



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

**March 21, 2023**

The Boston School Committee Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force held a virtual meeting on Zoom on March 21, 2023 at 4 p.m. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit [www.bostonpublicschools.org/gaps](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/gaps), email [feedback@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:feedback@bostonpublicschools.org) or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

**ATTENDANCE**

Task Force Members Present: Dr. Carroll Blake; Rev. Willie Bodrick; Hardin Coleman; Dr. Lisa Gonsalves; Dr. Gil Noam; Dr. Carline Pignato; Marinelle Rousmaniere; Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi; Kimberley Williams; Co-Chair Sam Acevedo; Co-Chair Jeri Robinson; and Co-Chair Ayele Shakur.

Task Force Members Absent: Dr. James Jennings. Student Representative Khasim Saeed was also absent.

Boston Public Schools (BPS) Staff Present: Deputy Superintendent of Family and Community Advancement Ana Tavares, Chief Equity and Strategy Officer Charles Grandson; Assistant Superintendent of Achievement Gaps Yozmin Gay; and Acting Managing Director of Retention, Cultivation & Diversity Programs Rashaun Martin.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Agenda

OAG Task Force Meeting Minutes: December 20, 2022

PowerPoint: Educator Diversity Data as Presented at the November 2, 2022 School Committee Meeting - Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force, March 21, 2023

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

March 21, 2023

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*Approved* - The OAG Task Force unanimously approved, by roll call, the minutes of the December 20, 2022 meeting.

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Ms. Robinson provided a brief update regarding the recent break in OAG Task Force meetings. She said that following the December 2022 meeting when Superintendent Skipper presented an overview of her key priorities and an update on the reporting structure, several members of the Task Force and the community raised concerns about the new reporting structure and its potential impact. The Co-Chairs then held meetings with the Superintendent and her Chief of Staff Rochelle Nwosu to address these concerns. The co-chairs made the decision to pause Task Force meetings in January and February. While discussions with the Superintendent's Office are ongoing, the co-chairs are committed to moving the work forward, and have added today's special meeting.

Ms. Robinson welcomed district partners Dr. Ana Tavares, Deputy Superintendent of Equity, Family and Community Advancement, Dr. Charles Grandson, Chief of Equity Strategy and Opportunity Gaps, Dr. Yozmin Gay, Assistant Superintendent of Opportunity Gaps and Acting Managing Director of Retention, Cultivation & Diversity Programs Rashaun Martin. The Task Force will meet again next Tuesday, March 28 as previously scheduled. Ms. Robinson reaffirmed the co-chairs' commitment to this critical work and to partnering with the district towards a shared goal of improving outcomes for children.

Ms. Shakur said that a number of members have raised concerns about increasing teacher diversity, prompting her recent testimony to the Boston School Committee requesting additional funding to support BPS teacher diversity efforts in the FY24 budget. Today's presentation from Acting Managing Director of Retention, Cultivation & Diversity Programs Rashaun Martin and subsequent data requests will also attempt to address those concerns. The Office of Human Capital will join the March 28th OAG Task Force meeting to discuss diversity recruitment.

Ms. Shakur encouraged members to view the trailer for the documentary film [\*The Right to Read\*](#) which shares the stories of an NAACP activist, a teacher, and two American families who fight to provide young people with the ability to read, the most foundational indicator of life-long success. Ms. Shakur said that in order to close gaps, young people must first be able to read, calling it a fundamental building block for learning. Ms. Shakur suggested that the Task Force consider centering its focus around literacy as well as data and accountability.

Dr. Tavares expressed support for the focus on literacy. She said that an organization called Learning Heroes plans to put up billboards in cities across the country, including Boston, citing literacy data. She said that Superintendent Skipper and her team are keenly focused on equity literacy. Ms. Shahur emphasized the importance of curriculum and consistency across the district. Rev. Bodrick agreed that literacy is an important issue and said that accurate metrics since the start of the Covid pandemic are needed.

**March 21, 2023**

Ms. Rousmaniere echoed earlier comments about the value of literacy and recommended two podcasts: *Sold a Story* and *Have You Heard*. She spoke about the importance of learning from the past and ensuring alignment across the curriculum. Dr. Blake and Ms. Williams expressed hesitation about shifting the focus of the Task Force towards literacy, saying that the Task Force must address other outstanding questions about its role. Dr. Gonsalves suggested that the data subcommittee examine literacy as part of its work. Dr. Coleman encouraged the Task Force to look more broadly at student outcomes rather than specific academic areas, describing the Task Force as more of a review panel than an action panel. Dr. Pignato said that she will share a memo regarding literacy and monitoring with the co-chairs for their consideration.

