Minutes of the Meeting of the Boston School Committee Nominating Panel
Wednesday, October 1, 2025, 5:00pm
Meeting by remote participation via Zoom

Members present:

Will Thomas, Chair
Neema Avashia
Kharlita Chambers-Walker
Joanne Freeman-Fanfan
Jerry Howland
Midori Morikawa
Sammy Nabulsi
Natalie Rivkin

Staff assistance:

Tali Robbins
Rebecca Grainger

1. **Introductions**

Chair Thomas called the meeting to order at 5:05pm.

2. **Approval of Minutes**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Panel **voted** with seven in favor and one abstention to accept the meeting minutes for the August 14, 2025 meeting of the Boston School Committee Nominating Panel.

3. **Selection of Chairperson**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Nominating Panel **voted** to select Will Thomas as the Chair of the Boston School Committee Nominating Panel.

4. **Timeline for Nominating Process**

Chair Thomas said that the Boston Private Industry Council recently announced that Michael O'Neill would be taking on the role of Executive Director, and would be concluding his service on the Boston School Committee at the end of December. As a result, the Nominating Panel can anticipate that the nominating process this fall would work to find candidates to fill a total of three seats beginning in January 2026.

Chair Thomas invited Rebecca Grainger, Senior Advisor to Mayor Wu on Youth and Schools, and Jeri Robinson, Chair of the Boston School Committee, to share an idea for strengthening outreach to potential School Committee candidates. Ms. Grainger and Chair Robinson proposed hosting a virtual informational session for potential candidates to gain a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of serving on the School Committee. Ms. Robbins shared that once a date and time have been selected for the informational session, details would be shared with members of the Nominating Panel.

Chair Thomas then shared a tentative timeline for the Nominating Panel process:

- October 1: BSC Nominating Panel convenes to review application and finalize schedule
- October 10-November 7: Applications are open
- November 8-12: Panel members review applications independently
- November 12: BSC Nominating Panel convenes to select candidates to interview
- November 18, 19, and/or 20: Interviews and deliberation
- November 24, 25 and/or 26: (if necessary) Deliberation and vote
- December 1: Deadline to submit shortlist to the Mayor

Members discussed and agreed to the proposed timeline.

5. **Review of Application**

Members reviewed the application used during the previous nominating process. Ms. Avashia proposed tightening the language on the time commitment required of School

Committee members. Chair Thomas suggested making the time commitment more clear during the interviews, and that the roles and responsibilities of serving on the Boston School Committee would also be reiterated during the virtual informational session. Ms. Rivkin requested beginning interviews at 5pm instead of 4pm to accommodate working hours, and other members agreed.

6. **Public Comment**

Victoria Mitchell congratulated Mr. Thomas on his selection as Chair of the Nominating Panel, and thanked Chair Robinson for explaining the expectations of a Boston School Committee member.

7. **Adjournment**

On a motion duly made and seconded, the Nominating Panel **voted** to adjourn at 5:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Tali Robbins