



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

September 22, 2015

The Boston School Committee held a meeting at 4 p.m. on September 22, 2015 at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, Room 2-12A-B, Roxbury, Massachusetts.

For more information about any of the items listed below, visit www.bostonpublicschools.org, email feedback@bostonpublicschools.org or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

Task Force Members Present: Co-Chair Jeri Robinson; Co-Chair Ayele Shakur; Co-Chair Samuel Acevedo; Kim Janey, Dr. Hardin Coleman; Dr. Carroll Blake; Liliana Mickle; Sherman Zemler Wu; Carline Pignato; Adrienne Level; Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi; Jennifer Aponte; Heshan Berents-Weeramuni; Marinell Rousmaniere; Dr. Gil Noam; and Ron Walker. Dr. Miren Uriarte, English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force liaison to the OAGTF, was also present.

Task Force Members Absent: Dr. Vanessa Calderón-Rosado; and Alexandra Oliver-Dávila

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force Charge and Priority Goals (2015)

Boston School Committee Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force Recommended Membership

Boston Public Schools Achievement Gap Policy (2006)

Superintendent Chang's 100-Day Plan

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Robinson called the meeting to order, then introduced herself and fellow co-chairs Ayele Shakur and Samuel Acevedo. She then welcomed the Task Force members and thanked them for participating. Ms. Robinson explained that the meeting was serving as an "introduction" to the

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OAG Task Force because there was no official representation from Boston Public School (BPS) and the Mayor's Office.

For the next 30 minutes, Task Force members took turns introducing themselves and describing their aspirational goals as they relate to eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Ms. Shakur led a review of the Task Force's charge and priority goals, as well as the district's current achievement gap policy. She stated that, in addition to reviewing current district policies, the Task Force should review policy recommendations that are currently before the School Committee to see if the recommendations would potentially close or widen the achievement gap. She also stressed that the Task Force cannot work in isolation and should partner with City and community-based efforts such as My Brother's Keeper and Boston Basics, for example. She also suggested that the Task Force review the Massachusetts Department of Education's Equity Plan. Ms. Shakur then led a review of Superintendent Chang's 100-Day Plan, highlighting projects that are related to closing opportunity and achievement gaps, such as Advanced Work Class (AWC), high school redesign, Mass Core, and student assignment.

Ms. Robinson led a brief discussion of the structure of the Task Force, which will be guided by national expert senior advisors and likely divided into sub-groups.

Elizabeth Sullivan, executive secretary to the School Committee, presented a brief overview of MA open meeting law, to which the Task Force will adhere.

The Task Force then compiled the following list of topics and questions for later discussion and resolution:

- Update needed from the ELL and Inclusion Task Forces
- How will we find bright spots? Need testimony from stakeholders. What is working? What is not working?
- Should there be more than one student on the Task Force?
- Who will serve as the point person for data from district? Who will hold them responsible?
- Who will serve as the BPS content leads?
- How broadly do we define opportunities?
- What is the role of ELL and Inclusion Task Force liaisons?

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- PARCC/MCAS state mandates
- How do we define the opportunity and achievement gaps? What will be the benchmark to measure the gap?
- Need to examine disparities in funding allocations.
- Examine school climate/culture, social and emotional
- Need to break down data on teacher competency and its effect on student performance.
- Get district data on gaps, broken down by sub-groups.
- Decide on a set of working agreements/norms.
- Get report on all BPS schools and their entrance requirements.
- What's the follow up on various BPS reports i.e. special education
- Data needed on human capital diversity
- Data needed on teacher training cultural and competence
- Need a comparison of rigor from school to school; also look at geographic quadrant.
- What are the barriers to replication?
- Need to study discipline, home-based assignment and unified enrollment proposal.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Beth Nolan, Citywide Parents Council, suggested that the Task Force call upon high school guidance counselors to answer many of the questions that were posed during the meeting. She also said that school site councils are responsible for looking at school improvement.

John Mudd, education advocate, asked how will this Task Force go beyond the creation of another report and identify the barriers to closing the gap.

Sarah Faude, graduate student, Northeastern University, offered to be helpful to the Task Force.

Ruth Wong, Emmanuel Gospel Center, encouraged the Task Force to gather public input.

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NEXT STEPS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Shakur said that the Task Force may try to hold one community forum before the end of December as one method to solicit public feedback.

ADJOURN

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

Attest:



Elizabeth A. Sullivan
Executive Secretary