



**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
OPPORTUNITY AND ACHIEVEMENT GAPS TASK FORCE  
VIRTUAL MEETING**

**March 31, 2026**

The Boston School Committee Opportunity and Achievement Gaps (OAG) Task Force held a virtual meeting on Zoom on March 31, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit [www.bostonpublicschools.org/gaps](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/gaps), email [lpavex@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:lpavex@bostonpublicschools.org), or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635 - 9014.

**ATTENDANCE**

Task Force Members Present: Co-Chair Ayele Shakur; Dr. Brandy Brooks; Dr. Lisa Gonsalves; Dr. Ambrizeth Lima; Dr. Harold L. Miller Jr.; Devin Morris; Dr. Gil Noam; Dr. Carline Pignato; Marinell Rousmaniere; Filiberto Santiago-Lizardi; Lea Serena.

Task Force Members Absent: Co-Chair Dr. Stephen Alkins; Rev. Willie Bodrick; Pamela Leins; Student Representatives Nayla Hicks and Kevin Louis.

BPS Staff: OAG Policy Director Senior Advisor for Strategy and Opportunity Gap Dr. Colin Rose; Director of Policy Tamika Estwick Buckmire; Deputy Superintendent of Academics Simone Wright.

**DOCUMENTS PRESENTED**

Agenda

Meeting minutes: February 27, 2026

2026 BPS Opportunity & Achievement Gaps (OAG) Policy

Opportunity and Achievement Gaps PowerPoint

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Shakur called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Approved** - The Task Force approved, by roll call, the minutes of the December 9, 2025 and January 14, 2026 Task Force meeting.

## INTRODUCTION OF DR. WRIGHT

Dr. Rose welcomed Deputy Superintendent of Academics Dr. Simone Wright, who shared her background, that she has been in the role for about three months, has visited nearly 50 schools, and is focused on learning more about the district. She acknowledged the Task Force's work and expressed interest in staying engaged.

## TASK FORCE BUSINESS

**Review of the revised 2026 Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Policy** - Ms. Shakur reviewed the final policy updates and shared the upcoming April 15 presentation to the Boston School Committee. She explained that, following feedback from Superintendent Mary Skipper, the team strengthened language in the executive summary to emphasize urgency, accountability, and measurable progress, and clarified that outcomes are mandatory. They also revised educator diversity annual reporting to be shared by region rather than by school to protect privacy.

Dr. Gonsalves discussed the timeline for the annual report, stressing the need for baseline data by the end of the current year. She also raised concerns about accountability, especially following losses of teachers of color, and emphasized tracking progress. Dr. Rose clarified that reporting details are still being finalized and that the report will be publicly accessible, with ongoing monitoring to ensure follow-through.

Mr. Santiago-Lizardi stressed the need for a detailed report on layoffs by race and ethnicity. Dr. Gonsalves explained many teachers of color were affected due to Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) issues, not just seniority. She suggested the OAG gather this data and present it to the state to address systemic barriers.

The members discussed addressing layoffs through state policy and contract negotiations, supporting teachers to pass licensing exams rather than exempting them.

Ms. Serena explained that the BTU has requested the district to grant early permanency to educators, and to revise policies that force provisional third year teachers with "needs improvement" to take a year off, and she also mentioned the loss of teachers of color due to school closures.

Mr. Morris said the OAG Task Force should focus on examining the effectiveness of district licensure support for all teachers by using data to identify gaps and improve support. Dr. Gonsalves discussed requesting data on layoffs, including whether teachers had passed MTEL exams or held waivers, to better understand underlying factors. Dr. Pignato explained that MTEL disparities stem from access to prep courses rather than ability. The members discussed the possibility of obtaining the data.

Ms. Shakur shared the OAG policy slide presentation, describing it as the district's "North Star," a framework for historically underserved students. She explained that the update was delayed due to COVID and leadership changes, highlighted the policy's origins, and described the Task

Force's role in ensuring accountability by monitoring, guiding, supporting, and holding the district accountable for implementation and impact. Dr. Rose presented MCAS trends showing mostly flat progress with some gains and reviewed key accomplishments under the 2016 policy, including racial equity planning tools, culturally responsive practices, and improved data systems. Ms. Shakur noted that broad stakeholder feedback shaped the updated policy, emphasizing academic excellence, clearer accountability, schools as the unit of change, and expanded support for disadvantaged students. Dr. Rose concluded that the OAG policy aligns with school committee priorities and guides district strategy and implementation, with the strategic plan aligned to it. Members provided feedback on language and requested additional data.

#### UPDATES FROM DR. COLIN ROSE

Dr. Rose presented the 2026–2031 Boston Public Schools strategic roadmap, framing it around the OAG policy as the district's "North Star." He highlighted priority areas including high-quality instruction, equitable literacy, holistic student support, and expanded programming and facilities, aligned with community needs and culturally responsive practices. He explained that cross-functional teams analyzed data, research, and stakeholder input to create focus areas with objectives such as reducing disproportionality, improving engagement and attendance, and strengthening professional learning. Implementation will focus on equity and aligned systems, with detailed action steps and targets to follow.

Dr. Gonsalves praised the presentation for being comprehensive and capturing the full scope of work. Mr. Morris asked about the timeline. Dr. Rose said that timelines, owners, and implementation goals will be defined later, and the current presentation focuses on priorities and gathering school committee feedback.

Dr. Pignato said that literacy goals should explicitly address students needing intensive support to ensure gaps are closed. Dr. Rose said it connects to broader academic recovery and acceleration models.

Dr. Noam praised the plan as clear and actionable, highlighting the need to address chronic absenteeism and the complexities of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and emphasized the importance of collaboration to make it clearer.

Dr. Brooks talked about the importance of clearly communicating the five-year timeline and outcomes so families can understand and see the plan's impact. Dr. Rose said that the proof is in the implementation.

Ms. Shakur invited Boston Public Schools' Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SpEdPAC) Chair Edith Bazile to speak. Ms. Bazile stressed that equity must confront systemic racism directly, name the specific struggles of Black students, multilingual learners, and students with disabilities, and address how they are taught, not just access or representation. She also highlighted the disproportionate loss of teachers of color.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

**Opportunity and Achievement Gaps Task Force Virtual Meeting**  
**March 31, 2026**

John Mudd, Cambridge resident and advocate, said the presentation could more clearly convey urgency and a strong commitment to measurable progress on diversity and closing achievement gaps.

Barbara Fields, Mattapan resident and advocate, urged the district to ensure teacher diversity, enforce court orders, and restore programs that support Black students and students of color.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***Approved*** - At approximately 5.57 p.m. the Task Force unanimously approved a motion by roll call to adjourn to the meeting.

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lena Parvex", written in a cursive style.

Lena Parvex  
Executive Secretary