



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

June 29, 2021

The Boston School Committee Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force held a remote meeting on Zoom on June 29, 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 Ayele Shakur; Dr. Carroll Blake; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Lisa Gonsalves; Marinell Rousmaniere (joined after roll call) and Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi. Dorian Levy, Boston Student Advisory Council appointee to the OAG Task Force, was also in attendance.

Task Force Members Absent: Co-Chair Sam Acevedo; Jennifer Aponte; Rev. Willie Bodrick; Dr. James Jennings; Dr. Gil Noam; Dr. Carline Pignato; Kimberley Williams; and Sherman Zemler Wu. Carolyn DeJesus, Boston Student Advisory Council appointee to the OAG Task Force, was also absent.

BPS Staff Present: Dr. Charles Grandson, Chief Equity & Strategy Officer; Harold Miller, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Office of Opportunity Gaps; and Eva Mitchell, Chief of Accountability.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

[Agenda](#)

OAG Task Force Meeting Minutes: May 25, 2021

[ESSER Proposals for Opportunity Gaps & Anti-Racist Practice](#)

[Opportunity & Achievement Gaps Task Force \(June 29, 2021\): Federal Relief Funding Planning](#)

June 29, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Robinson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. A quorum was not present; Ms. Robinson tabled the approval of the May 25, 2021 meeting minutes until the next meeting.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Chief Equity and Strategy Officer Dr. Charles Grandson presented a PowerPoint on Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Proposals for Opportunity Gaps (OG) & Anti-Racist Practice. He said that the proposed OG investments using ESSER funding should transition into the BPS general fund budget in the years to come to ensure sustainability. Harold Miller, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Office of Opportunity Gaps, explained how the work of the OAG Office has grown significantly since 2016.

High Level Goals for Next Phase 2020-2025

SYSTEM FACING SUPPORTS & ACCOUNTABILITY

OAG Policy & BPS Policy Review, Planning & Implementation

- Review and update of 2016 OAG Policy
- Implementation of 2020-2025 OAG Policy Goal setting process in BPS Divisions, Departments AND Schools
- Lead, facilitate and organize teams, processes, and timelines to vet, revise and/or create new district AND school level policies
- Work with Superintendent, Division of ESOG and Office of Special Education to ameliorate the disproportionate referral rate of Black and Latinx students in substantially separate settings

SCHOOL FACING SUPPORTS

PD & Coaching Capacity with schools and central office so educators can get what they need to better serve students

- Develop team and clear, shared, vision, calendar and arc of learning for BPS CARES (CLSP/CRIOP, Anti-Racism, Racial Equity Planning, Equity Roundtables, Systemic EWIS)
- Develop team and shared vision for the implementation of CLSP Badge/Endorsement

STUDENT FACING SUPPORTS

Innovation & Programming directly serving students

- Ensure funding and capacity for expansion of Exam School Initiative (ESI) and development of Strategies 4 Success (S4S)
- Locate sustainable funding to improve upon current programming and/or develop new programming based on direct feedback from stakeholders pre/post pandemic {10 Boys/10 Girls, BARR, PGC, Success Mentors, William James College CAMHI Initiative, Boston Rookies (Elementary School Athletics/Academics), Social Histories of Indigenous Peoples and Peoples of the African Diaspora, Hip Hop Agora, and more}

**Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force Remote Meeting
Zoom**

June 29, 2021

- Re-emerge sustainable partnership w/ EFA

Capacity Considerations for Next Phase 2020-2025

SYSTEM FACING SUPPORTS & ACCOUNTABILITY

OAG Policy & BPS Policy Review, Planning & Implementation

- Goal setting & monitoring for 8 division chiefs, 53 departments heads, and 125+ school teams
- Equitable Policy Review: 15 new policies scheduled to be developed next year with an antiracist lens
- 200+ district policies and circulars overall
- 1 newly proposed position

SCHOOL FACING SUPPORTS

PD & Coaching Capacity with schools and central office so educators can get what they need to better serve students

- 125+ schools - supporting and monitoring School-based Equity Roundtables, implementation of CLSP/CRIOP in alignment with OAG Policy and REPT
- 40+ racial equity analyses writing in progress - monitoring and coaching district offices
 - Continued CLSP & Anti-racism training - for 125+ school leaders and 150+ central office staff, Executive Team, and School Committee
- Lowest performing schools require targeted, systematic, pedagogical strategies to ensure optimal teaching and learning
- 2 newly proposed positions

STUDENT FACING SUPPORTS

Innovation & Programming directly serving students

- Expansion of Exam School Initiative (ESI) scheduled to serve over 750 students year around and expand to 4th grade
- Design and implementation of Strategies 4 Success (S4S) scheduled to serve 1300+ 7th & 9th graders at each Exam School
- Sustain funding and programming in over 40 BPS schools; earned nearly \$500,000 in grant funding 2017-2020
- Incubation of Boston Rookies (Elementary School Athletics) and other identified programming
- 2 newly proposed positions and request of additional funding to launch/sustain programming

Dr. Grandson reviewed the Division of Equity, Strategy & Opportunity Gaps' ESSER Funding Proposals totaling \$2,153,680.65 over three years, as well as the Office of Recruitment, Cultivation & Diversity ESSER Proposals totaling \$4,800,000.00 over three years.

