OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE HYBRID BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

October 14, 2026

The Boston School Committee held a hybrid meeting on October 14, 2026, at 6.00 p.m. at the Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building, 2300 Washington Street, School Committee Chamber, Roxbury, Massachusetts. The meeting was also live-streamed on Boston City TV and Zoom. For more information about any of the items listed below, visit. bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee, email lparvex@bostonpublicschools.org, or call the Boston School Committee Office at (617) 635-9014.

ATTENDANCE

School Committee Members Present: Chairperson Jeri Robinson; Vice Chairperson Rachel Skerritt; Franklin Peralta; Rafaela Polanco Garcia; Quoc Tran; Lydia Torres.

School Committee Member Absent: Stephen Alkins and Student Representative Mah Noor.

DOCUMENTS PRESENTED

Agenda

Meeting Minutes: September 16, 2026 meeting

FY2027 Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Memo

Grants for Approval

In-Kind donations

Horace Mann Charter Governing Update: Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (DSNCS) Memo

Horace Mann Charter Governing Update: DSNCS MOU A

Horace Mann Charter Governing Update: DSNCS Slideshow

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement: Local Union 1952, Painters & Allied Trades District Council No. 35 (Custodians) Memorandum Of Agreement

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement: Local Union 1952, Painters & Allied Trades District Council No. 35 (Custodians) Memo

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement: Local Union 1952, Painters & Allied Trades District Council No. 35 (Custodians) PowerPoint

2026 State Assessment and Accountability Memo

2026 State Assessment and Accountability Equity Impact Statement

2026 State Assessment and Accountability PowerPoint Slides

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jeri Robinson called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance. She said it will be rebroadcast on Boston City TV and the video will be posted at bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee and on YouTube. She announced that simultaneous interpretation services were available virtually in Spanish, Haitian Creole, Cabo Verdean, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin and American Sign Language (ASL). Translated meeting documents were posted at www.bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee.

Dr. Alkins and Ms. Noor were absent. All other members were present.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Approved – The Committee approved by unanimous consent the minutes of the September 16, 2026 meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

As prepared for delivery.

Thank you, Chair Robinson. Good evening School Committee members and the public joining us here in person and virtually.

I'd like to begin tonight with a brief update on the district's proposed cell phone policy. School Committee members are in receipt of a memo which previews the proposed Personal Electronic Device Use Policy for all BPS students in grades prekindergarten through grade 12.

The research-based policy is our preliminary recommendation for a bell-to-bell ban on all personal devices including cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, blue tooth devices, and personal computers. The purpose of the memo is to give members and the public a preview of the proposed policy ahead of its formal submission to the School Committee for consideration and action in January 2027. This will allow the members to review the policy, understand how it aligns with state guidance, and provide feedback to the district team. We are currently working to create implementation guidance that will provide schools with a menu of implementation choices so they can select the method that's right for their school community.

Over much of the past year, the district has engaged in robust conversations with students, educators, and parents to understand their perspectives and experiences regarding personal devices in schools. Among these conversations, we've met with members of Sociedad Latina and

the Boston Student Advisory Council or BSAC. I want to take a moment to thank Executive Director Alexandra Oliver-Dávila for her leadership on this issue and the students from Sociedad and BSAC who helped shape this policy. We plan to continue stakeholder engagement over the next few months as we finalize the policy. Our goal is for the policy to be in place for the first day of the 2027-2028 school year. A survey will be available in the near future where the public can contribute their thoughts and help guide our implementation. The memo is publicly available with tonight's meeting materials on the School Committee's website at bostonpublicschools.org/schoolcommittee.

I would like to provide an update to the Office of the Inspector General report that was released in August, covering procurement practices that outlined internal control failures, improper workarounds, and gaps in oversight. As I mentioned at the last meeting, we welcome independent oversight because it makes our district stronger. While the more than $857,000 identified in non-compliant spending represents a small fraction of our $1.635 billion operating budget, falling short of the highest standard of fiscal stewardship is completely unacceptable.

In a letter I sent to the Inspector General on Friday October 9, I highlighted past reforms that had been underway since 2023, like strict limits on sole-source procurement, digitizing Facilities work orders through Asset Essentials, mandating procurement and conflict of interest trainings for staff, and engaging an external auditor for an internal procurement audit of our functions.

We also took the OIG's recommendation to immediately institute a 10 day pause, effective Aug 31st to September 18th, on all payments and audit all invoices. During this pause, BPS Central Office finance teams thoroughly reviewed 905 pending invoices across all impacted departments. As recommended by both the Inspector General and the Finance Commission, we are completing a comprehensive plan to realign all district procurement and accounts payable functions under the Chief Financial Officer's office. Centralized purchasing removes isolated departmental workflows, establishes a single point of financial accountability, unifies compliance, and ensures strict fiscal controls across the entire district.

I want to reassure this committee, our families and our schools, we are going to continue to fix these historical vulnerabilities. Through central leadership, automated controls, and direct accountability under the CFO, we are ensuring that BPS operates with the operational integrity our students and taxpayers deserve. The memo will also be publicly available with tonight's meeting materials on the School Committee's website at boston publicschools.org/schoolcommittee.

We're regularly reviewing all the worst performing routes and trying different interventions to improve them, while also the daily route changes needed to route new students/reroute students with address/IEP/school changes. Performance so far in October is averaging 90% AM, 85% PM OTP with 0.05% uncovered trips. This compares to the 84% AM, 82% PM, and 0.14% uncovered trips from September, so each metric is improved from September, reflecting the regular month to month improvement we'd expect to see.

The school year is fully underway and that means I have a few Bright Spots to share from around the district before I finish my report. Last month, I joined the Red Sox Foundation at the Blackstone Elementary School in the South End to celebrate $125,000 in improvements to the

school's gymnasium and school yard - which now includes a newly painted baseball diamond and Green Monster-inspired wall and stairs. Thank you to Linda Henry, Fenway Sports Group partner and Red Sox Foundation board member and the entire Red Sox organization for their continued support of BPS.

It was great to see member Polanco Garcia - a longtime supporter of the Blackstone School - there and we appreciate Principal Courtney Sheppeck and Assistant Principal Felix Caraballo for making sure the event was a great experience for their students. Students participated in a "Play Ball" clinic led by Red Sox Foundation staff. As you can see from this photo, I had a chance to put my skills to work. And it's always a special occasion when Wally stops by.

October marks several important and notable occasions in the BPS calendar. On October first we kicked off National Principals Month when we recognize the outstanding BPS principals and heads of school who support and develop children's academics and social emotional and physical well being by creating welcoming learning environments for all students and families.

Pictured here are the district's newest principals who took on the role of school leader in school year 2026 - 2027. We are thrilled that these talented individuals are now part of our outstanding group of school leaders.

- Katie Pagano, Otis Elementary School
- Kiki Moschella, Eliot K-8 Innovation School
- Holly McPartlin, Eliot K-8 Innovation School
- Dr. Darius Green, Mattahunt Elementary School
- McKenzie Powers, Bradley Elementary School
- Dan Cesario, Tynan Elementary School
- Jackie Carolan, Lyon Elementary School
- Amelia Massoud-Tastor, Holland Elementary School.

Our principals and heads of school work hard to ensure that every student is academically challenged while also feeling seen, included, and safe at school. Please join me in thanking our school leaders for their dedication to our school communities - this month and all year.

September 15 marked the beginning of National Hispanic Heritage Month which continues through October 15. During this month we honor the contributions and achievements of the members of our Latina, Latino, and Latinx communities throughout the district. Last month, Otis Elementary School students enjoyed a very special visit when five Boston Red Sox players stopped by the school to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with the community. We're again grateful to our Red Sox for making this visit happen and we appreciate the players for helping our students celebrate Hispanic heritage and the richness, pride and joy of our school community.

Also pictured here is the 6th annual Hispanic Heritage month celebration at the O'Bryant School of Math and Science which featured music, dancing, and guest speakers. I want to thank City Councilor Enrique Pepén for being part of this special event. The Otis and the O'Bryant are just two of the schools that held - and continue to hold - special celebrations recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month.

As BPS continues to implement inclusive education across the district, National Learning Disabilities Awareness Month gives us an opportunity to recognize the perseverance and achievement of our neurodivergent students while raising awareness about the importance of advocacy and resources. This month we pause to shout out our schools for their success in putting the model into practice.

The Conley Elementary School in Roslindale - pictured here- is a great example of a BPS school that has created a culture of inclusion, belonging, and empathy by involving the entire school community. You can learn more about the Conley's journey at bostonpublicschools.org. Special thanks to the BPS Office of Specialized Services and all of our educators and staff who work tirelessly to make sure that all of our students feel welcomed and supported.

On October second we honored the hard work of our schools' unsung heroes on School Custodian Appreciation Day. Often working behind the scenes, our custodians ensure that our schools are clean and healthy.

I participated in a very special event at the Boston Arts Academy recognizing the work of the school's custodians including Andy Allen, who was honored with the "Unsung Hero Award." Andy formed a friendship with a colleague, geometry teacher Tom Thermidor. Upon learning that Tom's younger brother was in critical need of a kidney transplant, Andrew made the remarkable decision to step forward as a donor. Through a paired kidney donation program, Andrew ultimately donated his kidney to a stranger — enabling Tom's brother to receive a life-saving transplant. Andrew's selfless act not only saved a life, but also reflects the compassion, courage, and humanity that define the Boston Public Schools community.

October is also the 20th anniversary of College and Career Month in Boston Public Schools, a time when we launch the postsecondary planning process as a shared responsibility. Pictured here are staff from around BPS who participated in BPS's annual College & Career Pride Day, representing their alma maters, part of an effort to share multiple postsecondary paths with students across Boston.

This year, 25 student ambassadors will spread the word about events in their schools and on social media. Students can also take the PSAT and SAT for free during the school day, at their own schools. