



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

March 29, 2016

The Boston School Committee's Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force held a meeting on March 29, 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, email 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; Kim Janey; Keondre McClay; Liliana Mickle; Alexandra Oliver-Dávila; Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi; and Sherman Zemler Wu.

Task Force Members Absent: Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Vanessa Calderon-Rosado; Kenny Feng; Adrienne Level; Dr. Gil Noam; Carline Pignato; Marinelle Rousmaniere; and Ron Walker. Suzanne Lee and Dr. Miren Uriarte, English Language Learners Task Force liaisons to the OAG Task Force, were not present.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

Task Force Meeting Minutes: March 15, 2016

Proposed Timeline for Completion of Draft Revised OAGTF Policy

Non-negotiables – updated March 15, 2016 (draft)

Subcommittee Goal Revision /Amendment Form

Policy revision worksheet

Subgroup Notes from March 15, 2016

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A list of combined goals pairing the 2006 Achievement Gap policy goals with Annenberg Report recommendations according to theme

Additional 2015 Annenberg Report Recommendations

The 2006 Achievement Gap Policy

Minutes of the November 17, 2015, November 24, 2015 and December 8, 2015 OAG Task Force meetings (containing notes from earlier subgroup work)

Promising Practices and Unfinished Business: Fostering Equity and Excellence for Black and Latino Males (Executive Summary)

Opportunity and Equality: Enrollment and Outcomes of Black and Latino Males in Boston Public Schools (Executive Summary)

Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card (March 2016)

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Robinson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

ACTION ITEM

The Task Force approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the March 15, 2016 meeting.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Assistant Superintendent of Equity Rebecca Shuster invited one or two Task Force members to serve on the Superintendent's working group that will revisit the district's exam school admissions policy.

Mr. Santiago-Lizardi, Ms. Mickle, Ms. Oliver-Davila, Mr. Berents-Weeramuni and Ms. Janey all expressed interest. Ms. Shakur said that the co-chairs would consider the matter and follow up in the near future.

Mr. Acevedo then explained that the Task Force would break up into the following three subgroups in order to begin revising and updating the district's Opportunity and Achievement Gaps policy:

Group 1 - District Goals, Policy, and Operations

Jeri Robinson
Marinelle Rousmaniere
Adrienne Level

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Kenny Feng
Kim Janey
Heshan Berents-Weeramuni
Sherman Zemler Wu

Group 2 - Leadership and School Culture:

Pastor Sam Acevedo
Dr. Carroll Blake
Ron Walker
Jennifer Aponte
Dr. Vanessa Calderon-Rosado
Keondre McClay
Alexandra Oliver-Davila
Suzanne Lee

Group 3 - Teaching and Learning

Ayele Shakur
Liliana Mickle
Dr. Gil Noam
Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi
Dr. Hardin Coleman
Carline Pignato

The following members of the Superintendent's cabinet joined the subgroups to lend their expertise and provide guidance:

- Dr. Donna Muncey, Deputy Superintendent of Strategy
- Michele Shannon, Assistant Superintendent of Leadership Development
- Kim Rice, Assistant Superintendent of Operations
- Jason Sachs, Director of Early Childhood
- Jonathan Landman, Principal leader
- Tommy Welch, Principal Leader
- Rebecca Shuster, Assistant Superintendent of Equity
- Kelly Hung, Principal Leader
- Thomas Maffai, Director of Special Projects, Office of Human Capital

Each Task Force member received a packet containing the following information:

- A list of combined goals pairing the 2006 Achievement Gap policy goals with Annenberg Report recommendations according to theme
- Subcommittee Goal Revision /Amendment Form
- Policy revision worksheet

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- The 2006 Achievement Gap Policy
- Notes from earlier subgroup work from fall 2015
- A draft list of "non-negotiables" that Task Force members would like included in the final policy
- Timeline for completion of work

Group 1 Notes:

A question was raised: Is there a conflict with MIT who designed the home-based student assignment plan also doing equity analysis?

Ms. Rice responded that BPS is not contracting with MIT. Its data review is an extension of earlier work. She added that other higher education institutions would charge the district a fee to conduct a data review. The district is presenting home-based equity analysis at the April 27th School Committee meeting at which time the data will be made publicly available. She clarified that there is no legal conflict of interest with MIT doing this work.

Rebuttal was made that if the public could perceive a credibility issue if MIT does data analysis.

A suggestion was made that parents should be able to see number of actual available seats when they register so they have a complete, realistic picture of their options.

Ms. Rice responded that the district does not have the capacity to provide that information at this time but is actively working to make live data available on a more regular basis.

A suggestion was made that district should do a peer review.

A request was made for an equity chart that was presented to School Committee when the Committee was considering adopting the home-base student assignment plan.

A suggestion was made to examine programmatic commitments made by the district when the School Committee approved the home-base student assignment plan.

A suggestion was made to examine the manner in which overlays are administered by central office. e.g. SIFE program removed from Curley K-8 School.

Ms. Rice explained that under the home-base model, there is no longer walk-zone priority. ELL and Sped students receive additional options in addition to standard home-based options.

A question was raised: How will the district ensure equity in the school closure process?

Mr. Rice explained that the process has not been worked out yet.

Rebuttal: An equity lens must be used by the district to avoid creating further gaps and disproportionately impacting communities of color. Transparency is critical.

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A comment was made that the district's current academic programming doesn't match its funding structure. Is the weighted student funding model and class size impacting the achievement gap?

A concern was raised about the wide variety of grade configurations that exist in BPS.

Ms. Rice responded there is no conclusive data about the quality of education based on the grade configuration of schools.

A concern was raised about equity of access to student bus passes.

Ms. Rice responded that passes are issued to students outside of the walk zone: 1 mile for elementary, 1.5 for middle and 2 for high school. BPS currently provides transportation for about three quarters of its students. It would cost the district an additional \$3 million to provide T passes for all students. Money saved on transportation could be reinvested in the classrooms. The district is currently tracking data on yellow bus usage to look for efficiencies.

A comment was made that the district should clarify its vision for creating quality and cohesion for students.

A question was raised about how the district is going to create more transportation efficiencies.

Ms. Rice responded that some buses are being routed to multiple schools. A position has been revamped to examine sped and homeless transportation. Ms. Rice will follow up for more details about the district's sped transportation budget.

A question was raised: Will the Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force examine the unified enrollment proposal?

A question was raised: How is the district judging equity?

A suggestion was made to study Seattle's model.

Group 1 then transitioned into drafting goals.

A suggestion was made to use an equity lens and put equity ahead of budget concerns.

Goal 1: Keep goal 1 and add language stating that all reports and policy recommendations presented to the School Committee should be accompanied by an achievement gap impact statement that includes achievement gap data and disaggregated ethnic data.

Goal 9: Keep goal 9 and add specific language that calls for the district providing monthly benchmarks during hiring season; clarifying the roles and responsibilities and accountability measures for school leaders, principal leaders and Sped and ELL department heads; major expansion of pipeline development programs; additional hiring goals; providing development opportunities for support staff; assessment and major investment in professional development to close gaps; anti-racism and cultural proficiency training.

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Goal 10: Discussion around school police presence at middle and high schools. A suggestion was made that each operational division should have its own process, outcome and equity measures.

Note: Group 1 believes that a goal should be written around school discipline.

Goal 11: Focus on developing and measuring performance. OHC administers teacher survey to measure school culture and retention. OHC said that there are a disproportionate number of teachers of color in schools with weakest culture. Need to be cognoscente of implicit bias vs. disparate impact. Add a performance meter (that includes access to opportunities e.g. AWC, libraries, partnerships) and make sure each section is disaggregated.

Goal 12: Add language about providing school leaders with fundraising/partnership development. A suggestion was made to examine current weights in the weighted student funding formula (should the district do more to address pockets of poverty? Provide more funding for wrap around services?)

Note: There should be a goal that addresses vocational-technical education.

Group 2 Notes:

Cultural Proficiency Goal

Develop a shared vision and approach around cultural proficiency that reflects the views of multiple stakeholders. The vision and approach should be inclusive and asset-based in considering all BPS community members including students, families, educators, and staff.

To ensure district-wide implementation of this policy, we recommend the following metrics:

- A draft of BPS cultural proficiency vision and approach by January 2017 (within 1 academic school year of the adoption of this revision).
- Input from multiple stakeholders in various forms such as focus groups, surveys, Principal's institute August, school-based, community-based, etc.
- Lead to solid and consistent implementation plan across schools
- Central office cultural proficiency climate audit

Climate Goal

Establish culturally proficient and responsive climates across all aspects of Boston Public Schools System (i.e. Boston Public Schools, Central Offices, Food Services, Busing, etc.).

A productive and healthy school climate is essential to implementing this goal. A culturally proficient and responsive BPS school climate includes (1) strong and competent leadership; (2) culturally proficient and responsive strategies, (3) safe and conducive learning environments; (4) high expectations and valuing all students, (5) shared responsibility and collaboration among, and (6) positive and active family engagement.

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(consider how much more detail those aspects need to capture the intent we had in mind)

- Develop a process and tool that individual schools would use to perform an annual cultural proficiency audit of practices, climate, and all aspects of teaching and learning.
- School support systems beyond the audit.
- Culturally proficient and responsive strategies including Quality School Plans (QSP).

Metric for teaching and learning goal – each school includes an indicator/ goal in QSP around their achievement gaps

- Assistant Superintendent of Opportunity and Achievement Gaps has sign-off on QSP since achievement gap goals included.

Ensure data systems adequately capture necessary information. Consider the data needed for metrics we are considering and who's collecting, and analyzing said data.

Group 3 Notes:

Data:

- District focused on rigor throughout the year and all students are having access
- Survey data – strengthen for students, family and administrators. Students are held at high standards.
 - Develop with performance measure
 - System set goals for the district
 - Empower schools to use it
 - Performance meter around perception and place to set district goals
 - Amplify lens, use data showing how whole district views particular elements
 - School level reports don't include all data points
 - Disaggregate by student subgroup
 - Suggested that its injected at first two days of professional development
 - Lots of work to combine culturally relevant and rigor
 - Instructional focus, cognitively demanding task
 - AWC – 6th grade curriculum eliminated
 - Supports professional development for teachers, universal design, different access points, additional outreach to parents.
 - Base level dealing with many is visiting schools
- Data – metrics on Goal 8
 - Family experiences
 - Triangulate with other data can yield significant info
 - Educate parents to know what questions to ask
 - Progress reports – parents as partners
- Family Engagement Office ran data nights parent with corresponding number of their child; group by ability level; packet of strategies and differentiating support by families.

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- Relationship – key factor
- Training for teachers
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) – access to learn in different ways
- Severe trauma – Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)
- Trauma informed discussions
- Social thinking- helpful
- Create metrics around
 - Cultural
 - Rigor
 - Feedback loop so administrators are informed
- Teacher unit of change
 - Consistent
 - Ongoing
 - Teacher, principal, central office
- Accountability is missing in BPS
- Careful balance around accountability
- Set up systems that build trust; transparent conversations

Dr. Donna Muncey, Deputy Superintendent of Strategy

Takes, not happening/want to see spelled out in the policy

- Gap in what we say and how resources are administered
 1. Cultural and climate don't sustain and rigor challenge
 2. Instructional support strong. Offer opportunities to get ahead/open possibilities
- Summer programming for remedial and advancement of students

Mr. Santiago-Lizardi:

- Before/after school reinforcements
- Enrichment and reinforcement

Mr. Landman's observations:

- Different levels of preparation for success
- Response interventions/supports
- PBIS and RTI – structures use data, monitoring to identify gaps, uneven delivery

Stanley - Review model at Boston Latin School and implement in other schools; factors that lead to four-year colleges.

- Cognitive demand; exp. rigorous educational instruction
- Learning - teachers need to be able to deliver rigor for all
- Headmasters struggle with students with motivation; help to understand that it matters; level of preparation

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- Socialized, clear of what it takes to complete a high school for success beyond high school
- Educating them on courses and grades
- Socialization around success
- Ongoing information about staying on track
- Clear ways: Burke and English high schools
 - Coming to school makes a difference
 - Support system to address different needs (John Hopkins Diploma Now)
 - Overall support and guidance
- Through 9th grade on-track 60 % more likely to graduate
- Focus on the mechanics
- Stream of data about on-track indicators - right indicators
- GPA-SAT focused
- Lagging and leading indicators
 - Early warning regularity and rigor

The Task Force members then reconvened. Members of each subgroup spent a short time debriefing and said they will continue revising the goals at the next Task Force meeting scheduled for Thursday, March 31.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURN

At approximately 7:00 p.m., the co-chairs adjourned the meeting.

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary