



OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE HYBRID BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

December 4, 2024

The Boston School Committee held a hybrid meeting on December 4, 2024, at 5.15 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, School Committee Chamber, Roxbury, Massachusetts. The meeting was also live-streamed on Boston City TV and Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit.

bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee, email lpavex@bostonpublicschools.org, or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Jeri Robinson; Vice Chairperson Michael D. O'Neill; Stephen Alkins; Chantal Lima Barbosa; Rafaela Polanco Garcia; and Student Representative Omer Ismail.

School Committee Member Absent: Brandon Cardet-Hernandez; and Quoc Tran.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

[Agenda](#)

Meeting Minutes: [November 6, 2024](#) meeting and [November 20, 2024 retreat](#)

[Grants for Approval](#)

[Memo Bus Drivers CBA Supplemental Appropriation Request and Letters of Agreement](#)

[MOA United Steelworkers Local 8751 Agreement](#)

[Letter of Agreement A United Steelworkers Local 8751 Agreement](#)

[PowerPoint United Steelworkers Local 8751 Agreement](#)

[Memo Human Resources Update](#)

[PowerPoint Human Resources Update](#)

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. Ms. Robinson announced that the Committee would immediately adjourn to an executive session to discuss strategy with respect to the Committee's role in collective bargaining between its contractor Transdev and the United Steelworkers Local 8751 for a successor collective bargaining agreement. The Committee will receive a brief update on the BTU contract negotiations. She said that the Committee would return to public session at 6.00 p.m.

Approved - At approximately 5:25 p.m. the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call, to adjourn to executive session

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION AND WELCOME

At approximately 6:20 p.m. the Committee returned to public session. Ms. Robinson announced that the Committee had just returned from executive session to discuss strategy with respect to the Committee's role in collective bargaining between its contractor Transdev and the United Steelworkers Local 8751 for a successor collective bargaining agreement. The Committee also received a brief update on the BTU contract negotiations.

She said that tonight's meeting was being live streamed on Boston City TV and on Zoom. It will be rebroadcast on Boston City TV and the video will be posted at bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee and on YouTube. She announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available virtually in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cabo Verdean, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin and American Sign Language (ASL). Translated meeting documents were posted at www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee prior to the start of the meeting.

Mr. Cardet-Hernandez and Mr. Tran were absent. Dr. Stephen Alkins arrived during the executive session.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the November 6, 2024 meeting and November 20, 2024 retreat.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

The following speakers testified regarding the Boston Teachers Union (BTU) contract negotiations:

- Jessica Tang, Roslindale resident, President of AFT Massachusetts, Former BTU President
- Erik Berg, Jamaica Plain resident, BTU president
- Jess Ellis, Raynham resident, Sumner School teacher
- Danielle West, Jamaica Plain resident, BTU, Brighton High School teacher
- Michael Maguire, West Roxbury resident, Parent, BTU, Boston Latin Academy teacher
- Christopher Barton, Quincy resident, Tynan Elementary School teacher
- Karsten Frey, Brighton High School teacher, BTU
- Devin Clark, Roxbury resident, BTU, Community Academy of Science and Health

(CASH) paraprofessional

- Shannon Wyman, Walpole resident, Joyce Kilmer K-8 School teacher
- Meagan Reider, Dorchester resident, Curley K-8 School teacher
- Samantha Laney, Somerville resident, BTU, teacher, Community Advocate
- Nicole Scipione, West Roxbury resident, Joyce Kilmer K-8 School teacher
- Dan Goldsbury, Dedham resident, Ruth Batson Academy teacher
- Denise Sonnie, Dorchester resident, Natan Hale Elementary School teacher
- Mary Grady, Dorchester resident, parent, Ruth Batson Academy teacher
- Rachelle Boujoulian, Medford resident, Blackstone School teacher
- Caitlin Gaffny, North Andover resident, Maurice J. Tobin School teacher
- Grace Kelly, West End resident, BTU, Joseph Lee School teacher
- Nicole Parker Mondon, Hyde Park resident, West Zone ELC/Hennigan paraprofessional
- Michael Sweeney, Mattapan resident, BPS School Psychologist
- Allison Rigney, Brighton resident, BTU, Another Course to College teacher
- Claude James, Quincy resident, BTU, teacher

Travis Marshall, Roslindale resident, Bates and English High School parent, Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), testified regarding 7th and 9th Grade Assignment Timeline and Communications.

Deirdre Manning, Dorchester resident, Boston Collegiate Charter School parent, testified regarding the Exam school policy inequity.

Rebecca Knight, Back Bay resident, Eliot School and Boston Latin school (BLS) parent, testified regarding the Exam School policy.

Jillie Santos, Quincy resident, Citizens for Juvenile Justice, testified regarding Restorative Justice in BPS.

Saadie Jasmin, Dorchester resident, President of the Bus Monitors, testified regarding the working conditions for monitors.

The School Committee took a brief 15-minute break before moving on to the action items.

ACTION ITEMS

Mr. O'Neill asked Mr. Bloom to clarify the difference between the actual amounts from the federal and state governments and the budget estimates. Chief Financial Officer David Bloom said that the difference between estimated and actual amounts for the four grants was around \$100,000. Title I and IV came in higher, while Title II and III were lower. The variations were balanced by reallocating funds, resulting in a net gain of \$100,000. Overall, the impact on programming was minimal.

Ms. Robinson asked if the district has 1,400 Native American students, as indicated in the Indian Education Formula Grant. Mr. Bloom explained that the Indian Education Formula Grant is a federal grant passed through the state, and he would double-check the source of the number.

Ms. Robinson asked how the district evaluates the effectiveness of the Title II Part A grant in improving student achievement. Mr. Bloom explained Title II Part A grant funds professional development, with effectiveness measured by attendance and targeted support for specific schools. Ms. Skipper added that Federal rubrics track student outcomes, which can be shared.

Mr. Ismail asked which schools are implementing the Innovation Pathways grant and what pathways are being offered. Mr. Bloom said the Innovation Pathways are at Dearborn STEM, Holland School of Technology, Brighton High School, and Excel, focusing on technology and supported by the state.

Ms. Polanco Garcia inquired about the distribution of Title I, Part A and D funds across the district and how the allocation for specific populations would be monitored. Mr. Bloom clarified that Title I funds are allocated per student based on the number of low-income students, approximately \$583 per pupil. At least 1% of the funds is earmarked for family engagement, with additional funds reserved to support English learners, proportional to their representation in each school. He further explained that schools must submit a spending plan, which is monitored throughout the year, and provide a final summary of their expenditures.

Approved - The Committee approved by unanimous consent grants for approval totaling \$52,654,772

REPORTS

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreements: Transdev and the United Steelworkers Local 8751 - Executive Director of Transportation Dan Rosengard presented an update on ongoing collective bargaining between our contractor, Transdev, and the United Steelworkers Local 8751 for a successor agreement.

CBA Highlights

Duration: 4 year agreement in effect from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2028

Wages: Market Adjustments for Regular Report Rate

- Effective July 1, 2024: \$33.00 per hour (\$3.87 per hour increase - retroactive)
- Effective July 1, 2025: \$34.00 per hour (\$1 per hour increase)
- Effective July 1, 2026: \$35.00 per hour (\$1 per hour increase)
- Effective July 1, 2027: \$35.38 per hour (\$0.38 per hour increase)

Retirement:

- Years of service eligibility requirement for retirement benefits reduced from 30 to 25 years
- Retirement severance increased according to the following:
 - Effective July 1, 2024: Increased to \$1,200 per year of service (retroactive)
 - Effective July 1, 2025: Increased to \$1,300 per year of service
 - Effective July 1, 2026: Increased to \$1,400 per year of service
 - Effective July 1, 2027: Increased to \$1,500 per year of service

Guaranteed Minimum Hours:

- Guaranteed minimum weekly hours to increase from 31 hours to 35 hours, effective July 1, 2025, upon adoption of language by the parties about “work as directed” with work protections
- Note: Working in conjunction with existing provisions of the driver collective bargaining agreement, the addition of “work as directed” language is anticipated to improve BPS’s and Transdev’s ability to cover athletics, field trips, and other transportation activities in cases when they are not able to be covered through existing driver bid and assignment processes

Mr. Rosengard also requested approval for two side letters of agreement with the Bus Drivers Union, specifying that any new bus vendor would continue employing current drivers under the same terms. Lastly, he asked for a supplemental appropriation of \$6.6 million from the City Council to cover increased costs in FY25 due to the new contract.

Mr. O'Neill praised the four-year contract for ensuring a fully staffed fleet and supporting athletic and field trip coverage. He asked if the contract would also improve regular daytime bus performance or if staffing was the main factor. Mr. Rosengard highlighted the contract's stability, operational improvements, and better trip management. Deputy Director of Transportation Jackie Hayes, also highlighted its role in retaining drivers.

The Committee is scheduled to vote on the collective bargaining request on December 18, 2024.

Human Resources Update - Chief of Human Resources Francesse Canty and Rashaun Martin, Managing Director of Recruitment, Cultivation, and Diversity presented an update on Human Resources.

Ms. Canty said that the presentation would include three key points: Workforce diversity, Inclusiveness initiatives, and targeted hiring.

Ms. Canty emphasized that BPS leads Massachusetts in educator racial diversity, with 25% of the state's educators of color, including 41% Black, 18% Latinx, and 22% Asian teachers. Over 57% of staff identify as people of color, and 56% of school leaders and 60% of the superintendent's cabinet are also people of color. BPS remains committed to the Garrity Rule, ensuring at least 25% of teachers and counselors are Black, with 10% from other racial minorities. Despite challenges, BPS has made continued progress in increasing workforce diversity.

BPS has 118 School Leaders this school year:

- 66 identify as People of Color
- 40 self report fluency in at least one of BPS’s official languages
- 41 have achieved a higher degree (ex. Master’s or PhD)
- 27 have served BPS as a leader for at least 10 years

Ms. Canty discussed BPS’s efforts to support transformation schools by accelerating the hiring process for the 2024-25 school year, resulting in a more diverse educator pool. This led to a higher percentage of Garrity positions filled (93%) and reduced vacancies. Ms. Canty also emphasized the importance of linguistic diversity, aiming to hire educators fluent in multiple languages to better serve students and families, as required by the Language Opportunity for Our Kids (LOOK) Act. Ms. Canty shared strategies to boost BPS's workforce diversity, including a

new self-reporting tool for language proficiency, which saw 677 Garrity educators report fluency in BPS languages.

Ms. Canty acknowledged progress in workforce diversity but stated that goals are not fully met. BPS will implement key strategies to strengthen the 2025-26 school year.

Key initiatives include early hiring contracts, licensure support for priority schools, and expanding the recruitment pool. BPS will also launch a campaign to promote teaching as a rewarding career, with school committee involvement essential to its success.

- Early Contracts Pilot: Candidate pools are more diverse earlier in the hiring season. As a result, the district will pilot reintroducing “commitment letters” to educators of color for the SY25-26 school year.
- Tailored License Support: The Licensure Team identified 18 priority schools with the highest numbers of waivers and emergency-licensed educators. On-site meetings with these educators are being conducted. As of 11/22:
 - 15 out of 18 school visits have been completed
 - 138 one-on-one meetings with educators have been held
- Recruitment Strategy Shifts:
 - Increase the number of applicants to the Early Hiring Pool (EHP) from 337 to 400 by partnering with more diverse educator preparation programs
 - Vet EHP applicants earlier and more thoroughly to ensure applicants are ready to be hired by school teams
- Increased Retention Focus: The district will further prioritize identifying non-renewed educators of color earlier than in previous years and offering one-on-one career support consultations.

Ms. Lima Barbosa thanked the team for the update and asked for follow-up on two points: the salary breakdown for new hires of color and how linguistic proficiency, especially in Cape Verdean Creole, is assessed. Ms. Canty clarified that language proficiency is self-reported and is only tested for dual-language roles. Ms. Lima Barbosa emphasized the importance of considering language skills for all positions and stressed the need for clear proficiency guidelines and community engagement, particularly for Cape Verdean Creole roles.

Dr. Alkins asked why there are fewer external candidates, especially educators of color, compared to internal hires. Ms. Canty said that licensure is a major barrier for hiring educators of color, with difficulty passing required tests. Ms. Skipper highlighted the challenges of licensure exams, especially for multilingual educators, and advocated for alternative pathways, like portfolios, and increased support for external candidates. Mr. Martin highlighted that the district focuses on converting internal candidates, such as paraprofessionals and provisional staff, into permanent educators. This includes providing support for substitutes who are working toward becoming teachers.

Ms. Polanco Garcia requested a timeline and details on the district’s plans to hire more bilingual educators, stressing their importance in inclusion planning. Ms. Canty described the district’s bilingual educator pipeline, funded by a \$6 million grant, including a residency program at dual language schools to prepare participants for educator roles. Ms. Polanco Garcia praised Mr. Martin’s team for their work with paraprofessionals and suggested increasing program visibility

for bilingual parents. Ms. Canty agreed, emphasizing efforts to publicize and engage the community. Mr. Martin added that the district is boosting visibility through community events like St. Stephen's and the BPS showcase.

Dr. Alkins inquired about the district's partnerships with local colleges to boost teacher recruitment and development. Mr. Martin highlighted collaborations with institutions like Boston University, Northeastern, and Merrimack for staff degree completion and discounts, as well as educator programs such as Boston Teacher Residency and Teach Next Year. He also emphasized fostering relationships with local schools and renegotiating a tuition discount with Boston College for BPS employees. Ms. Skipper added that the district is working with Simmons University and Boston College to attract future social workers.

Ms. Lima Barbosa proposed expanding pipeline programs to support seniors facing barriers to higher education, citing Duet as an accessible, project-based option for careers in the district. Mr. Martin emphasized the success of the Duet success of bachelor's completion programs, noting their impact on advancing district staff careers. He also mentioned exploring free community college programs to develop non-traditional recruitment pipelines.

Mr. O'Neill emphasized retention, noting concerns about safety, pay, and professional development. He stressed the importance of annual evaluations for all staff and asked about the progress of the Teach Cadet program for future educators. Mr. Martin shared that the Teach Cadet program is being piloted at Brighton High School, offering an elective for students interested in teaching. If successful, the program may expand to other high schools. Ms. Skipper recalled Teach Boston as a successful high school pathway program and stressed the importance of exposing students early to teaching to create internal pipelines.

Mr. O'Neill noted the low number of paraprofessionals enrolled in a teacher pipeline program. Mr. Martin explained that the 25 paraprofessionals in the program reflect those interested in that specific option, and highlighted that the district offers various pathways to become licensed educators, with both accelerated and extended programs available. Ms. Canty highlighted the district's focus on expanding pipeline programs and increasing participation.

Ms. Robinson emphasized the need for a teaching workforce that reflects Boston's changing demographics, suggesting creative hiring strategies like recruiting international teachers. Ms. Canty acknowledged these changes, highlighted efforts to increase Latinx educators, and mentioned exploring the reintroduction of recruiting teachers from Puerto Rico to diversify the workforce.

Ms. Robinson asked if BPS has updated job descriptions to reflect the increasing diversity of students, including multilingual learners. She emphasized the need to help current teachers adapt and collaborate with universities to prepare educators for diverse student needs. She stressed that improving student outcomes requires skilled, motivated teachers and updated job descriptions, noting that adding teachers without proper support won't drive improvement. Ms. Canty acknowledged the challenges of updating job descriptions and the importance of strategic staffing to ensure well-prepared educators. She acknowledged the effort required for these changes. Ms. Skipper stressed the importance of planning and collaboration with higher education to address the growing need for bilingual and dual-language educators,

Ms. Robinson thanked the presenters and said that she looked forward to updates on the next steps, including changes for the fall, challenges, and strategies to support and retain diverse teachers.

PUBLIC COMMENT (*CONTINUED*)

The following speakers testified regarding the Boston Teachers Union (BTU) contract negotiations:

- Mike Heichman, Dorchester resident, Community Advocate, Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA)
- Maria Mejia, Roxbury resident, Blackstone school parent
- Paola Lugo, Dorchester resident, Roger clap elementary parent
- Martha Arzu, South End resident, Blackstone school parent

Rosy Hosking, Roslindale resident, Sumner School parent, testified regarding inclusion and the Sumner Philbrick merger.

Hajmeena Feroz Omid, Dorchester resident, OBryan and BLS parents testified regarding the Exam School policy.

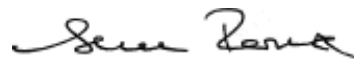
NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

Approved - At approximately 9.20 p.m. the Committee unanimously approved a motion by roll call to adjourn to the meeting.

Attest:



Lena Parvex
Executive Secretary