



June 6, 2022

Dear Chair Craven, Members of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Commissioner Riley:

We, the Citywide Parent Council, an organized body of parents representing 124 Boston Public Schools, write to express our opposition to any recommendation that would put Boston Public Schools into state receivership or under state control (including “empowerment zones” or similar programs).

State takeovers of individual schools or whole districts have not shown measures of success nor a proven method to improve public schools, particularly at the scale of Boston. State takeovers, however, have proven to cause instability and disorder, in schools that are located within communities of color.

The most vital school systems have beneficial partnerships among families, schools, and teachers. Community and family engagement are among the most significant factors in success in our public schools. We write to you as a body of parents and guardians ready to commit ourselves as a resource in the plan to improve the Boston Public Schools, to effectuate the truth that all students should attend a school able to help them achieve their full potential.

Fortunately, we currently have new leadership reflective of the city looking to rebuild those partnerships dismantled by COVID and former administration and policies. Now is not the time to undermine those efforts with a proposal for state control, which is not a real solution and has no proven track record.

Parents' voices and participation, which are essential to guarantee a system of equity and accountability, have not been heard or valued with state receivership, like what happened with

the Dual Language Program at Dever Elementary. This organized body of parents will stand ready to work with Mayor Wu, the School Committee, the Teacher's Union and the new Superintendent to ensure that quality and holistic education is delivered to every student - our children.

In the rhetoric arguing for state receivership, it is routinely said that it must be done for the students and their families. We say, "not in our name." While we do not disagree that the Boston Public Schools have systemic issues, those issues are complex and require new leadership to remedy them. State control is not the answer. We agree that milestones must be established and there must be transparent reporting and accountability on steps taken to achieve them. We ask that the state serve as a supportive partner to enable the city and the district to achieve the necessary change to better serve our children. We stand ready to be another partner to the city and district as well.

As a voice of parents within the Boston Public Schools, we, the Citywide Parent Council, urge the Board to reject any state takeover proposal and instead look to support our parents, teachers, and our city leadership in reconstructing the schools we need with techniques that have shown proven results - let's follow the science through partnerships, investments, accountability, and parent involvement. State takeover is not the answer.

Respectfully,

Boston Public School
Citywide Parent Council
Consensus