

ELL Task Force Boston School Committee
Human Capital Subcommittee Meeting
January 30, 2018
Bolling Building, Room 212

Minutes

Subcommittee Members present: Suzanne Lee, Miren Uriarte, Maria de Lourdes B Serpa, John Mudd, Chelsea Banks, Amanda Preston-Sicari, Ceronne Daley, Ray Porch, Faye Karp, Kim Tsai, Mary Driscoll, Grace Wai.

1. Subcommittee Structure and Meetings

It was not clear to the group what the intention of this agenda item was.

John asked that since Emily Qazilbash was not able to be present and this meeting had been cut in half to one hour, whether there could be a meeting next month rather than waiting for the regular two-month schedule.

Miren said that the agreement with BPS was to hold bi-monthly meetings.

2. Measure of Need (OHC estimated need for ELL and SPED-ELL students)

Chelsea said that OHC had only received this data request on January 25 and that it did not have an estimate of the current overall district need for ELL and SPED-ELL teachers in BPS at this point.

The OELL representatives at the meeting were not able to give an estimate of the overall district need for these positions.

Later in the meeting in another context, Chelsea said that OHC could provide an analysis of the number of BPS's job postings for ELL and SPED-ELL teachers at the start of the hiring process in March and the number of these positions that remained unfilled on June 1. She said they could provide this data for the last year SY2017-18 now and for SY2018-19 when it is available in the next month.

3. BPS Staff Language Data Interim Report I

Chelsea presented the data that BPS had gathered in response to the subcommittee's earlier request. (A copy of the full report is attached to these minutes.)

There was a presentation of the number of active DESE licenses related to language held by BPS educators. It showed that of the roughly 3000 licenses, 2500 are in ESL and 500 licenses (by 400 teachers) were in foreign language, TBE, and other areas.

Maria pointed out the difference between the TBE license, Foreign Language license, Bilingual [endorsement](#) and the SEI endorsement [in MA](#).

Chelsea noted that under the current contract, BPS does not have the flexibility to change licensure requirements in current positions.

There was extensive discussion of the data in the OHC report on Language Capacity of SEI Program Classrooms. It was noted that this match data is “grossly incomplete” since it is taken from PeopleSoft before the transition to TalentEd and did not include SLIFE classrooms.

But the data only showed a confirmed match between the language of the teacher and the language of the SEI classroom for 18% of Spanish classes, 18% of Chinese SEI classrooms, 23% of Vietnamese SEI classrooms, 5% of Haitian SEI classrooms, and 5% of Cape Verdean SEI classrooms.

Miren noted that this highlighted a major problem. Others from the ELL Task Force strongly concurred.

Chelsea said that OHC has submitted TalentEd data on language capability to the city administration for incorporation into PeopleSoft a more complete picture of the match between teachers and classroom needs. The Task Force asked that it be kept informed of the response to this request and of any updated data when it arrives, rather than waiting for the next subcommittee meeting to distribute it.

4. **Probable Org.** (How can OHC use these upcoming meetings to gather data on the current match, mismatch, and needs for ELL and SPED-ELL teachers on a school- by-school basis and aggregate this data for the district as a whole?)

In Emily’s absence, Chelsea took the lead in responding to this item. She said that although this issue could be raised at the school meetings, OHC would not aggregate language data from the Principals. In addition, OFC did not yet have an Excel spread sheet form ready to gather and aggregate this data. She suggested that perhaps OHC could develop a self-reporting form that teachers could fill out voluntarily with the support of the union. ELL Task Force members responded in different ways to OHC’s position on the subcommittee’s request for use of the Probable Org meetings.

Miren said that she agreed Principals could not adequately assess language capability and that they might get into trouble if they did so.

John said he didn’t understand how principals could have the responsibility for hiring teachers and for evaluating teachers but could not judge the match and mismatch between classroom teacher language capacity and student language education needs, in a meeting whose specific purpose is to determine these staffing needs and matches. He noted that this suggestion for the use of the Probable Org meetings to gather this data had come from both the Human Capital subcommittee and the SPED-ELL subcommittee. The leaders of the Office of Special Education and the Office of English Language Learners on the SPED-ELL subcommittee both thought it important to use Probable Org to focus attention on the needs of SPED-ELL students and to gather this data. In addition, both offices had representatives at the Probable Org meetings who could help with this analysis.

There were also questions whether a voluntary teacher survey would be adequate to determine needs. John showed the group the results of a manual analysis that had been done by the SPED-ELL staff of the school-by-school teacher capabilities in comparison to the SPED-ELL students in each school. He suggested that a manual analysis could be done for ELL students as well as SPED-ELL students. OHC asked who would pay for the staff to do this. John suggested that in a \$1,000,000,000 system where OSE and OEL had combined budgets probably in excess of \$300,000,000 money could perhaps be found to fund this analysis, if people felt it was needed with some urgency. He asked that Chelsea take the Probable Org and the manual analysis issues back to Emily.

Maria volunteered to resend the a self-reporting language proficiency

5. Pipeline/Recruitment

Ceronne distributed and summarized a memo analyzing the results of the major pipeline programs and also distributed recruitment brochures and posters. (The memo is attached to these minutes.)

There was a discussion of the community to para-professional program which had to be cut back this year because of problems in opening jobs to new paras, since paras are predominantly assigned by seniority and not through mutual consent in the current contract. The recent contract opened about 20% of para positions to mutual consent, but left 80% to seniority. Miren commented that the ELL Task Force had previously raised this issue, and it was suggested that perhaps the new union leadership would be more open to dealing with it in the upcoming contract negotiations.

With time running out, there was a brief discussion of the other pipeline/recruitment issues. Miren made some corrections in the Spanish for the posters.

Suzanne and Maria both raised the issue that universities including Lesley and UMass Boston indicated that there was a need but no demand for ELL and SPED-ELL teachers. BPS asked if the Task Force would join BPS in approaching universities on this issue. Suzanne said that if we don't know the need, we can't go to the universities. Maria added that until there is a demonstrable demand, universities won't create training programs. As noted earlier, Chelsea said that OHC could do an analysis of the March postings and the jobs that remained unfilled as of June 1. This data would indicate current recruitment demand needs.

John noted that the Diversity Pipeline report showed relatively small numbers of new teacher hires over the three-year period, and seemed to be unclear about the number of ELL teachers and SPED-ELL teachers prepared through these programs. He also asked if there could be data gathered on BPS's Pathways licensure prep programs managed by Nick Balasalle. Ceronne said that these covered current BPS employees. They were not included in the report, but data could be gathered on them. [There was also no information on the BPS Partner programs like the Boston Plan for Excellence or the UMass Teach Next Year program.]

With no further time, the meeting ended.

[ELL Task Force Human Capital Subcommittee 1-30-18 Minutes draft corrected]