gaps Budget Proposal FY22/FY23. Ms. Gay spoke about disproportionality at open enrollment schools. She said that there needs to be strategic alignment of programming to support student academic progress. She outlined budget requests for the OG Office for FY22 and FY23. Ms. Shakur clarified that Dr. Gay is seeking an endorsement of the budget proposal and recommended that the Task Force vote to endorse the presentation. Dr. Jennings expressed full support for the work of the OG Office but said he could not support specific budget recommendations based on a brief presentation. He agreed that the Office should be fully funded. Ms. Robinson that she supports providing the OG Office with the funding necessary to support the work outlined by Ms. Gay. After much discussion, the co-chairs agreed not to call for a vote but instead have Ms. Sullivan capture in the minutes the strong support expressed by members for Dr. Gay's presentation, noting that no objections were raised to the content of the presentation.

Dr. Jennings discussed next steps. He asked members to devise specific questions that need to be answered by the district. Dr. Grandson added that the superintendent and her team are currently reviewing the proposal and are looking for areas of alignment with other district initiatives in the FY23 budget process.

Ms. Robinson suggested that members send Ms. Sullivan a list of their top two or three burning questions for the district.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Barbara Fields, advocate, expressed support for full funding of the OG Office. She requested an update on Excellence for All.

John Mudd, advocate, applauded Task Force's efforts to refocus and recenter its work. He said that it is crucial to identify priorities.

ADJOURN

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Attest:

Elizabeth Sullivan

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Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary