

Citywide Parent Council (CPC) Meeting Minutes

29 September 2015, 6-8pm

Attendance: Parents from 37 schools attended the meeting. Distribution of minutes through the CPC Google group is going to parents representing 84 schools.

Next meetings: For the 2015/16 academic year meetings will be held the last Tuesday of each month. Dates are: October 27th, November 24th, December 15th (third Tuesday rather than 4th), January 26th, February 23rd, March 29th, April 26th, May 31st and June 21st (fourth Tuesday). It was agreed that the meetings for the coming year would be held at the Bolling Building. We anticipate Superintendent Chang will participate in the following meetings: November 24th, February 23rd, June 21st.

Sub-Committee Updates

ELT update. Kristin Johnson reported. Kristin will be touching base with parents whose students are in the 16 schools in which ELT rolled out this year. Her contact information is krissycabbage@gmail.com. The program is supposed to roll out another 20 schools next year, and another 20 the year after. Many of the decisions were dictated by transportation: more information will be presented tomorrow at School Committee. Ellen Church noted that the Conley is hoping to be an ELT school but is looking for assistance with professional development to ensure it is a high quality program.

Opportunity and Achievement Gap Task Force. Heshan reported. The Task Force is chaired by School Committee Jerry Robinson, Ayele Shakur (NAACP), and Sam Acevedo (CEO at CASA). The Task Force has incorporated a member of the SPED Task Force and a member of the ELL Task Force. Sherman (Mather parent) and Heshan (Curley, BLA parent) are CPC Task Force members. Running from now till December.

Facilities. Margaret Wood (BLS parent) gave an overview of the BPS Facilities Master Plan, which had a public kick-off this morning at the McKay School in East Boston on the 20th. Margaret is collecting names of CPC members interested in sitting on the five groups which will be following the project and making recommendations to the Superintendent.

Sub-Committee Meetings. The group broke into interest groups to discuss common concerns. Reports back from these groups included:

- Transportation: Karen spoke. A unifying concern of the group are the many inequities in the system.
- Testing: Latoya spoke. No one else joined group but she is still interested.
- Curriculum: Latoya spoke. No one else joined group but she is still interested.
- Pathway to quality high schools: Dina and Karen spoke. There are multiple good choices: the non-exam schools need help marketing themselves.
- School Assignment/Enrollment: Natasha spoke. Concerns include: Many parents don't know how people are assigned, ELL assignments are limited, there is not sufficient transparency for SPED enrollment.

- Facilities: Carolyn spoke. Concerns (particularly about the Master Plan) include how long improvements to the buildings may be: buildings are in terrible shape today. Parents want to know how to get buildings care for NOW.
- ELT: Shari and Krissy spoke. They are leads on the subcommittee and will be working closely on the assessments of the ELT schools in this round. See update above on ELT.
- Health Wellness. The group compared notes about schools.
- Opportunity & Achievement Gap. Paula spoke. The common concern is that there is a policy in place that is not being implemented.
- Evaluation. Naeemah spoke. Pilot schools have autonomy to decide how teachers will be evaluated. Principals should be SPED certified and evaluated much for frequently themselves. Purpose of teacher evaluation is to find things to work on within your profession, but principals often tell teachers what to focus on. Two-thirds of principals were evaluated last year. Kenny commented on the huge amount of teacher turnover: seems like a three year cycle.
- Parent involvement. Tina spoke. Group feels that schools need to leverage second language speakers on school staff. Whole parts of the city are not represented in some groups. Parents want to know what kind of parent involvement teachers need.
- Equity. Kenny and Beth spoke. Concerns included how best to identify and connect with opportunities. School Committee Member Hardin Coleman has invited parents to meet with him.
- Budget: Kristin and Heshan spoke. Concerns discussed were how to share knowledge and encourage advocacy: we need to find out what schools and parents know the budget. There is good stuff on the CPC website. Heshan noted that Eleanor Laurans, BPS Director of School Finance, has asked to speak at next CPC meeting, which will be a great opportunity for discussion.
- Safety: Mary suggested adding this working group.

Next steps.

- Schools need to elect parent representatives, if they haven't already and communicate that meetings are open to all.
- Push for functioning Site Parent Councils.

