

Citywide Parent Council Meeting Minutes

23 March 2021 6-8pm ZOOM

1. Welcome, Check-In, Review of Meeting Norms and Opening Discussion

It is important to be taking time to do the work of CPC and build community across Boston. Glad everyone is here to build stronger community in the face of threats to our communities; gun violence and racism in the US. Information was shared about the Massachusetts Town Hall on Anti-Asian Racism and circulated to the CPC email list.

Questions for discussion came from Kim Parker, Lee Academy (small parent council, n ~4): How have members continued to mobilize/organize their Parent Councils throughout the pandemic year? What has worked? What hasn't? Any success stories in bringing up issues to the school and pushing for change?

- The Grew has more people showing up this year. It may be more convenient on Zoom, also advertising and timing (now 6pm) is better. Earlier than that did not work.
- Blackstone uses remote calls, having access and childcare, ethnic food when it is back in person. Make it easy in every possible way. We are lucky to have St Stephen's Youth programs that help parents mobilize and give testimony at School Committee. Family liaisons are also helpful.
- Boston Latin Academy participation quadrupled with remote meetings. Parent participation tends to drop off after elementary. We would have 3 maybe 8 participating in the past. Getting out advance notice over phone and email is key.
- Sumner has over 500 students and our school leader doesn't allow us to use email or text. We communicate through Class Dojo. Recently shifted mtg from 6 to 7pm. Few folks show up (more white than nonwhite and most of school is nonwhite). Don't have all school council positions filled. Fundraising is a mission of the school in the parent council even during pandemic.
- Boston Arts Academy uses robocalls, principal's newsletter to alert families to meetings, holds meetings at 5 or 6pm, and welcomes the principal or another staff member to report on issues in the school at the start of the meeting. We also usually have some small project to work on that helps with engagement.
- Young Achievers did robo calls to parents with a student. SPC executive team would meet parents during pick up and drop off. YA also used Classroom Parent Leaders.
- HernandezK8 provides a lot of clarity. Tell people why they should come, what the agenda is going to be, and what you hope they contribute to the meeting. A lot of our meetings in the past were aimless which drove down participation. A clear agenda makes people feel like they can leave when it's done and there's a reason to be there.
- Samuel Adams parent noted that it has always been hard to get parents involved. They use WhatsApp, Facebook, twitter, principle calls and email.
- Boston Latin School has monthly SPC meeting, well organized by the SPC parents group. Activities include presentations, webinars such as Internet Safety, Course Selection, college preparation etc. Parents are very much involved with school events. We use email, newsletter, Head of School's message to communicate.

Participation/engagement for the School Parent Councils is a perennial problem so brainstorming and shared ideas is helpful. Kim Parker proposed having a document for keeping these ideas in one place. It could be helpful for new reps and there are great solutions here.

2. Announcements

CPC orientation: The next CPC Orientation will be on April 6th. It is important to understand expectations and limitations of your role on the CPC and when representing the CPC. Invite will be shared on the listserve.

BTU Virtual Parent2Parent Conference: Join March 27th. CPC will be presenting. Register & information: btu.org/parent2parent

Fundraising and budget:

- Tomorrow is the final budget vote for the FY22 budget and the last chance to bring up issues or testify at School Committee.
- At the next CPC meeting there will be a presentation about fundraising in BPS. Reach out to the finance co-chair, Suleika Soto with questions.

Best Practices CPC listserve: We have no rules listed on Google Group and the question of renaming CPC are topics we need to address. Emily Hale, O'Bryant volunteered to put together a draft of listserve norms. Renaming will be brought up at the next meeting due to time constraints today.

Advocacy for an elected school committee: The Boston Coalition for Education Equity has been looking at an elected school committee model. They can come present to CPC about the history of how we got to an appointed school committee. The BCEE Steering Committee is looking for a way for folks to sign onto statements rather than be a member.

- Concerns about an elected school committee were raised (i.e., Parents currently are on the committee to nominate people to the committee. If it were fully elected a large number of people with no stake in the BPS would be voting for the school committee.)
- A quick poll of those present showed majority interest in learning more about this. This will be informational only. Lauren Margherita will follow-up to organize this.

Video project: Steve Lewis, LyndonK8 is a freelance videographer and we were thinking about rather than just having a Zoom recording of the orientation mtg to put together a condensed video version of the orientation and a welcome video- 30 sec or a min who we are holding on to the idea that every parent is a member of the CPC and welcome. Steve will send an email looking for volunteers soon! If this works out well - we can do more of these. We can share information about AWC, Exam Schools, etc.

3. Elections

CPC leadership team elections are scheduled for March of each year. Minimum 25% of currently elected reps must be present for the vote. More than 20 folks raised hands present as elected CPC members, quorum was met.

Current BPS student demographics were reviewed. CPC leadership team should reflect the current demographic.

Details of open positions were reviewed. See slides 11-16 on CPC March Meeting slides for

details:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1YMqPpkg145YRQRi2-vKfuTT93-pVtYDQjWi7oHGQJq4/edit?usp=sharing>

Administration Co-Chair: No interested nominees at this time.

Finance Co-Chair: Suleika Soto is new in this role and has been doing a lot of work behind the scenes and did want to run for this again. She has been able to meet with Nate and have him come present to the CPC and doing a lot of research on fundraising and how we can help parent councils and the CPC establish funds not directly from the school budget.

Nicol Riley nominated Suleika and Steve Lewis seconded the nomination. Unanimous YES to re-elect Suleika Soto as Finance Co-Chair: 23 votes+ 1 who couldn't respond on the poll.

Assistant Diversity & Inclusion Co-Chairs: Nagla Abdalla and Geju Brown both interested.. Due to conflict of working for BPS/BTU, this may not be permitted by by-laws. Nicol Riley and Steve Lewis both willing to step back.

In the interest of moving forward we left vacancies and will revisit leadership elections next meeting.

4. External Committee Reports

District Wellness Council (DWC): Tara is attending the DWC tomorrow. Looking for someone to take this on more formally ongoing. Emily A Hale, Rep and O'Bryant parent with a particular interest in social emotional health volunteered. Widespread support check marks and support for Emily joining. Thank you to longtime CPC member Ann Malone for her prior work in this role.

Joint Steering Committee: Nicol Riley reporting this committee has not yet met.

Community Education Advisory Council (CEAC): Lauren Margherita and Nicol Riley both attended. Megan Costello has joined the BPS as a senior advisor and Carolyn Marquez Meadows talked about Build BPS. Former interim superintendent Laura Perille did a pause on Build BPS so Dr Casselius could steer the ship but then COVID came along. So we don't know what has been going on at least publicly. Dispelled some myths about why redoing our schools would take so long. Megan made a good point. Why can a charter school up fast but public money vs private money have different restrictions? Big share is there are these new team members and Build BPS will be happening. Meeting minutes will be shared on the listserve. Reach out to Lauren or Nicol with questions.

Build BPS: Not yet meeting. Soon!

School Quality Working Group (SQWG): Wenling Ma has no update for SQWG. Will send minutes to be shared.

Advanced Work Class/Excellence For All (AWC/EFA) Working Group: Aron Boros and Prince Charles Alexander will be hosting a call to discuss AWC/EFA issues. ALL parents

welcome. Do not need to currently be at an AWC or EFA school. Has not met yet, may need someone in addition to Charles due to a scheduling conflict for these meetings.

Mayor's Transition Committee: BPS went on our website and picked the first names they saw (Gloria West) so she sits on Mayor Janey's task force and will share the minutes. They want to know: What are we missing for Sept? What is there we haven't thought about? How can they make an impact with listening to parents concerns and voices?

Exam School Task Force: Concern that we were not invited to participate in this and there is little parent voice at the table. Sarah Henderson has been attending all along. Lisa Jeanne has also been attending. Neathery would like to participate as well. Those 3 parents can report out to CPC to keep us abreast of what is happening. Note they only represent themselves, not the CPC at the meeting as we do not have a CPC position at this time.

5. Nominations to BPS Reopening Committees

Aron Boros reviewed slides 21-26 about the Reopening Committees and CPC selection process:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1YMqPpkg145YRQRi2-vKfuTT93-pVtYDQjWi7oHGQJq4/edit?usp=sharing>

The following parents self-nominated and were voted to be the CPC nominees for the Reopening Task Force Subcommittees:

Assessments: John Tyler - Hernandez K8 (johnrtyler86@gmail.com)

Curriculum: Anna White - Henderson (anna@fishjump.com)

Grading: Katrina Henry - JP Manning (kleehenry@gmail.com) AND Anna White - Henderson (anna@fishjump.com)

Learning Management System (LMS)/Digital Learning: Nagla Abdallah - BLS/BCLA (nagladfabdalla@gmail.com)

Intervention/Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): Neathery Brenzel - Mission Hill School (neathery99@gmail.com) AND Melina O'Grady - Curly K8 (melogrady@gmail.com)

Out of School Time Interventions: Megan Castro - EliotK8 (meggwill@gmail.com) AND Sarah Parker - Lyndon (parker.sarah@live.com)

Transformative Social Emotional Learning (SEL): Geju Brown - JQES (gejubrown@gmail.com) AND Sarah Henderson - Lyndon (sarahmhendersonlicsw@gmail.com)

Multilingual Learners: Jun Xie - JQES (junboston@gmail.com) AND Nagla Abdallah - BLS/BCLA (nagladfabdalla@gmail.com)

Special Education: Lisa Jeanne Graf - Mission Hill K8 (lisa_jeanne_graf@msn.com) AND Megan Castro - EliotK8 (meggwill@gmail.com)