Mr. Filiberto-Lizardi spoke about the importance of guidance counselors. He suggested that all schools, regardless of their size, should have guidance counselors.

**Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force Remote Meeting
Zoom**

June 29, 2021

Ms. Williams asked about the expansion of Excellence for All (EFA). Ms. Shakur commented that EFA is currently under the Office of Academics and seems stagnant. Dr. Grandson spoke about the importance of expanding rigor whether under the name EFA or something else. Regine Pieree said that she is no longer managing EFA. She said that it is important to maximize its impact. She suggested that one way ESSER funding could be used is to stipend school teams to do Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP)/Culturally Responsive Instructional Observation Protocol (CRIOP) work at the school level.

Ms. Robinson suggested that BPS consider creating a hybrid between EFA and Advanced Work Class (AWC). She asked how the district will increase rigor in grades 4-6 to prepare students for MassCore requirements in high school. Dr. Grandson spoke about the importance of rigor for all and said that AWC Working Group recommendations will be forthcoming to the School Committee.

Chief of Accountability Eva Mitchell then presented a PowerPoint on Federal Relief Funding Planning. BPS is slated to receive \$123 million in ESSER II funding to support lost learning and wellness. The BPS ESSER funding plan was developed and informed over the past three months through a robust community process that engaged students, families, teachers, staff, and the larger Boston community. The plan outlines how 100% of funding will be utilized to support stronger student outcomes. The plan ensures that the first 50% of funding is invested directly to schools; the next 30% will go to schools via school department investments; and the final 20% will be allocated to fund districtwide innovation, collaboration and community partnerships.

Ms. Mitchell said that the ESSER II Plan draft will be released on July 8, 2021, followed by a 30-day public comment period and one additional meeting of the ESSER Commission. Each BPS department had to present a proposal. Ms. Mitchell is scheduled to present an ESSER update to the School Committee tomorrow, June 30. BPS will present a draft plan to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) followed by an amended plan after the completion of the public comment period.

Mr. Filiberto-Lizardi spoke about the importance of differentiating support by need. Dr. Blake asked if the ESSER funding is guaranteed. Ms. Mitchell confirmed that it is. He expressed concern about the funding cliff. Dr. Coleman spoke about the importance of diversity recruitment, hiring and retention, as well as driving quality in every school. He suggested that the School Quality Working Group, which he co-chairs, explore how to reinvent the way that school quality is defined. Dr. Gonsalves suggested that the ESSER plan place more focus on data and evaluation. Ms. Rousmaniere suggested that there be more investments in academics rather than programs.

Ms. Mitchell introduced her ESSER support team: Maggie Riddell, Charles Paige, and Serena La Roque. She spoke about the proposed investments in three categories: academics, social-emotional and operations. She said that the district will fund operations in the central budget.

**Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force Remote Meeting
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June 29, 2021

Ms. Robinson spoke about the importance of engaging students in the decision-making process. Ms. Mitchell said that BPS plans to establish a Student ESSER Commission. Ms. Robinson suggested including younger student voices. Ms. Mitchell offered to share the results of a student and family survey. She spoke about the district's engagement with families through the Citywide Parent Council (CPC), District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC), and Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpedPac). Dr. Blake asked how the needs of individual schools will be monitored. He spoke about the importance of accountability and suggested a study on black and brown boys. Ms. Mitchell spoke about the district's focus on the instructional core, multilingual learning and inclusion, high quality pathways, equitable access, school environments, and community.

Ms. Shakur summarized the discussion by providing a recap of focus areas of importance to the OAG Task Force:

- A guidance counselor in every school
- EFA in every school
- Teacher Recruitment and Diversity
- Assessment, Data and Accountability - what's working?
- Look at each Investment - is it truly driving systemic change? Or just another program?
- Teacher Recruitment *for* Diversity
- Focus on Black and Brown boys

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Barbara Fields, advocate, spoke about the importance of teaching and learning and the importance of funding and supporting Excellence for All.
- John Mudd, advocate, asked the Task Force to consider the strategic levers of systemic change and lessons learned. He urged BPS to address the language diversity of students and staff. He advocated for CLSP investments in the curriculum and new CLSP professional development. He spoke about the importance of inclusion models and the district's contract with the Boston Teachers Union contract

ADJOURN

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary