

# Connecting UPK and BPS

*Proposal for a connector system between UPK programs and BPS*



# Connector System Overview



**What:** System that connects students in participating UPK community based K1 classrooms with specific Boston Public Schools K2 classrooms.

**When:** Students enrolling in UPK CBO classrooms in September 2020 will be eligible for the connecting system when enrolling in K2 for September 2021





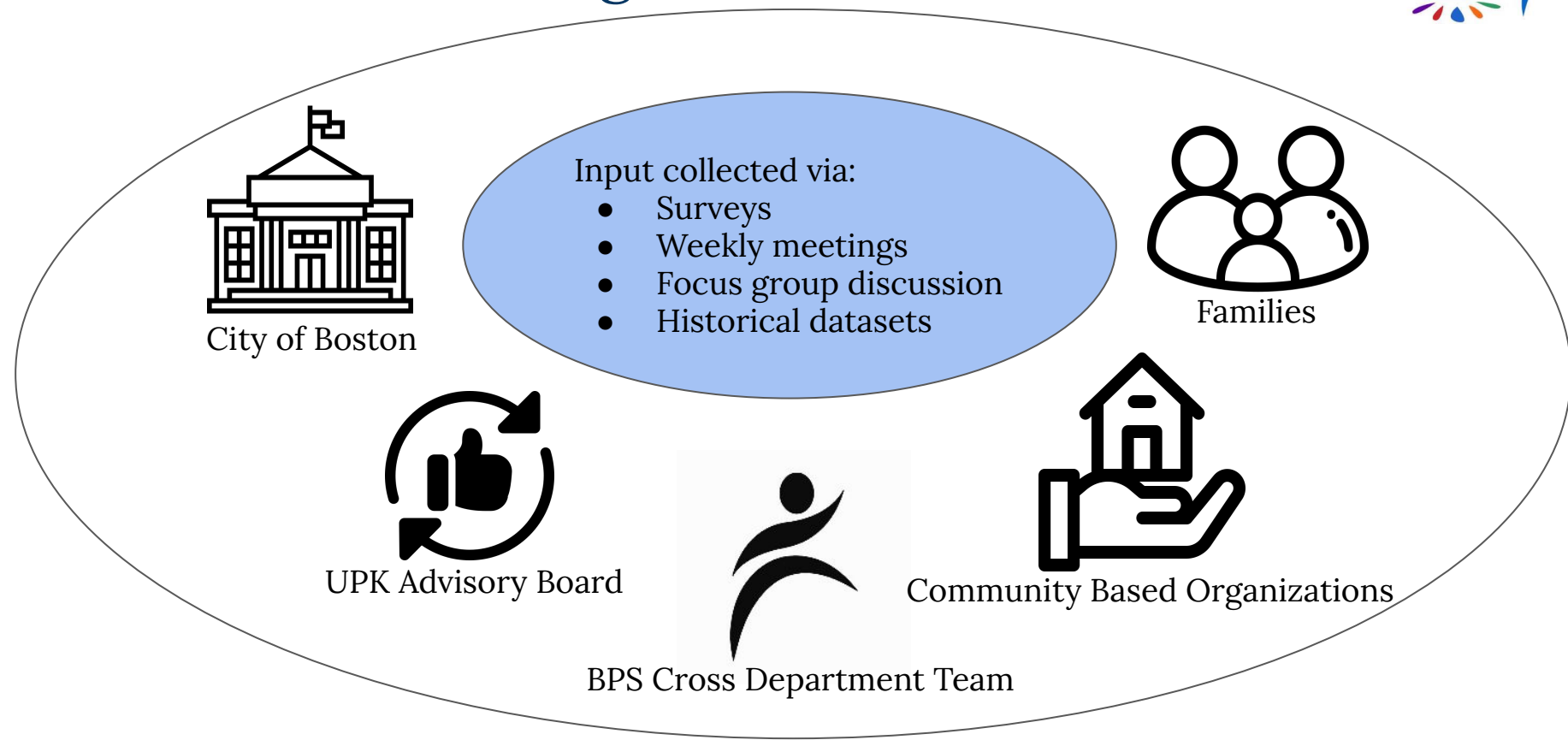
# Boston Universal Pre-K Overview

1. BPS K1 - 2800 seats
  - Students are automatically are enrolled into K-5 or K-8
2. Community Based K1 - 540 seats
  - Students are not automatically enrolled into K-5 or K-8

## Why expansion of Universal Pre-K

- Closing the Achievement Gap
  - ◆ Aligned with BPS Strategic Plan
  - ◆ Set up for success
  - ◆ Better outcomes for students who experience K1 and gains maintained in longitudinal study when curriculum is aligned and parents support.
- No wrong door
  - ◆ Compatible systems across setting
  - ◆ Minimize transitions, streamline registration, maintain family choice
  - ◆ Equitable access for working families

# The Connector Design Process



# UPK Student Snapshot

Economically Disadvantaged Families: 75% in community based | 72% in BPS

## Race & Ethnicity

### UPK Community Based Programs

- 42% Black or African American
- 12% Latinx\*
- 12% Asian
- 9% White
- 25% Other or Multiracial

### Boston Public Schools

- 33% Black
- 42.5% Latinx
- 9% Asian
- 14% White
- 1.5% Other/Multiracial



## Dual Language Learners

- ◆ 45% are dual language learners in community based | The most common languages are: Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese and Haitian Creole
- ◆ 45% in BPS do not have English as their first language

An estimated 70% (~270) of K1 students in CBOs will transition into BPS K2

\*The % of Latinx students is an underestimation due to the way sites reported student race. Additional Latinx students are included in the 25% "other or multiracial". 19% of all UPK students reported Spanish as their first language. For next year UPK Admin will use the updated BPS racial self-identification form.

# Our Proposal: UPK Priority Seats in K2



## 77 BPS Schools that Serve K2+

54 schools with open K2 seats

33 schools with >10 open K2 seats

Selection of 50% of these open K2 seats



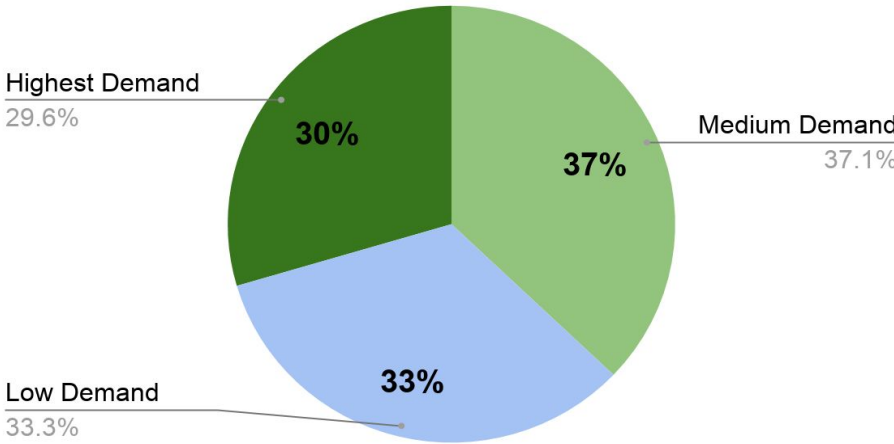
**450 UPK Priority Seats in K2 in 33 schools**

- “Open” K2 seats are in schools with more K2 seats than K1 seats
- New UPK priority will fit within the current BPS lottery system
- Provide UPK families with more access to the BPS K2 schools they want
- Low-income UPK students will have priority to the 450 seats.

# UPK Priority Seats and School Demand



Distribution of UPK Priority Seats by School Demand



Investment in quality enhancement

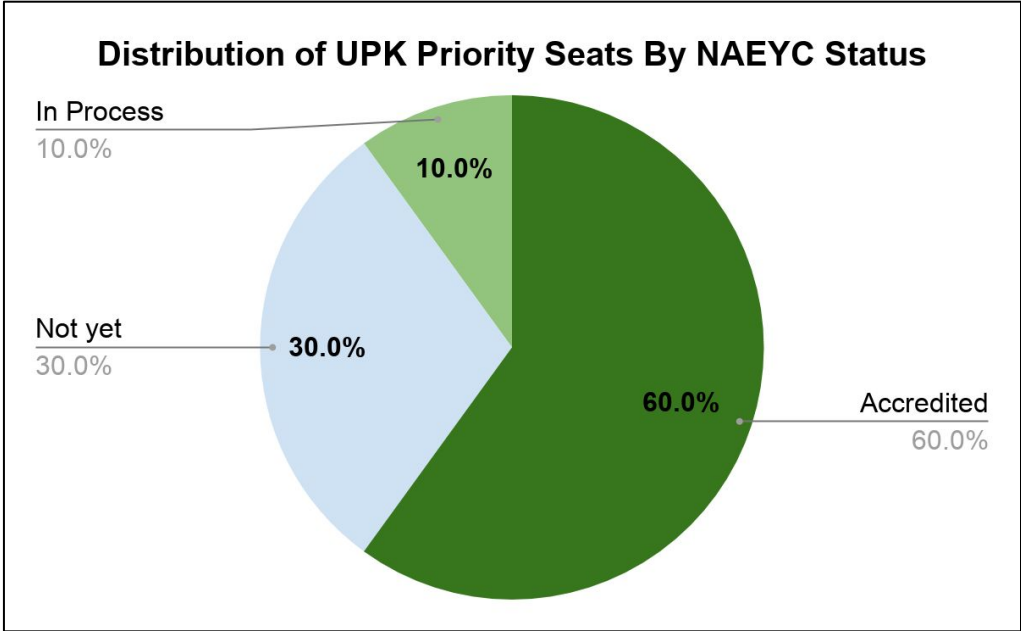
Neighborhoods		
The highest demand schools with UPK priority seats are in:	The medium demand schools with UPK priority seats are in:	The low demand schools with UPK priority seats are in:
Roxbury	Roxbury	Roxbury
South Dorchester	South Dorchester	South Dorchester
Mattapan	-	Mattapan
East Boston	East Boston	-
-	South Boston	South Boston
-	Hyde Park	Hyde Park
Jamaica Plain/Mission Hill	Jamaica Plain/Mission Hill	Jamaica Plain/Mission Hill
Roslindale	-	Roslindale
Charlestown	-	-
Downtown	-	-
West Roxbury	-	-
-	Allston-Brighton	-
-	North Dorchester	-
-	South End	-

# UPK Priority Seats and Quality Indicators



Distribution of UPK Priority Seats by Use of Focus on K2	
	% of UPK Priority Seats
In Schools <b>Using</b> Focus on K2	88%
In Schools <b>Not Using</b> Focus on K2	12%

- Schools using Focus on K2 have received direct coaching and professional development from the Department of Early Childhood
- NAEYC Accreditation is a key quality element of both UPK programs and Kindergarten classrooms.





# What this will mean for families:

Start of K2 in BPS



School  
Assignment



UPK students assigned to K2 through lottery and have preference to any school they ranked with **UPK priority seats**.

K2  
Registration



In February of the K1 year, the family visits a BPS Welcome Center and ranks their choices for K2 including choices where there are **UPK priority seats**.

Start of  
K1 year



Family enrolls in a UPK classroom at the CBO of their choosing.

# Considerations for Dual Language Programs



- The Office of English Learners (OEL), in their work to implement the LOOK ACT (2018), has piloted a strategy of collaboration with the UPK language based site at Viet-Aid to seed two K1 classrooms as a means for growing a Vietnamese Dual Language program in response to community request.
- As these programs are being developed, it is critical that there is a defined pathway from the identified UPK site to the new dual language program at a BPS school to ensure robust continuity for families who desire to continue in the dual language program. OEL will work in collaboration with the UPK governance structure to support each new program site.

# Under this Policy Change:



1. **Yes/No** to prioritize CBO K1 students and hence make available 450 seats across the proposed 33 schools for priority seating.

Feedback on this model:

- a. Assures less transitions for students:
- b. Provides greater options for families, especially for low income and working families who need a full day;
- c. BPS is being responsive to community needs and to its new strategic plan around equity and pathways for families.
- d. Greater alignment opportunities in curriculum.
- e. Increases enrollment in BPS (longitudinal research indicates that those who chose BPS UPK stay in in BPS longer)

# Under this Policy Change:



2. **Yes/No** to prioritizing low income students (only)

Feedback on this model is that it assures low income families (75% of CBO UPK families) will have priority to a school of their choice provided it is one of the 33 schools.

3. **Yes/No** to prioritizing the remainder of seats to non low income CBO K1 students

Feedback on this model is that it incentivizes mixed income classrooms and ensures the connector is available for all students in UPK funded CBO seats.

# Next Steps

## Timeline:

