

Citywide Parent Council Meeting (November 24, 2015, Bolling Building)

Attending, CPC reps:

Mary Battenfeld: (BLA, Secretary/Minutes)
 Sapna Padte: (Facilitator, Lyndon K-8)
 Heshan Berents-Weeramuni (Curley)
 Angelina Camacho (Hernandez)
 Barbara Rosa: (Timilty)
 Kenny Jervis (Roger Clapp)
 Bruce Thatcher (Dearborn)
 Annissa George (Perry-and soon to be City Councilor!)
 Joel Thompson (BTU School)
 Nicol Riley (Sumner)
 Nancy Minucci: (Eliot)
 Dina Cundiff (Trotter)
 Harneen Chernow (Ohrenberger)
 Beth Nolan: (BLA)
 Krista Magnuson: (JFK Innovation Elementary)
 Carolyn Lomax: (Tech Boston)
 Kenneth Hawkes (Henderson)
 Maria Roges (Henderson)
 Delia DeVito (Lyndon)
 Daphnee Floreal (Hale)
 Latoya Gayle (Mason)
 Nina Kallen (Haley)
 Ellen Church (Conley)
 Paula Fleming (Winship)
 Jessica Prou (Shaw)
 Linda Freeman (BGA and CASH)
 Gloria West (BCLA/Young Achievers)
 Chris Lindstrom (ELC West)
 Regina McClay (EMK)
 Beth Rogers (Eliot)
 Shannon Parker (Roosevelt)
 Mike McCormick (Bates)
 Maria Edsale- Farrell
 Naeemah Kennedy (Mason)
 Katie Muse-Fisher (Sumner)

BPS parents/non CPC members:

Beth Norton (Mather)
 Stephanie Shapin Gerhom (Eliot)
 Ann DeGeorge (Curley)
 Jason DeGeorge (Curley)
 Erin O'Hearn (East Boston/Quincy)
 Albert Bruce? (Curtis)?

Guests (BPS):

Tommy Chang (Superintendent)
 Karla Estrada (Dep. Super, Support Services)
 Amalio Nieves (Asst. Super, Social Emotional Wellness)
 Doannie Tran (Asst. Super, Professional Learning)
 Donna Muncey (Dep. Super, Strategy)

Becky Schuster (Asst. Super, Equity)
 Makeeba McCreary (Chief of Staff)
 Ross Wilson (Managing Partner, Innovation)
 Erika Giampietro (CFO)
 Kim Rice (Asst. Super Operations)
 Mary Ann Crayton (Community Engagement)
 Lori Greenwood (Engagement)
 Sarah Spofford (Office of Superintendent)

Other Guests:

Ariel Branz (St. Stephen's Youth Programs)
 Kim Janey (Mass. Advocates for Children)
 Annie Qin (Office of Michelle Wu)
 Emerson College student (taping for class project)

- 1) **Welcome:** (Sapna): Welcome to Dr. Chang. Please sign in, with star on name tag if CPC rep.
Opening question: What are your plans for Thanksgiving, and what are you looking forward to?
 --things looking forward to: a break, visit with 90 year old mother; seeing extended family; travel to Cape, New Jersey; working from home; friends in neighborhood; volunteer work; Turkey Trot run; my mother's cooking;

Sapna: conclusion: CPC/BPS families like a family;

Meeting livestream via Periscope and archived; also Emerson student videotaping for a class project;

- 2) *Five CPC Subcommittees Presentations to the Superintendent* (Intro by Sapna: remember some questions can't be answered now; opportunity to raise questions ;)

- **ELT (Kristen):** on ELT task force; role is to talk to families and what you want; current ELT group (list); issues that arise (attention span; need snacks for the kids); planning session for next cohort will be in December; if you are in the schools with ELT should have a planning group at the school about how to use the extra time;

?? What are the positive and negative things happening? A: Positive: Otis: project about food
 Negative: Transportation;

??Are there problems with afterschool partners and programs? A: late start time so hard to get to afterschool.

??Is there a particular curriculum? A: no, the school determines;

??How are we using ELT in relation to student teachers at colleges and universities? A: (Kristen) work included has to be led by BTU because of contract; Dr. Muncey: could have conversation about how college students can help but can't be the lead teacher; won't save the cost of the teacher, because have to have the lead teacher; at end of 3 years every school will have ELT;

?? Transportation for K-8 schools and 7th and 8th graders on bus now it is dark; concerns about safety around that; A: we are monitoring but the 9:30 start time makes end;

?? has there been talk about changing so the 9:30 start time is earlier: Answer; (Kristen): is some creative thinking going on to resolve the problem; (Dr. Chang) could be answered with discussion of transportation;

Dr. Chang: if questions, ask Dr. Muncey; (on ELT task force)

- **Transportation (Harneen):** our focus has been at where transportation has not been working for our kids; equity and particularly around middle school; problems, recommendations, issues:

--all middle and high school students should get an M7 pass; right now only get pass if you live far away; that's not equitable; some kids get greater access to getting to school and other places (jobs, libraries, etc.)

--look into how decisions are made about who gets yellow buses and who gets dedicated MBTA bus;

--older siblings should be allowed to ride the yellow bus along with younger ones;

--look at distance and rules (1 ½ miles, 2) for when you get a pass;

--people like where's my bus but doesn't work with all smart phones and and doesn't track if bus changed;

--school start up; a lot of students are unclear about what their transportation options; this year a lot of kids didn't know about options and alternative transportation;

--transparency: who receives transportation and why? not equitable because a lot of schools don't have special buses

--SPED; would be great if monitors were trained around working with students with disabilities and particular students;

?? Dr. Chang: who is this group working with on BPS? I ask that this committee work with leadership team at BPS; what will be our innovative solutions? need a working group to make sure our kids are going to school safely;

- **Food and Nutrition (Anna George, Stephanie S.; Shannon Parker):**

--Context: (Anna) how group evolved; research on impact of food critical to learning; issue of poverty in BPS; so we decided to monitor BPS; have since formed a more collaborative group;

--Stephanie: working on "low hanging fruit:" and specific indicators; sodium; lower sugar (examples; Cheerios rather than sweeter cereals; fruit rather than fruit juice; no chocolate milk;; breakfast in the classroom; Eliot (35% don't take breakfast; not enough time to eat, so fruit sits there; problem: there is right now no food nutrition director-we have submitted names and want to be part of the selection process; we think a single kitchen best (scratch cooked food); look forward to working with you;

--Shannon: CPC rep, Roosevelt; passionate about this; wanted to work to increase access to healthier food for not just my son but every child; invite other CPC members (or school members) to work on committee; if interested, contact Ann: NEXT meeting: Dec. 7, 6 pm, location TBD.

?? at school told can't just take the milk; time; such a short window to eat; A; Time is on our radar; breakfast in the classroom fixes some of the problem; milk is part of federal guidelines and how money distributed;

Dr. Chang: EOS foundation paying for Food search; will absolutely reach out to Ann and parent rep; EOS foundation also might fund study on food policies in other districts; Ann: we've done a lot of that research;

- **Parent Involvement (Krista, Katie N, Chris L);**

--Why this group? research shows that family engagement improves outcomes; definition; ensuring that parents assist child's learning; included on advisory committee and decision making when appropriate; want parents to recruit and retain group of active parents; parents key role in child's education;

--"Manifesto" (goals/beliefs) 1) -parents would like to be involved but don't have the resources; how can parent council help and enable parents to step in; tools: "best practices" manual (successful strategies of other parent councils); connect to other groups that do training (such as Federation of Special Needs); 2) parents need to know their rights; parents can provide each other advice but not systemically gathered; 3) not good enough system to categorize feedback and act on it; starting point for us is to have parent councils have way for feedback/complaints, 4) family engagement plan; need to have one; decisions should be made in concert with parent council; should be a way to work with principals 5) parents recognize how underfunded the system is but don't have ways to seek change; CPC can help bring out these issues

Dr. Chang: disconcerting that parents are feeling there is no way to provide feedback; who do we work with parents to get feedback on student learning? We will get there when we engage parents in meaningful learning experiences; maybe we need “adult learning practices” build capacity so parents are building deep learning alongside of principal, students, etc.

- **Budget (Heshan):**

--Overview: complaints that parents don't show up; it's because we think our feedback isn't welcome; (snaps); we're doing the heavy lifting (example; high school show case meetings);

--Budget and enrollment: Has to be a way to work it out so not tied to enrollment; weighted student funding is great, but what's happened with WSF is that schools compete for a limited pool and resources driven by enrollment;

--Suggestions: share resources among schools should be a wider strategy; increase \$ for countdown to kindergarten; Office of Engagement, CPC (claps, snaps);

--Transportation not the place to cut; cuts in transportation are in fact making the opportunity and achievement gap worse - teachers are paying for M7 passes so students can get to school;

Dr. Chang: Long term viability critical; intrigued by notion of looking at variables others than WSF; ideas of sharing resources on transportation; think we should move down to school level:

Heshan respond: have to look at equity, central office perhaps a better arbiter of equity because under present model schools set up not to always look at equity for all student because too busy competing with each other;

Sapna: conclusions of working group; list of 14 groups; at other meetings the other groups will have a chance to share;

3) **General Q and A;** *Sapna,* guidelines: does your question apply to the district? not venue for questions about your child or a very particular situation; if questions ask Caroline ombudsperson or Executive committee;

Send additional questions, comments to Mary Battenfeld: mbattenfeld@wheelock.edu

Angie: safety and parent voice; what is the process for parent complaints; burden should not be on parents or to blame parents; need BPS team to take the initiative; we need solutions to be arrived at with framework for our voices to be heard first;

Dr. Chang: that should not have happened:

Annissa: are you doing a transportation audit to look at and get a better sense of who is on the bus? What is the planning for school buses in the winter?

Dr. Chang: we can't track whether individual students are on the bus; but have a plan; *Dr. Wilson* working on plan for tap monitor; can we get a clearer picture to predict the need?

Ross Wilson: we are working on manual audits, but ultimately working on a system that would have a text message sent to parents so every parent knows when a child get on and off the bus; will also help us understand efficiency;

?? are we going to have a system to opt out of transportation assignment?

?? how about the late buses? and impact on food and nutrition?

?? sharing resources? Free t passes for all students?

?? snow banks and winter will affect the way

?? lateness of the MBTA busses affects kids; they are marked tardy; 3 tardies late

Dr. Chang; working with city to do better on the snow; will monitor clearance of schools to share publically; if schools have to be closed parents will get a text message;

?? ELT and impact on SPED students especially with ADHD; sensory overload; difficult when you get home; collateral consequences of extended learning;

Dr. Chang; we have to absolutely solve this problem;

??SPED and parent involvement: focus is on autism; put together list of what what services schools offer;

?? would be good if SPED students/families have place to make complaint that not's a lawyer

?? should be a systematic way to collect information on what parents are

?? can we create a budget that lowers class size and supports teachers? budget; should be based on how many classrooms we have and keeping classrooms small;

Dr. Chang; appreciate investing in teaching and learning; that will be our biggest investment; PD; diversity; support teachers staying in teaching;

QUESTIONS to be sent to Dr. Chang:

- Discipline: has been a working group (COPAC) on revising the code of conduct and training parents; no parent involvement: what can your office do to make that happen?
- What is your plan for decreasing testing?
- How can we bring in the conversation around the BTU contract to create more opportunities for teachers to have practicums at school?
- How was ELT chosen as a priority during budget crunch? And high schools starting early?
- Who is responsible for getting out communications district wide? Why are they not getting
- Can we use our own buses and not pay for private school buses?
- Is the system going to address problems at Shaw? building, other lack of funding
- Can anything be done for a few schools to get partnerships with companies? We are constantly not making ends meet (supplies)
- Curriculum? Can the parent know what kind of curriculum their school is working on and have impact on choice of curriculum?
- Can we get a feedback system to report safety issues and a timeline on that?
- Why aren't principals being evaluated?
- Can we change situation so students out of the walk zone can get MBTA passes?
- Suggestion for parent involvement: put washer/dryers in schools; parents come in and use;
- Parent engagement; applaud parents for getting involved;
- Facilities (Tynan) need to make facilities so children can be educated (lights going out; mice, etc);
- AWC: takes resources away from black and brown kids for kids; what can we do?
- Would you consider a parent to parent office where parents are paid and there to answer questions of other parents?
- Student teachers? They stop coming at certain times of year?
- Not enough information around when schools have open seats? Can we get this?

- ELT/buses; supplier tells BPS how to provide services; we should tell the bus company what we need v. the other way around;
- Has anyone considered reaching out to Hubway for bike passes?

Dr. Chang; doesn't feel good that the system isn't working for so many kids; would be helpful to know where things are working; so we can systematize what is working; ask for the bright spots where things are working; looking for ways to get feedback/customer service way so we can figure out what needs to be fixed; thank you for the feedback; I suggest CPC starts with bright spots; people share something positive that happened with their children's lives;

Questions submitted later (written or email):

- Are there checks and balances around students who are kept back (ELL/SPED)?
- Could BPS help organize/coordinate parent carpools?
- What is the process for handling transportation issues?
- How can we get resources for labor, cleaning supplies so schools sparkle and students have clean and respectful environment?
- What processes and procedures are there re reporting personell violations?

4) Boston Compact discussion

Sapna: plan to add charters to enrollment; unclear about if they are going to do this; Dr. Chang; I haven't weighed in and we're not committed to it;

Questions, comments:

- Who is responsible? what is occurring?
- Comment: very little outreach; this is a huge issue; what we have seen in other cities is that there will be the expansion of charters and closing of BPS schools; applications for new charter seats;
- Boston Compact documents; are charters going to change their start times to make our ELT work? Kim Rice said they haven't been asked;
- public records request to receive records; what we have learned is troubling; shouldn't be a private group having these conversation; Dr. Chang: will follow up;
- concern is that the way the meeting was facilitated; charter parents were given more time to ask question; BPS parents have equity concerns; we shouldn't look to a future; how do we benefit from the Compact? left with way more questions and confusion:
- felt like it was to bring access where there was no access before? why are we not reaching the bar that we have? what are the issues that are complicating matters? achievement gap?
- so much confusion; parents are not understanding your position? where did it come from? could you put out a statement of your concerns? we assume you are on board with this:

Dr. Chang: in many venues with Compact work; guided by equity framework; I am concerned about funding and resources; I haven't reached any indication this is happening next school year; still a public engagement process; if we're not collaborating we need to evaluate; my job is to ensure quality in BPS schools;

- problem; motivation seems disingenuous; understand issues of equity and access; will not benefit BPS schools; access issue but there is a better way to handle then to bring in Compact;
- parent access to issues on meeting; we didn't get any information; when it came to this very little communication; timing of the meetings a concern; deliberately diminished

- BPS should take charge of this process; Boston Compact should not run the process because they are not impartial; part of their goals; they will get financial benefits from it;
- somewhere along the line we lost track of educating the whole child; how many times have our children been put on the line; every time we asked the Compact for details they didn't answer; seems like they have already decided;

5) CPC elections: (Heshan); acknowledgement to CPC co-chairs; reps on ELT, etc. task forces;

- Motion: to add a rep, so have two, to transportation steering committee;
- Nomination: Sapna and Shannon as facilitators; approved by show of hands;
- 5 reps to SSC steering Committee; called into existence; will be there to address issues/questions, such as about waivers for a school from start time; --nominees: Nancy Minucci, Bruce Thatcher; Regina; Carolyn Lomax, (approved)
- COCAP (Code of Conduct Advisory Committee); will put two parents on;
- CPC co-chairs; Heshan; Latoya; Angie, Kenny; (approved)
- Secretary: Mary Battenfeld; Margaret Wood; (approved)
- Treasurer; want to get back to being a 501c3; Chris; Netta?;
- Reps on the School Committee selection; Dina; Naeemah;
- ELT Steering Committee; Kris, Maria F.
- Transportation Steering committee; Harneen, Gloria, Barbara;
- 38 member governing board; (will elect at next meeting)

All approved by show of hands; except governing board will put out on email and we will vote on in Dec.

Public comment; Angie: Junior Achievement;

- Dina: ask for meeting outside to get a smaller group that we discuss about "hot topics" parents would like to address; for example safety issues (robberies at Lilla Frederick, Dearborn, etc.);
- Sapna: could you craft an email to figure out when such a meeting might take place?
- Regina: suggestion: must get more structure; hone in on bylaws and operating procedures to get goals and objectives; organization could be more functional;
- Evaluation: Sapna: got to ask questions of Dr. Chang; hear his opinion on Compact; had elections;
- Comments; next year have the descriptions of the positions available;
- If superintendent there could have questions in advance; also push Superintendent follow up and get a time line for when resolved;

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.