Acting Managing Director of Retention, Cultivation & Diversity Programs Rashaun Martin presented a report on Educator Diversity Data, which he noted contained data presented to the School Committee last November as part of the district's hiring and workforce diversity, with a primary focus on teachers and guidance counselors (i.e. "Garrity educators"). The Garrity Order requires BPS to achieve and maintain a desegregated faculty and staff (teachers and guidance counselors), "comprised of not less than 25% blacks and 10% other minorities." BPS strives to employ a workforce that reflects the rich racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of its student population. The diversity of Garrity educators in the district continues to increase compared to prior years. BPS employs 7% of the teachers in Massachusetts and accounts for 30% of the state's educators of color. The 2022-2023 school year saw a 66% increase in the number of Garrity educator hires from the prior year. Also this school year, BPS hired more new-to-BPS Garrity educators than any year in the past five years. Compared to last school year, the number of paraprofessionals and substitutes who transitioned into teacher or guidance counselor roles nearly doubled. While Garrity hires' self-reported fluency in a BPS language declined for the 2022-2023 school year, the proficiency of hires remains above the five-year average. Educators of color continue to exit the district at lower rates than their white counterparts. The presenters shared highlights of the district's recruitment, retention and cultivation strategies to attract and retain a diverse workforce. Mr. Martin highlighted areas of progress as well as areas in need of improvement. He said that additional staff are being added to support the district's recruitment and retention work.

Dr. Gonsalves requested the further disaggregation of slide 7 (retirements, resignations, non-renewals). Mr. Martin agreed to follow up. Ms. Williams requested that educator data in the presentation be separated by teachers, guidance counselors and paraprofessionals.

Dr. Pignato asked about paths to licensure beyond emergency licensure. She also asked how exit interviews inform the district's recruitment and retention strategy. Mr. Martin explained the district's targeted approach to supporting provisional educators of color. He said that the Office of Human Capital conducts an exit survey that focuses on supervision and professional development.

Dr. Blake asked Mr. Martin to follow up with more information about data trends related to non-renewals.

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

**March 21, 2023**

Dr. Grandson said that the Superintendent is rebuilding the Retention, Cultivation & Diversity (RCD) team and offered to provide more information at the March 28th Task Force meeting.

Dr. Tavares highlighted school leader Jomila Smith for her retention work.

Mr. Acevedo expressed concern about retirement rates among teachers of color and asked Mr. Martin to follow up with more information. Dr. Grandson said that a large group of black educators are slated to retire in the next two or three years. He said that he will ask the Office of Human Capital to provide more information.

Ms. Williams requested a staffing update for the Office of Opportunity Gaps. Dr. Grandson said that the Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices (CLSP) position has been vacant for several months. He pledged to provide a complete staffing update for the Division of Equity, Strategy and Opportunity Gaps (ESOG) on March 28.

The Task Force discussed and compiled the following data requests related to diversity recruitment, hiring and retention:

Ms. Williams: Please separate teachers, guidance counselors, and paraprofessionals in the data presented in the PowerPoint.

Mr. Santiago-Lizardi: Please provide data on exits of teachers of color by school.

Dr. Gonsalves:

- Retirement, resignations, non-renewal data
- Number of paras who become teachers
- Number of teachers of color hired on waivers and on emergency license
- Number of teachers of color who are provisional
- Number of teachers of color who take advantage of the MTEL support
- MTEL pass rates for teachers of color
- Data on the promotion of teachers of color to the administration

Ms. Shakur requested data on promotions if it is tracked (and suggested that the district track the data if not currently doing so).

Dr. Blake requested an update from the Office of Opportunity Gaps related to programming and staffing. Dr. Grandson said that he will present an update on March 28.

Ms. Shakur said that at the March 28 OAG Task Force meeting, Superintendent Skipper will join from 4-4:30 p.m., followed by an ESOG update from Dr. Grandson and a presentation from the Office of Human Capital responding to many of the data questions raised today.

Mr. Acevedo led a brief discussion summarizing topics that Task Force members would like to see at future meetings:

- Literacy

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

**March 21, 2023**

- Racial Equity Planning Tool
- School-Based Equity Roundtables
- School Climate Surveys
- Monitoring progress of the goals in the strategic plan
- Mental health
- Central Office climate and culture

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

- John Mudd, advocate, testified regarding strategies for increasing teacher diversity.

**CLOSING AND ADJOURNMENT**

**Approved** - On roll call, the Task Force unanimously approved a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary