



## **OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE'S OPPORTUNITY AND ACHIEVEMENT GAPS TASK FORCE**

**January 5, 2016**

The Boston School Committee's Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force held a meeting on January 5, 2016 at 4 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, School Committee Chamber, 2300 Washington Street, Roxbury, Massachusetts. 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: Co-Chair Sam Acevedo; Co-Chair Jeri Robinson; Co-Chair Ayele Shakur; Jennifer Aponte; Heshan Berents-Weeramuni; Dr. Carroll Blake; Dr. Hardin Coleman; Kim Janey; Adrienne Level; Keondre McClay; Lilianna Mickle; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Carline Pignato; Marinelle Rousmaniere; Filberto Santiago-Lizardi; Ron Walker; and Sherman Zemler Wu. Suzanne Lee, English Language Learners Task Force liaison to the OAG Task Force, was also present.

Task Force Members Absent: Dr. Vanessa Calderon-Rosado; Kenny Feng; and Dr. Gil Noam.

### **DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Agenda

Task Force Meeting Minutes: December 15, 2015

Draft Power Point Presentation: Update from the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force

AWC Expansion

MassCore: Current Status and Next Steps

*January 5, 2016*

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Robinson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She announced that Task Force member Alexandra Oliver-Davila had been sworn in by Mayor Walsh as a member of the School Committee the previous day.

## **ACTION ITEM**

The Task Force approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the December 15, 2015 meeting.

## **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

Ms. Shakur led a line-by-line collective review of the draft power point presentation prepared by the co-chairs updating the School Committee on the Task Force's work to date.

The members discussed a variety of issues, including what data points to include; listing guiding principles; past barriers to implementation; preliminary findings; the need for common definitions; the need to address structural and cultural barriers; calling out BPS actions that may unintentionally widen gaps/hinder efforts to close them; the need for a rigorous data dashboard; the role of higher education in closing gaps; the need for adequate resources, budget and facilities; the need for a coherent, shared vision across the district with clear accountability throughout. Ms. Shakur stated that she would incorporate the group's feedback and revise the presentation accordingly.

The Task Force then discussed the potential impact that the Superintendent's proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget could have on opportunity and achievement gaps. Dr. Coleman, who serves as vice-chair of the School Committee, suggested that the Task Force identify the principles that the School Committee should use to hold the district accountable for closing the gap. The group concluded that FY17 budget is worth discussing and the co-chairs agreed to add the topic to the next meeting agenda.

The group discussed adding the following items to its January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting agenda: draft a formal response to the district's December presentations on AWC and MassCore expansion; Dr. Colin Rose, Assistant Superintendent for Opportunity and Achievement Gaps, will present his strategic plan; and a FY17 Budget Discussion.

The Superintendent's Chief of Staff Dr. Makeeba McCreary clarified that the Superintendent's AWC and MassCore projects have not been finalized. Dr. McCreary assured the Task Force that the Superintendent's leadership team has the achievement gap at the center of its budget decisions.

*January 5, 2016*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Theresa Perry, professor, Simmons College, encouraged the Task Force to confirm Dr. Pedro Noguera's affiliations. She also urged the Task Force to ask the district to identify a theory of practice. She invited the Task Force to look at the work taking place at Southside High School in Rockville County, New York.

Barbara Fields, former president, Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts (BEAM) and participant in the creation of the district's 2006 achievement gap policy, said that the 2006 policy does address opportunity gaps, although the word opportunity gap was not in fashion at the time. She reminded the Task Force that its charge is to eliminate, not close, gaps, and reminded the group to have a sense of urgency about the work.

John Mudd, advocate, urged the Task Force not to create a report that just contains rhetoric. He said that the district's AWC and MassCore presentations did not explicitly say how those projects will close the opportunity and achievements gaps.

**ADJOURN**

At approximately 6:27 p.m., the co-chairs adjourned the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan  
Executive Secretary