



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

April 26, 2022

The Boston School Committee Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force held a remote meeting on Zoom on April 26, 2022 at 3 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 (joined after roll call); Co-Chair Ayele Shakur; Co-Chair Sam Acevedo; Dr. Carroll Blake (joined after roll call); Rev. Willie Bodrick (joined after roll call); Dr. Lisa Gonsalves (joined after roll call); Dr. James Jennings; Dr. Carline Pignato; and Marinell Rousmaniere (joined after roll call).

Task Force Members Absent: Jennifer Aponte; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Noam; Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi; and Kimberley Williams. Student representatives Catherine de Jesus and Dorian Levy 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: March 29, 2022

Office of Opportunity Gaps Updates, April 26, 2022

BPS School Based Equity Roundtable Progress Rubric

Draft George B. Cox Equity in Urban Education Fellowship - Opportunity Gaps Data Scientist Fellow

Superintendent Search Process: An Update, April 26, 2022

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Boston Public Schools Superintendent Leadership Profile

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Acevedo called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Ms. Sullivan called the roll. A quorum was not present. Mr. Acevedo announced that he was delaying the approval of meeting minutes until a quorum was established.

REPORTS

Update from the Division of Equity, Strategy, and Opportunity Gaps - Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Yozmin Gay shared a presentation that included updates on the FY23 budget, school-based equity roundtable implementation, racial equity planning, district-wide OAG policy consultation, the recruitment and retention of teachers of color, and a hiring timeline for current vacancies. Ms. Gay shared a draft job description for a data scientist position who will provide reports to the OG Office and the OAG Task Force to help inform strategies.

Dr. Jennings asked why so many teachers are leaving the system, as well data on their race and ethnicity. Ms. Gay said that in exit interviews, many black and brown teachers expressed feelings of not belonging.

Ms. Pignato expressed enthusiasm for the data scientist position. Ms. Gay explained that the data scientist will collaborate with the Office of Data and Accountability to analyze quantitative and qualitative data to inform the district's strategy to close opportunity and achievement gaps.

Dr. Gonsalves expressed concern that some schools have a low percentage of teachers of color. She encouraged the district to look for patterns. She expressed concern that the district could lose teachers of color who are working with emergency licenses who have difficulty passing the MTEL exam. Dr. Gonsalves suggested that district leadership reach out to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requesting waivers or an extension of emergency license. Mr. Acevedo asked Dr. Gonsalves to send her concerns in writing to the co-chairs and Dr. Gay. Dr. Pignato agreed that the issue is a problem.

Ms. Shakur praised the naming of the fellowship after retired BPS educator and advocate George Cox.

Update on Superintendent Search Process - Dr. Pignato, who also serves as a member of the Superintendent Search Committee, presented an update on the search process.

Engagement:

- The Committee received a total of 507 survey responses.
- Video testimony and text submissions will continue being accepted via the search webpage
- BPS Office of Data and Accountability will present a summary of the survey results to the Search Committee on April 26.

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- Additional stakeholder sessions are scheduled with various stakeholder groups
- The Mayor’s Office is holding additional sessions in 5 other BPS languages

Executive Search Firm: JG Consulting

- JG has begun recruiting and vetting candidates.
- JG is encouraging referrals. JG reported that applicants are coming in.
- JG is training the Search in interview protocols.
- JG Consulting will provide the Committee with weekly updates.
- JG will continue to join the Search Committee in listening sessions to gather feedback

Job Description:

- The JD, approved by the School Committee and posted by search firm, includes language that “The Superintendent will make the Opportunity and Achievement Gap policy central to the district by promoting the vision, goal, and objectives within the policy to all stakeholders; prioritizing the needs of students and families marginalized by the system; and broadly ensuring that decisions, resources, and funding allocations are driven by the goals and objectives of the policy.” Ms. Shakur praised the job description’s focus on closing gaps.

Next steps:

- Engage with ODA in presentation of the summary of the survey results (4/26).
- Engage with JG Consulting in their protocol training (4/26 & 5/3)
- Begin to deliberate interview questions.
- Review applications and select candidates to interview
- Solidify dates for interviews with candidates w/JG throughout May and June
- Search Committee will continue meeting Tuesday evenings for public updates on the search process

Ms. Acevedo asked about anticipated challenges. Dr. Pignato expressed the community’s desire for candidates who reflect the demographics of the BPS student population, and who are familiar with Boston and its politics. Dr. Pignato clarified for Ms. Shakur that interview questions have not yet been set by the Search Committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approved - On roll call, the Task Force unanimously approved the minutes of the March 29, 2022 OAG Task Force meeting.

REPORT

Preparing for Spring OAG Task Force Presentation to the School Committee - Ms. Gay shared the following focus areas for the upcoming joint presentation from the Office of Opportunity Gaps and the OAG Task Force to the School Committee:

- reimagining the OG Office structure
- school based equity roundtables

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-staff diversity efforts

Dr. Jennings encouraged the Task Force to examine racial and ethnic data on churn rates, graduation rates, special education placement and housing instability. He said that the School Committee needs to take accountability for these issues. Dr. Gonsalves suggested that the presentation be data-focused and include context on how the Task Force is refocusing on its initial charge. Ms. Rousmainere spoke about the role of the OAG Task Force as a critical friend that elevates areas of importance for both the School Committee and the public at-large. Dr. Blake emphasized the importance of budgetary and implementation support for district policies. Ms. Gay agreed to share a draft of the presentation with the Task Force by May 5th. Members will be invited to share feedback that will inform a revised draft that she will present at the May 9th Task Force meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Barbara Fields, advocate, spoke about a joint statement from 15 community organizations to the Superintendent Search Committee expressing that the next BPS superintendent should be an educational leader. She asked about the status of Excellence for All expansion and encouraged the School Committee to hold the district accountable for the quality of equity impact statements.

John Mudd, advocate, testified about the importance of strengthening school site councils and school-based equity roundtables. He spoke about the importance of increasing the racial and language diversity of BPS staff, as well as the importance of vetting candidates for the superintendent's position.

ADJOURN

Approved - On roll call, the Committee unanimously approved a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary