

Citywide Parent Council (CPC) Meeting Notes

December 16, 2014

6-8 pm

Meeting Goals:

- Elections for CPC positions
- Updates on CPC old & new business
- Continue discussing action steps
- Continue building relationships among parents across schools

Attendance:

- 16 parents & grandparents representing 16 schools
- 2 BPS Office of Family and Student Engagement staff (<http://bpsfamilies.org>)

Next Meetings: 1/20, 2/24, 3/24, 4/28, 5/19, 6/16. All meetings are from 6-8 pm at the Title 1 Training Center (BLA High School), 445 Warren St, Dorchester 02121

Specific Follow up Items:

- Follow up with Michael O'Neill on CPC co-hosting a Supt. Search Public Forum with Boston School Committee (Heshan)
 - Includes asking about the forum format, how many will happen, getting on whatever email/contact/distribution lists are out there, becoming aware of the Search Comm's timeline, and asking if we can co-sponsor
- Follow up with Beverly Mitchell, last elected co-chair of the CPC, to see what roles she envisions continuing to play on CPC (Heshan)
- Contact writer of BPS weekly to get in a piece on the CPC (Heshan)
- Nancy Fisher from BPS Food & Nutrition Services/Special Projects is looking for six K-8 parents to sit on a focus group in early January. (*I can't remember what the topic is, but it must be something about meals, right?!*) ALL CPC members: Please ask your individual school's parent community if anyone is interested; forward names/info to Holmes CPC rep Carolyn Lomax (clomaxol@gmail.com) who will be in touch with Nancy. If possible, do this before winter break; focus group may be happening in mid January 2015.
- CPC to co-sponsor a conference with OFSE in March. Michele asking for CPC reps to join a planning committee for this conference. If interested, email her directly at mbrooks@bostonpublicschools.org. CPC reps at meeting who already volunteered: Nancy/Perry, Angie/Hernandez, Karen/Eliot K-8, Beth/BLA, and Heshan/Curley

Ideas brought up, but without someone specifically taking it on: (Anyone want to volunteer?)

- Next School Comm meeting is Jan 5th; place for CPC to introduce itself during open comments.
- How can CPC get a website up and running?
- CPC has a seat on the Boston Sch. Comm. nominating committee. How & when do we get on it?

Narrative description of meeting

Introductions

- Last meeting, we solidified the issues & started working on action steps
- Overview of today's meeting expectations: CPC elections, determine subcommittees & action steps

Warm Up Question

Each person introduced themselves, the school(s) their student(s) attend, and responded to this question: "In the spirit of the holiday season, what's one gift you've received from BPS and one you would like to give the district?"

Responses for gifts received included laughter, dedicated teachers, art teacher, caring community, parent community, school community & a sense of a network, social life, having a small community in a large city, my own education, child learning to read

Responses for gifts to give included money (and lots of it), someone who knows how to manage the money, stability, everything, new BAA building, all students able to access enrichment activities, parents feeling like they have a voice and can contribute to BPS, sense of purpose/clear management, remove political nonsense that gets in the way, educate every child

Debrief points include recognizing that many of us feel our individual schools are doing well (i.e. all the gifts received were about individual schools) but a real sense of concern for how the district is handling itself (i.e. all the gifts to give were about systemic change).

CPC Updates

Opportunity to share info on old and new CPC business

Old Business:

- **Update on the parent seat on the Supt. Search Comm (Heshan)**
 - BSC Chair Michael O'Neill responded to the CPC's request to have a parent seat on the Supt. Search Comm¹
 - At this point they are not able to add more seats. We knew this going in, but wanted to make the ask so as to get on the radar. There are already 2 BPS parents on the committee he referred to: Laura Perille, CEO of Edvestors, "a Boston-based nonprofit organization focused on accelerating improvement in urban schools" and a BPS parent. The other is Regina Robinson, a board member of our sibling organization SPED-PAC, the Special Education Parent Advisory Council. Visit <http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/domain/438> for full bios of all 12 members
 - Basically, there are 64 candidates who have completed or are in the process of completing the applications. The Exec. Search firm hired by the BSC will interview 10-15 candidates between 12/27/14 and 1/10/15. 5-8 candidates will be presented to the SSC on 1/13/15.
 - From Michael's email: "...(T)here is planned to be a public process for interviewing the final candidates. This should be in early-mid February. We expect to put together some panel meetings with a variety of interested stakeholders to meet and publicly talk with the finalist candidates - and then expect to ask them to share those findings with the School Committee. We have promised to include BSAC in that process and it would certainly be logical to me to also include a City-wide Parents Council representative in that effort as well. I'll be in touch when those plans come more into focus in early-mid January."

- CPC voted to offer to co-host the public forum; part of the responsibility would be to do significant outreach in getting a high number of current BPS parents to attend. In the past, forums like this tend to get professional education advocates whose children have aged out of BPS or who never had children in the district.
 - Question was asked on where BPON (Boston Parent Organizing Network) was on this issue; someone said there were not active and not able at this time to take on such a project
- Heshan will follow up with Michael O'Neill on this topic of co-hosting forum
- Update on the **family engagement policy** (Michele B.)
 - Supt. is reviewing the draft, and a team will look at the protocols and expectations of the policy. It is a framework of all the requirements and mandates with the family engagement policy including what the district is responsible on to the state and federal level.
 - Expect approval in mid-March, then will present the info in BPS parent focus groups for feedback, and then present it to the school committee.

New Business/Information:

- **BPS Food services focus group** (Heshan)
 - Organized by Nancy Fisher, BPS food service coord.
 - Needs 6 parents to participate in a focus group in early January. Prefers elementary and middle school parents
 - All CPC reps will take this request back to our respective schools and ask any parents who are interested in participating to email Carolyn Lomax (Holmes CPC rep) at clomaxol@gmail.com
- Potential to **co-sponsor a conference in the spring with OFSE** (Michele B.)
 - The conference is for all School Site Council members. Proposed for early March, hopefully in the new BPS Admn building in Dudley. Would also like parents to get Parent Unv credits for attending.
 - Michele asked for parents interested in joining the planning committee. Open right now to CPC reps; please email Michele directly if you want to join at mbrooks@bostonpublicschools.org
 - Planning Comm. Will help plan sessions, give feedback on what to offer, recruit parents to lead sessions, etc.
 - Nancy, Angie, Karen, Beth and Heshan volunteered to join
- Next School Comm meeting is on Jan 5th (<http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/253>); good place for CPC to introduce itself to the School Comm and our willingness to work together
- CPC has a seat on the Boston School Committee nominating committee. We need to re-claim that seat!
- Once CPC feels established, let's bring in the Supt., Rahn Dorsey (Boston's Chief of Education), State Reps and Senators who focus on education, etc.

Review CPC Bylaws and Elected Positions
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CPC reps Heshan/Curley and Mary/BTU reviewed the by-laws to figure out what positions we need to elect. Heshan presented the info at the meeting, below is a summation.

To read the by-laws yourself, click [here](#) or copy/paste this in your browser:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5WRg20VuzlsbG96YTITSmQwUEU/view>

- The first 3 articles in the by-laws are about the SPCs around the city. Every BPS parent is a member of their SPC and therefore the CPC. Every SPC should have 8-18 elected executive committee positions, which includes co-chairs, secretary, treasurer, SSC member, SPED PAC member and any school reps to other groups.
 - From this sub-group of elected SPC officers comes 38 members who are the Board of Directors of the CPC, as well as 38 alternates. (We were a 501 (c)3 in the past, and therefore needed a B.O.D.)
 - Boston was divided into 4 school zones; 8 reps per zone = 32 + 6 alternates = 38
 - Somewhere along the way, this dissipated. Currently there is a disconnect between the by-laws of 1999 and what's currently happening.
 - Voted to elect the current CPC members (there are 41) as the B.O.D. for this year, to be revisited in 2015-16.
- Mary/BTU and Heshan/Curley will be working on updating the CPC by-laws. If you're interested in joining them, please email Mary at lewispierce@gmail.com
- There is also a Joint Steering Committee overseeing all SSCs (School Site Councils; the governing body of each school). There should be 5 elected members from the CPC serving on this, along with 5 members appointed by the BTU, 5 from the Superintendent, and 2 students (most likely from BSAC, the Boston Student Advisory Council.)
- Given the current by-laws, we will be looking to fill the following positions:
 - 4 co-chairs, elected from the CPC's Board of Directors
 - Executive Director
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Meeting Moderator
 - 5 CPC members to serve on the SSC Joint Steering Committee
- Since the CPC in the past was a 501 (c)3 and had a budget of \$150K, there was a need for an Executive Director and Treasurer. That is no longer the case, but the by-laws haven't changed. As such, we need to elect for these positions until the by-laws are amended.
- Beverly Mitchell has been the long time co-chair of the CPC. These elections are being held recognizing her long time commitment to the CPC and in no way signal that she is being replaced. Heshan will be reaching out to her directly to see if she would like to continue remaining a CPC co-chair or is interested in a different role.

CPC Elections

Elections were held for the following positions. Candidates self-nominated or were nominated by others. Each position is a one year term for 2014-15. CPC recognizes that the by-laws will be updated, and that elections for the same or different positions will be held for 2015-16.

If you are interested in one of the positions and were not able to attend the meeting, please email Heshan at contactheshan@gmail.com. The CPC wants to recruit a wide body of parents, and will figure out how to get you on board.

- CPC Board of Directors (BOD). All current CPC members have been elected into the Board of Directors.
- Executive Director: position left unfilled; group wants more clarity on if we truly need it given where we are at
- 4 CPC Co-Chairs: Kenny/Roger Clap, Heshan/Curley, Angelina/Hernandez, Barbara/Hale & Snowden, Beverly Mitchell (current CPC Co-chair), Carolyn/Holmes (alternate)
- CPC Treasurer: Barbara/Hale, Sarah¹/Alig. Mont
- CPC Secretary: Margaret/BLS, Mary/BLA
- Meeting Moderator: Sapna/Lyndon, Shannon/Roosevelt
- 5 SSC Joint Steering Committee members: Maria/Roosevelt (with Shannon/Roosevelt as her alternate), Nancy/Perry, Carolyn/Holmes, Karen/Eliot K-8, Joel/BTU

Elected officers (outside of the BOD), please use the CPC email list to be in touch with one another! It's expected that you'll be meeting between the scheduled monthly meeting to sketch out the scope of work, and provide leadership and guidance for the CPC.

SubCommittees

It was proposed that the five topics identified under "Issues BPS Parents Face" in previous meetings would each become its own subcommittee. As actions steps become more clear, subcommittees may join together. A 6th subcommittee was identified to work on the CPC Organizational Review, which includes updating the by-laws.

If you are interested in joining any of the subcommittees, please email the chair or one of the members.

Subcommittees are responsible for working in between meetings with interested parents and figuring out action steps. Think of monthly meetings as the place to present back info and/or have discussions on an issue pertinent to your group to get feedback.

- **Budget** (Chair, Barbara/Hale, rosabragland@aol.com)
Members: Kris/Mendell, Heshan/Curley, Nancy/Perry, Sarah/Alig. Mont, Sapna/Lyndon
- **Equity** (Chair, Kenny/Roger Clap, kensusboston@gmail.com)
Members: Meghan/Mattahunt, Beth/BLA, Joel/BTU, Carolyn/Holmes

¹ Sarah was not present at this meeting but indicated interest in some leadership roles. She will contact Heshan to correct any of the info!

- **School Culture & Climate** (Chair, _____)
Members: Deb/Lyndon, Karen/Eliot, Carolyn/Holmes, Shannon/Roosevelt
- **School Quality** (Chair, Krista/JFK, Krista.Magnuson@gmail.com)
Members: Karen/Eliot, Shannon/Roosevelt, Joel/BTU
- **Facilities** (Chair, _____)
Members: Sarah/Alig. Mont, Margaret/BLS, Mary/BLA
- **CPC Organizational Review** (Chair, Mary/BTU, lewisierce@gmail.com)
Members: Heshan/Curley, Barbara/Hale, Angie/Hernandez)

Next Steps

- Upcoming meeting dates are 1/20, 2/24, 3/24, 4/28, 5/19, and 6/16
- Reminder for CPC chairs, and subcommittees to be in touch with their sub-groups between now and Jan meeting

Summary & Evaluation

- Group Shout Evaluation 8. Comments include feeling great about the elections, and waiting to see what we do/who we become

ⁱ Email from BSC chair Michael O'Neill

On Dec 15, 2014, at 5:36 PM, O'Neill, Michael <mone...@bostonpublicschools.org> wrote:

Dear Mr Berents-Weeramuni,

Thanks for this note and your prior letter. I always appreciate your thoughtful analysis, advocacy and feedback during the budget hearings, student assignment process etc., both on behalf of the Curley school in particular and our students overall.

Parental involvement in all we do, including in the Superintendent Search, is certainly important, which is why the Mayor and the School Committee made sure there was parental involvement from the outset. Ms. Robinson and Ms. Perille are both parents of BPS students. At this point, we will not be adding any more people to the search committee, as we are currently at 12 members and both Mayor Walsh and the School Committee are comfortable with the current composition. Unfortunately, we were not able to accommodate all the requests of groups and individuals who offered to help with the search process.

However, once the search committee narrows the process for final candidates for the School Committee, the Mayor and the community at large to consider, there is planned to be a public process for interviewing the final candidates. This should be in early-mid February. We expect to put together some panel meetings with a variety of interested stakeholders to meet and publicly talk with the finalist candidates - and then expect to ask them to share those findings with the School Committee. We have promised to include BSAC in that process and it would certainly be logical to me to also include a City-wide Parents Council representative in that effort as well. I'll be in touch when those plans come more into focus in early-mid January.

Regards,
Michael O'Neill, Chair, Boston School Committee