

Citywide Parent Council (CPC) Meeting Minutes

26 January 2016, 6-8pm

The meeting was facilitated by Sapna Padte. Sapna opened the meeting by welcoming the large group of attendees, giving an overview of the agenda, and asking for patience as CPC continues to grow.

The CPC currently has representation from one hundred and one schools. Forty-six parents from thirty-three schools attended the meeting.

Next meetings: For the 2015/16 academic year meetings will be held the last Tuesday of each month. Dates are: 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. Superintendent Chang will participate in the following meetings: February 23rd, May 31st.

Patrick Whittemore, a photographer from the Boston Herald attended the first part of the meeting. Participants who do not want to have their pictures taken were asked to identify themselves to Patrick.

Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC) Presentation

Keondre McClay from BSAC introduced himself and presented an application on Student Rights & Responsibilities that BSAC has created. He described the mobile phone application BPS students have created, and he asked if parents could assist BSAC by encouraging their students to participate.

School Representation

For the purposes of voting in the future, Heshan raised a question of voting protocol. The By-Laws are neutral on this issue: an excerpt is attached. In the discussion that followed several issues were discussed:

The CPC By-Laws need revision, and the revision should address this issue. There is a CPC By-Laws Subcommittee which will meet and propose revisions back to the CPC membership for a future vote. Additional parents volunteered to participate: the Committee members are LaToya Gayle (Mason), Karen Kast-McBride (BAA), Joel Thompson (BTU), Regina McClay (EMK), Angie Camacho (Hurley), Maria Roges (Henderson Inclusion), Odette Williamson (Lee), and Emelia Crespo (BAA). This group committed to meeting before the next CPC meeting.

Parents discussed the pros and cons of one vote per school. Heshan Berents-Weeramuni stated that he was in favor of one vote per school. He stated the following in support of this approach: the CPC comprises 125 large and small schools, with many different grade configurations and ranging from early Learning Centers to Adult and Young-Adult focused high school educational programs. School size ranges from 2400 student high school to 90 student early learning center. Our schools offer different types of programs for different types of students, and respective communities should have an equal voice in the CPC's shared decision making process.

For the purposes of the current discussion, all parents present voted on the following motion:

- To table the issue of how to vote until there are formal recommendations from the By-Laws Sub-Committee.
- The motion was seconded, and voted on in the affirmative, with two parents abstaining.

Budget Subcommittee Presentation

The members of the Budget Sub-Committee are Heshan Berents-Weeramuni, Bob Damon, Andre Dorsanvil, Kristin Johnson, Andre Dorsanvil and Eileen McMahon.

It appears that the proposed budget cuts will have very large impacts on schools, particularly the high schools. The Budget Sub-Committee is asking all schools to work together to convey the budget impacts. The Sub-Committee has developed an initial strategy to convey the impact of the cuts and to advocate together for the cuts to be reduced. A summary of the recommended action can be found here: <http://bit.ly/BPSMONEY2016>. All representatives are asked to complete the budget impact spreadsheet on the CPC website which Heshan and Kristin have circulated.

To get the word out about the impact of the budget cuts on high schools, BLS is asking representatives from all of the high schools to come to BLS on Monday February 8th at 6:30pm to speak to City Council Education Chair Tito Jackson and Co-Chair Annissa Essaibi George. Each high school will be asked to describe the impact of the budget cuts on their individual schools, and parents will be asking together for help to increase funding. All parents and members of all school communities, including teachers and staff are welcome. All of the City Councilors have been invited to attend to hear the testimony. After the presentation of the budget cuts there will be time for questions and answers. For more information contact BLS's CPC representative Margaret Wood at margaretminorwood@gmail.com. She can connect you with the parents organizing the event.

Early Learning Time (ELT) Sub-Committee update

Kristin Johnson reported that the roll-out of the second set of schools for an expanded day has been put on hold by BPS (16 schools began ELT in the current academic year). Because of this change the Round 1 lottery will be delayed. BPS Deputy Superintendent of Strategy Donna Muncey spoke about the reasons for the delay, including concerns from parents about the longer school day for younger children and recent research that suggests having a later start for older kids: these issues are causing BPS to rethink both ELT and the transportation structure. She also noted that the cost of rearranging the transportation grid to work with the ELT initiative was having a huge impact. She acknowledged the time that parents and staff have invested to implementing ELT and expressed regret to all of those affected. [I will have Donna review this text and concur that she agrees with this representation]

Karen Pferffele from the Hennigan expressed frustration with time spent, how well the Hennigan community thought ELT was going to work, and how frustrating it was coming on top of the other budget impacts, as well as the timing, four days after the Mayor expressed strong support for schools in his State of the City speech. Donna acknowledged the frustration. She added that she felt the first year program which had already been rolled out could use a year of support with scheduling and planning.

Feedback to the CPC Leadership

Several parents commented on concerns about transparency and engagement.

- Dina recommended that all CPC representatives take the Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Training that is available online: <http://www.mass.gov/ethics/conflict-of-interest-law-online-training-programs.html>
- Dina also commented that she feels the CPC should not be implying the endorsement of other parent groups, such as BEJA and Quest, which currently have links on the CPC website.
- A parent new to the group expressed that the meeting had been complex, very hard to follow and came across as though just a few voices were speaking.
- Mary Battenfeld objected to a guest filming certain sections of the meeting without asking. It turned out that the guest filming had asked permission of the person speaking, but not of the group. It was agreed that the CPC needs a clear policy on this issue as the meeting started and ended on this note.

CPC Representatives attending:

Baldwin ELC	Anna Davis
Bates	Patrick Manasse-Latham
BAA	Emily and Emilia Crespo, Karen Kast-McBride
BCLA	Gloria West
BLA	Mary Battenfield, Beth Nolan
BLS	Eileen McMahon, Margaret Wood
BTU	Nicole d'Avis
Channing	Dave Clarke
Clap	Kenny Jervis
Curley	Sara Warren, Ann DeGeorge
Dante Alighieri	Danubia Corregeos
EMKennedy	Regina McClay
Haley	Nina Kallen
Henderson	Lisa Bernard, Yvonne Pope, Maria Roges, Ken Hawkes
Hennigan	Malikka Wells, Karen Pfefferle
Hurley	Angelina Camacho
Lee	Odette Williamson
Lyndon	Sapna Padte
Mason	Naeemah Kennedy, Latoya Gayle
Mattahunt	Dalida Rocha
Mendell	Kristin Johnson
Murphy	Kim Harris
O'Bryant	Shari Perry-Wallace, Aristide Perez
Philbrick	Bob Damon
Roosevelt	Shannon Parker
Snowden	Vina Harvey
Sumner	Katie Muse-Fisher
TechBoston	Carolyn Lomax
Timilty	Barbara Rosa
Trotter	Dina Cundiff

West Rox Academy	Andre Dorsainvil
Winship	Marc Goldstein, Paula Fleming, Leila Hayes
Young Achievers	Gloria West

Guests:

BPS	Donna Muncey
BPS OFSE	Al Watson, Kiana Brunson
BPS Ombudsman	Carolyn MacNeil
BSAC	Keondre McClay, Arthur Collins
BTU	Jessica Tang
Boston Herald (part)	Patrick Whittemore
Mass Charter Assoc.	Julia Mejia
Michelle Wu's Office	Annie Qin
Northeastern	Giulia Afiune