New Items:

- Dina spoke about the recent lockdown issue at the Trotter. There was no communication to principal about what was going on. Garrison Trotter Neighborhood Association is working closely with the Trotter. There will be a meeting at the Shelburne Center. Dina will send out date: it will be a community meeting for kids to have a discussion about safety. BPS has said there will be trauma training for staff across district and PD.
- Vanessa expressed anger and outrage that incident reports do not seem to be required for all incidents involving harm to children. Carolyn said that if no one sees an incident, there is no requirement to create an incident report. Vanessa has made a request to Megan Webb, the Orchard Garden principal, for an incident report. She also noted that the school building is filthy: no toilet paper, paper towels and soap. Parents suggested getting in touch with the Ombudsman Carolyn McNeil.

- Heshan spoke about the conversation Kenny and he had with Rahn Dorsey (Mayor's Chief of Education) and Rachel Weinstein (organizational head of the Boston Compact) about the Mayor's proposal that a new Compact between BPS, Boston charters, and the parochial schools be signed. The plan includes centralizing planning authority by different school districts under the Mayor's Education office and it also includes a proposal to have charters be part of the BPS enrollment system. A set of public engagement sessions will be taking place in October and November.
- Heshan asked for volunteers for the Transportation Committed: Gloria volunteered.

Public comment period:

- Mothers for Justice & Equality (www.mothersforjusticeandequality.org). Sara Flint spoke: she is a founding member. Organization is in its first year. They want to meet with Parent Councils and provide information on what they can offer, including "You Matter" program. They will be holding a Women's Violence conference in November and are looking for 15 youth to participate. Sarah's contact information is as follows: sflint@mothersforjusticeandequality.org, 617-516-8086.
- Jonathan Rodrigues from BTU spoke. He expressed enthusiasm for the CPC and what he'd heard discussed. He distributed flyers for the Second Annual Parent2Parent event coming up Saturday October 10th at Madison Park HS.
- John Mudd spoke: John is a long-time student advocate in Boston. He noted that a major battle is coming over raising the existing cap on charter schools: he is concerned that charter schools have not equitably accepted ELL and SPED: he gave the example that charters have 4%ELL students while BPS has 38%.

Attendees

BCLA	Gloria West
Beethoven/Ohrenb.	Harneen Chernow
BLA	Beth Nolan, Lauren Margarita, Heshan Weeramuni, Mary Battenfield
BLS	Margaret Wood, Kenny Jervis
BTU School	Joel Thompson
Boston Green Acad.	Linda Freeman
CASH	Linda Freeman
Clapp	Kenny Jervis
Conley	Ellen Church, Tina Alva
Curley	Heshan Berents-Weeramuni
East Boston HS	Annissa George
Eliot K-8	Karen Shine
Ellis	Natasha Maughan
Ellison/Parks EEC	Liza White
Hale	Daphne Floreal, Barbara Rosa
Haley	Karen Zerby Buzzelle
Higginson-Lewis	Cathleen Brown
Holmes	Carolyn Lomax
Hurley	Rebecca MacNeely
JosQuincyUpper	Joanne McKenna

JFK	Krista Magnuson
Lyndon	Sapna Padte, Julie Muse-Fisher, Debra Brendemuehl
Mary Lyons	Cheyvonne Roberts
Mason Pilot	Naeemah Kennedy, Latoya Gayle
Mendell	Kristin Johnson
Mozart	Monique Oliveira
Murphy	Kimberly Harris
O'Bryant	Shari Perry-Wallace, Vanessa Martin, Carolyn Lomax
Perry	Annissa George
Snowden	Barbara Rosa
Sumner	Amy Fisher, Nicol Riley, Katie Muse-Fisher
Tech Boston	Carolyn Lomax, Nampeera Lugira
Timilty	Barbara Rosa
Trotter	Dina Cundiff
UP Dorchester	Paula Kelly
Young Achievers	Gloria West
West Rox Academy	Kelvin Brooks
Winship	Marc Goldstein

Other attendees

BPS	Monica Roberts, Nampeera Lugira
BTU	Jonathan Rodrigues
MA Charter Assoc.	Julia Mejia
Michelle Wu's office	Annie Qin
Advocate Emeritus	John Mudd
Boston Globe	Marcela Garcia