

Citywide Parent Council (CPC) Meeting Minutes

27 October 2015, 6-8pm

Meeting Goals: Meeting with Eleanor Laurans and Erika Giampietro, hold Sub-Committee meetings

Attendance: Parents from 36 schools attended the meeting. Distribution of minutes through the CPC Google group is going to parents representing 96 schools.

Next meetings: For the 2015/16 academic year meetings will be held the last Tuesday of each month. Dates are: 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.

Discussion with BPS Budget Leadership

Eleanor Laurans, BPS Executive Director of School Finance, and Erika Giampietro, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, introduced themselves. Eleanor noted that she joined the Superintendent's team in July and has come to meet with the CPC to hear concerns and questions. She gave a brief background on the budget process. The annual BPS budget is approximately \$1billion: of this two-thirds goes to operating the schools, and one-third goes to transportation and facilities. Eleanor's focus is to create an economically sustainable budget process.

The budget process starts in mid to late November when every school receives projections from BPS of the number of students anticipated: in December they receive their budget allotment, which is based on the projected enrollment. In January, the schools develop and approve (through the School Site Councils) their budgets and submit them to BPS. In February there are public hearings.

The Dynamic of the last several years have been that the budget process has been a losing proposition. It has been a particular challenge because the annual, quick cycle of the budget process makes it hard to plan ahead.

Parent participants asked the following questions:

- How do I get a copy of my school's budget from last year? Eleanor will send link to Heshan for distribution.
- What experience do you bring to this job? Eleanor worked in NYC for Superintendent Joel Klein, then for the Parthenon Group locally, as well as other school districts.
- How and when do you justify the projections with actual enrollment, when it differs? This is happening now (annually, in October): BPS has recorded actual enrollment is adjusting for classes that are larger by providing more teachers in those classrooms. If enrollment is more than 5% over the projection an adjustment is made.
- Has there been any discussion on sharing resources in neighborhoods? Eleanor said this is happening, but there is no structure for it.
- What are schools supposed to do about budgets that are blown because of decisions (ELT, teachers' contract, full inclusion) that are made after budget was passed? Eleanor acknowledged this is an impossible situation.

- What is the budget for a school determined by? School budgets are based on weighted student funding. BPS is in the fifth year of utilizing weighted student funding, which is being increasingly applied across the state because it is equitable: the needs of students drives the rate of funding per student. The base rate is \$5200-5700: if the student is identified as ELL, SPED or in living in poverty, the funding formula increases the reimbursement for that student. Following is a link with more information: <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/1107>
- The weighting methodology does not accurately measure poverty in this area: what changes are planned? Eleanor described the poverty calculation: currently based on federally defined community eligibility which matches rosters with families eligible for federal money, such as free lunch. When BPS moved to free universal lunch, the ability to utilize this definition was lost.
- Why are we funding charter and parochial transportation if the District's budget is struggling?
- How does the presence of charter schools affect the budget? Eleanor said that in theory the funding for charters makes so much sense. In reality, the cost are surprisingly sticky: for example, if you lose one or two students from each class, it doesn't affect the cost of operating the school, but it significantly changes your budget.

There were a number of additional questions on enrollment and its impacts, including:

- How is the enrollment projection created?
- If kids arrive at school after the October enrollment determination, why isn't there an adjustment?
- How can schools plan when resources change because of enrollment?

Eleanor responded to these questions as follows: Enrollment is tough. It is hard to change a school's funding in the middle of the year, even if the enrollment is changing. BPS does its best to project accurately and build in some safeguards. The fact that we value stable schools has affected our policy debate about how we do this work.

Participants discussed what parents should do to ensure appropriate funding for their school:

- When the budget is presented to the School Site Council by the principal, dig into it!
- Pay close attention to class size
- Look at the reference materials on the CPC and Office for Engagement websites
- Attend trainings that the Office for Engagement offers

Extended Learning Time (ELT) update: Kristin Johnson presented the following information. ELT is a requirement of the new Teacher's Union contract. This change occurred because Boston has one of the shortest days of any urban district: BPS, BTU and the Mayor made an agreement to add 40 minutes to the school day. ELT was initiated at 16 schools in 2015/16: in 2016/17 it will be rolled out to all 60 of the regular elementary schools. Current challenges include: the need for money to fund schedule and planning time, getting teachers to stay (Higginson-Lewis teachers won't, for example) and transportation (the transportation matrix is gridlocked around this issue).

Sub-Committees Reports:

- Transportation: Mary spoke. Need to lobby for decreasing funding for non-BPS schools. Need more information about problems parents are having.
- School Assignment. Patrick spoke. How do you change assignment numbers that you know are wrong? Action steps: Figure out what are the steps are for SSC to figure this out? What is impact of universal enrollment? Will volunteered to lead this group.

- Opportunity Achievement Gap/Equity. Jiannina and Heshan spoke. There is a City wide task forced on this issue in which parents can participate: Sherman Zemmler Wu (Mather) and Heshan (Curley, BLA) are the parent representatives. The Committee is supposed to produce recommendations by December 31st.
- Evaluation: Naaemah spoke. Two-thirds of principals were not evaluated last year. Need to figure out who the principal leaders are now. Heshan suggested getting in touch with Emily Qazilbah, Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital.
- Health & Wellness. Kenneth spoke on this. Has issues with reports of student rape and suicide at BLS that have not been addressed.
- Curriculum. Denise spoke. Parents want access to the curriculum in their child's classroom and notice about curriculum changes. How are teachers being held responsible for student progress? Angie spoke about progress made on this at the Hernandez. Fatima and Denise want to take lead.
- Pathway to Quality High Schools. Dina is very committed to this issue and looking for assistance.
- Expanded Learning Time (ELT). Kristin and Sherry are leads: Kristin noted there should be an ELT partnership forming at each school. Parents expressed concern about impact on partnerships.
- Budget. Heshan spoke about education process. WATCH THE VIDEO on the CPC website: <http://www.citywideparentcouncil.org/organizing-toolkits/>! He wants to have BPS make a presentation to the CPC on enrollment projections.
- Parent Involvement. Jiannina spoke. How do we encourage parents to come to SPC and SSC meetings, especially when there is a language barrier? She also spoke about Union Capital Boston. (<http://www.unioncapitalboston.org/>)
- Testing. Latoya spoke. What are parents' rights to opt out of tests? There is a hearing about testing coming up in November. Latoya is the lead for this group.
- Facilities. Gloria spoke about poor condition of many buildings and expressed concerns that many schools cannot wait to have basic building conditions addressed.

Groups not discussed/adopted:

- School Culture.
- Discipline
- Inclusion

Heshan closed the Sub-Committee discussion by urging that Sub-Committees meet and develop action plans between now and the next meeting, which will be attended by the Superintendent.

Boston Compact

Heshan summarized the situation with the Boston Compact. The Mayor wants the Boston School Committee to sign a new compact: the School Committee has voted to renew the Compact but there will be a separate vote on the language. The proposed changes to the Compact have been presented as:

- Better serving underserved populations
- Creating a family friendly systems: unified enrollment for BPS and charters (if the charter schools all opt in)
- The need for a coordinated citywide education policy, with Mayor's Education Adviser Officer as the point person

The City is currently holding public meeting around the City. Heshan urged parents to attend. He feels that the proposed compact language is terrible for BPS' financial well-being and would severely limit the

choice for parents interesting in applying to charter schools. Dina asked that CPC have a strategic meeting about Compact. Angie asked that we get as much Latino representation as possible: she is looking for help with recruiting Latino parents.

CPC Forums

CPC has been asked by BPS to host two citywide parent forums: Gloria West, Heshan and Lauren Margarita are participating. The next event will be November 9th between 6-8pm to talk about Advanced Work and MassCore (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/ccr/masscore/>).

BPS Facilities Master Plan

Margaret gave a brief update on the Facility Master Plan. Nine volunteers have come forward to serve on difference committees.

Attendees

Bates	Mike McCormick, Patrick Manasse-Latham
BLA	Heshan Weeramuni, Mary Battenfield
BLS	Margaret Wood, Kenny Jervis
BTU School	Nicole D'Avis
Clapp	Kenny Jervis, Gene Gorman
Condon	Nicole O'Brien
Curley	Genevieve Day, Heshan Berents-Weeramuni
Ellis	Denise Williams
Grew	Eliza Omo
Hale	Daphne Floreal
Haynes EEC	Will Allen
Henderson K-12	Maria Roges, Ken Hawkes
Hernandez	Angelina Camacho
Higginson-Lewis	Christine Narsjo
Holmes	Carolyn Lomax
Jos.Quincy Upper	Joanne McKenna
JFK	Krista Magnuson
Lee Academy	Brendan Hales
Lyndon	Sapna Padte, Delia DeVito
Mason Pilot	Naeemah Kennedy, Latoya Gayle
Mendell	Kristin Johnson
Murphy K-8	Kimberly Harris
New Mission HS	Marita McPhail
O'Bryant	Shari Perry-Wallace, Fatima Rosario
O'Donnell	Jiannina Tillman
Philbrick	Sherley Riviere
Roosevelt	Maria Farrell, Shannon Parker
Snowden	Barbara Rosa
Sumner	Katie Muse-Fisher
Tech Boston	Carolyn Lomax
Timilty	Barbara Rosa
Tobin K-8	Adam Fullerton

Trotter
UP Academy
West Rox Academy
Winship

Dina Cundiff
Nicolasa Lopez
Kelvin Brooks, Andre-Fils Dorsanvil
Marc Goldstein, Paula Fleming

Other attendees

BPS
Michelle Wu's office
Advocate Emeritus

Lori Greenwood, Kiana Brunson, Al Watson
Annie Qin
John Mudd