

March 23, 2016

Dear Boston Public Schools Principals,

We believe strongly that the quality of a school is determined by much more than the results of its student test scores. That is why the Boston School Committee created a task force to design a new method of measuring the true caliber of a school.

This new measurement system, called the School Quality Framework (SQF), uses multiple criteria to assess a school, forming a more balanced and broader range of areas that impact the experiences of students, families and teachers.

These five areas, known as “domains,” are: Student Performance; Teaching and Learning; Family, Community and Culture; Leadership and Collaboration; and Student Access and Opportunities.

The intent of this framework is to provide parents more data to help inform their school choices, and to provide the overall BPS community a more holistic way of gauging the quality of our schools.

One of the key metrics used in this new framework is a school’s measure of student growth on standardized tests. This is critical because it captures a school’s ability to help students improve academically -- over and above how they scored previously. This puts all schools on a level playing field when it comes to measuring their ability to impact student academic performance.

Some of the other important metrics include a school’s student attendance as measured by chronic absenteeism; its success in closing the achievement gap; the progress of its English language learners; the diversity of its staff; and the satisfaction of its parents as measured on the BPS Climate Survey.

These metrics and others were carefully selected after an extensive analysis and vetting process to ensure their reliability, relevance and replicability. However, we are still working to fine-tune the entire set of metrics utilized in each domain.

We are committed as a district to implementing the School Quality Framework in the 2017-18 School Choice/Student Assignment season, which is scheduled to open in late fall of 2016. The SQF was originally expected to launch sooner than that but the School Committee last fall voted to postpone its implementation.

Both the district and the School Committee will be actively seeking feedback this spring from school leaders, teachers, parents, and students on ways to support schools and implement the framework. Also, the BPS School Quality Framework working group will share an FAQ that will help principals and headmasters answer questions from their school communities.

If you are interested in providing input in the implementation of the School Quality Framework, please log into the [survey linked here](#) and send along your comments and/or questions.

Thank you,

Tommy Chang
Superintendent of Schools

