

To: BPS School Leaders
From: Laura Perille, Interim Superintendent
Subject: **Proposed Changes to School Quality Framework**

In November 2014, the Boston School Committee voted to adopt the School Quality Framework (SQF) developed by the School Quality Working Group (SQWG) with input from a broad and diverse set of community stakeholders, as a holistic means to assess school quality. While a primary application of the SQF to-date has been to inform student assignment, the overriding purpose of the SQF is to provide increased understanding of school quality that reflects what the BPS community values in its schools and believes should be found in every high quality school. The SQF is a tool to promote equity and ensure all families have access to rich information about BPS schools. School level SQF data has been calculated three times utilizing six years of data:

2015 Tiers: 2013 & 2014 Data - Not Implemented for student assignment

2017 Tiers: 2015 & 2016 Data - Implemented for student assignment

2018 Tiers: 2017 & 2018 Data - Implemented for student assignment

SQF Tiers have been updated in November each of the previous two years, including in November 2018 utilizing Spring 2018 performance data. Over the years, we have continued to receive input from SQWG members—including, school leaders, students, families, and community partners—and from many of you. Based on this feedback, moving forward BPS will provide more transparency and predictability for schools and families with respect to when tiers will be updated, and more accurate information about school quality. Therefore, at a June School Committee meeting, BPS will propose the following shifts to SQF policy and implementation.

Update tiers every year while maintaining continuity of choice lists

SQF data will be calculated every year in order to provide more up-to-date information for families (next calculation in Fall 2019). In order to increase stability, families will receive all schools on their home-based list from the two most recent tier calculations (i.e., over a two-year period). The most current tiers will be displayed. The district will monitor this approach to generating school choice lists for overall effectiveness, including cost.

Remove Tier 4 Override Provision

Turnaround schools will no longer automatically be designated Tier 4. These schools will receive the tier, as calculated, like all other schools. State accountability status is noted in DiscoverBPS for all schools.

Display High School Tiers in DiscoverBPS

The district will reaffirm that high schools tiers will be displayed in DiscoverBPS, despite the fact that they are not required for assignment. This will enable families to more easily understand the different quality tiers of BPS high schools when choosing a school for their child, just as they do currently for all other PreK-8 schools

Implementation of Access and Opportunities Domain

Opportunity and access data will be collected centrally and displayed in DiscoverBPS in a consistent manner to make information available to families; however, data on opportunities and access will not yet be utilized in the calculation of schools' tiers. This domain will continue to be developed by engaging with stakeholders and completing further data collection and analysis.

Update to Calculation Policy

The framework for the time being will continue to be calculated based on the four fully developed SQF Domains and associated outcomes. While the SQF provides families more comprehensive and meaningful information about school quality than the state accountability system, it is being continuously monitored so that potential improvements can be identified by BPS and the School Quality Working Group. As part of those efforts toward continuous improvement, we are requesting adjustments to the metrics based on data source changes and new opportunities to refine metrics. This will provide the ability to continue to improve the SQF. Examples of adjustments that would be attributable to this change in approach for Fall 2019 might include:

- Climate survey participation metrics: Currently schools receive zero points if their participation rate is below 30%. We could complete a sensitivity analysis to inform graduated penalties for low participation aligned with margins of error of the sample.
- Attendance metric: We could revise the attendance metric to focus on improving chronic absenteeism. The current target of 92% attendance is not differentiated by grade band and does not substantially reward growth. The state has moved to chronic absenteeism as an accountability indicator, aligned with research around school improvement.
- Science proficiency metric: Currently the SQF does not incorporate data from the MCAS science assessment. We could determine how to incorporate a science proficiency metric. Including a science metric would broaden the performance data considered and better align with the state accountability system.

For more information about SQF, visit: <https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolquality>. Please refer any questions about SQF to [Jake Stern](#), Director of Performance Management, Office of Data and Accountability or [Lisa Harvey](#), Deputy Director of Evaluation and Programs, Office of Engagement.

School Quality Framework

Giving families a more holistic understanding of school quality

In 2014, BPS developed a system for measuring school quality that looks holistically at what makes a high-quality school experience for students and families. The Boston Public Schools (BPS) believes that school quality is best determined by looking not only at how students perform on standardized tests but also how they grow from year to year, along with examining certain key areas of a school, such as its culture. The School Quality Framework (SQF) provides families more comprehensive data on how schools perform on a broad range of measures. Access to this expansive amount of data will help families make better-informed and more customized school choices. BPS has continued to improve the School Quality Framework each year to give families a clearer picture of their school choices.

Framework Score	
Tier 1	65-100
Tier 2	55-64
Tier 3	45-54
Tier 4	0-44

The School Quality Framework evaluates schools in five areas: student performance, teaching and learning, family, community and culture, leadership and collaboration, and access and opportunities (see Figure 1 below). Within each area, BPS has identified outcomes and measures relevant to these diverse aspects of school quality. Under the SQF, a school will receive a score from 0-100 based on measurements in the five areas. These scores correlate to a school quality tier from 1-4.

School Quality Framework Domains and Outcomes



New - Better School Climate Survey data

The calculation includes two years of survey data on the perceptions of students, teachers, and families about their current school. Additional indicators from the school climate surveys have also been included in the most recent SQF calculation in order to better incorporate the voices of students, teachers, and families.

Students, teachers, and families provide input on:

- *cultural sensitivity*
- *attitudes toward learning*
- *parent engagement*
- *teacher collaboration*
- *curriculum*
- *teachers' interest in students*
- *perceptions of the safety of schools*