



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

March 30, 2021

The Boston School Committee Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force held a remote meeting on Zoom on March 30, 2021 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 Jeri Robinson; Co-Chair Sam Acevedo; Co-Chair Ayele Shakur; Dr. Carroll Blake; Rev. Willie Bodrick; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Lisa Gonsalves; Dr. James Jennings; Dr. Gil Noam; Dr. Carline Pignato; Marinell Rousmaniere ((joined meeting after roll call); Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi (joined meeting after roll call); and Kimberley Williams (joined meeting after roll call).

Task Force Members Absent: Jennfier Aponte; and Sherman Zemler Wu.

BPS Staff Present: Dr. Charles Grandson, Chief Equity & Strategy Officer; Harold Miller, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Office of Opportunity Gaps; Jacob Stern, Director of Performance Management, Office of Data and Accountability; Monica Hogan, Senior Executive Director, Office of Data and Accountability; Eva Mitchell, Deputy Chief Equity & Strategy Officer; Corey Harris, Chief of Accountability; Shira Decovnick, Director of School Transformation; Geoff Rose, Division of Accountability; Kelly Hung, Assistant Superintendent Office of Accountability; Shahara Jackson, HGSE Doctoral Resident, Division of Accountability; and Itytch Tabora, Assistant Superintendent of Student & Community Impact, Division of Accountability.

Boston School Committee Chair Alex Oliver-Dávila joined the first portion of the meeting.

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DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

[Agenda](#)

OAG Task Force Meeting Minutes: February 23, 2021

Division of Accountability Presentation, March 30, 2021

Proposed Rubric Tool for OAG Task Force, March 30, 2021

Boston School Committee Goals and Guardrails with Preamble, March 2021

Memo from OAG Task Force to Boston School Committee re: official statement by the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force in response to the Boston School Committee's proposed Goals and Guardrails, March 30, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: FEBRUARY 23, 2021

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the February 23, 2021 OAG Task Force meeting.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Ms. Oliver-Dávila provided a brief overview of the School Committee's draft goals and guardrails, which is rooted in the Superintendent's strategic plan and is meant to increase the Committee's focus on improving student outcomes and increasing accountability. She said that she and Vice Chair Michael O'Neill had met with representatives from the Black Educators' Alliance of Massachusetts (BEAM) and the Boston Network for Black Student Achievement (BNBSA) and plan to incorporate some of their feedback, such as changing the term guardrails to values. They have also met with representatives from the Boston Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SpedPac) and will be incorporating some of their feedback. She spoke about the Committee wanting the goals and values to be a community document, not just a Committee document. She clarified that the goals and values are not separate from the strategic plan and that if achieved, they will close gaps. The goals focus on student outcomes (what students should know and be able to do). The strategic plan will continue to track 55 measures, including adult inputs.

Ms. Robinson thanked everyone who provided feedback. She said that there are areas that need further clarification or focus rather than adding new measures.

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Dr. Coleman praised the Superintendent's [College, Career, and Life Readiness presentation](#) to the School Committee on March 24th. He spoke about the critical need for the Committee to focus on student outcomes.

Dr. Gonsalves encouraged the Committee to explore why outcomes are not being met if that is the case. She suggested strengthening the language about evaluation.

Dr. Coleman spoke about the importance of tracking data and identifying and sharing best practices.

Ms. Williams spoke about the variability of the student experience by school and the need for equitable funding.

Ms. Shakur said that inequities in the system need to be called out. She suggested that closing gaps should be explicitly addressed in the college, career, and life readiness goal. She reviewed a statement that she drafted on behalf of the Task Force responding to the proposed goals and guardrails. She suggested adding a line in the preamble stating that none of the goals can be achieved without closing gaps.

Mr. Acevedo suggested that the goals be made more explicit, and acknowledged the need for the district to help students recover from the pandemic. Rev. Bodrick cautioned against being too narrowly focused.

Ms. Robinson called the goals and values a “clarion call” to the district, adding that district leaders not only need to have the data but a plan to address it and the ability to change course if needed.

Janet Williams, retired educator, spoke about the need for a plan to close gaps.

Dr. Pignato asked how the OAG Task Force's feedback will be incorporated into the School Committee's goals and guardrails. Ms. Oliver-Dávila said that she sees alignment between the feedback provided and the vision of the School Committee, adding that language will be adjusted to increase that alignment. She reiterated that the district will continue to track the 55 measures in the strategic plan and that the School Committee is focusing on touchpoints from that plan.

Dr. Grandson offered to incorporate Task Force's feedback in collaboration with Monica Hogan, Senior Executive Director, Office of Data and Accountability.

Ms. Oliver-Dávila closed the discussion by outlining next steps. Dr. Grandson and Ms. Hogan will make revisions based on these conversations. The Committee will vote on the final goal and values in April.

Chief of Accountability Corey Harris presented a report from the Division of Accountability PPT. The Division of Accountability comprises 12 offices with a staff of 389 working to (1) Build a culturally and linguistically sustaining, anti-racist community that works interdependently within our division and across divisions; (2) Learn how our individual and

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collective work supports students, families and school communities by advancing Culturally & Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP) (BPS Mission & Vision); (3) Mitigate obstacles through our actions to advance CLSP and antiracism actively and deliberately throughout the year.

The Division of Accountability has three major goals:

- Support and hold accountable each member in the Division of Accountability to take deliberate action to identify and dismantle cultural, structural, racial, and social barriers that create opportunity gaps for students
- Make investments, provide targeted professional learning, materials and ongoing support to eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps
- Develop and implement a student-centered strategy for organizing the resources of school, family, and community to transform schools into healing-centered spaces of innovation and liberation and transform student outcomes

Mr. Harris spoke about Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP), a whole school walkthrough tool to determine how schools are performing and what supports they may need to perform CLSP with fidelity. He encouraged members to visit <https://www.uky.edu/projectplace/criop> for more information.

Dr. Jennings spoke about the importance of job-embedded professional development and parent and student empowerment. Ms. Tabora said engagement is at the heart of Hub Community Schools where families help inform decisions. She said that she will make the connection more explicit. Mr. Harris agreed about the importance of job embedded professional development.

Dr. Noam praised the team's approach to the work by thinking about accountability as school transformation. He suggested that the last slide be more streamlined. He expressed concern that there may be too many people involved.

Ms. Williams said that she has seen a positive shift in professional development in the past year. She applauded the addition of 12 new positions.

Dr. Pignato asked about the timing of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for 2025. Mr. Rose said that the term MTSS is still abstract, adding that the district needs to deepen the work by operationalizing MTSS over the next four years using Panorama. Dr. Pignato spoke about the importance of hiring the right people for the 12 new positions. Ms. Hung spoke about the district's deliberate emphasis on hiring people of color who are multilingual.

Ms. Rousmaniere asked about the Guidance Department. Dr. Harris said that Guidance may be moved to the Division of Accountability.

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Ms. Rousmaniere shared a website of interest regarding guidance and support teams:
<https://chicago.chalkbeat.org/2021/3/22/22344002/chicago-public-schools-to-invest-24-million-in-student-trauma-and-mental-health-programs>.

The Co-Chairs announced that they would postpone the rubric discussion due to time constraints. They thanked the members who drafted the rubric and said they look forward to discussing it at the next meeting.

Mr. Acedeo asked members to email feedback to rubric within 10 days.

Ms. Santiago-Lizardi said that the Timilty Middle School where he teaches does not have a guidance counselor because the school's enrollment is under 400. He encouraged the presenters to think how to provide guidance resources to schools without a guidance counselor.

Dr. Grandson provided a brief update from the Division of Equity, Strategy, and Opportunity Gaps. He said that the district will have to restart the search for a new Assistant Superintendent of Opportunity Gaps after one finalist dropped out and the other finalist accepted another position. Dr. Grandson said that the budget for the Office of Opportunity Gaps has been level funded for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22), adding that he is exploring the use of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. Dr. Blake expressed concerns about the Office of Opportunity Gap's lack of permanent leadership and budget. Dr. Grandson reaffirmed his commitment to the work and praised Mr. Miller leadership as Interim Assistant Superintendent. He said that there are currently eight full time employees in the OG Office.

PUBLIC COMMENT


- Barbara Fields, advocate, expressed concern about the Office of Opportunity Gap's budget and lack of permanent leadership.
- John Mudd, advocate, said that the elimination of gaps should be the top goal of the School Committee's goals and guardrails. He encouraged the Committee to elevate teacher diversity and add explicit language about English Language Learners with disabilities and professional development. He urged the Committee to delay the vote.

ADJOURN

Ms. Shakur asked members to send any additional feedback on the goals and guardrails to Ms. Sullivan as soon as possible.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary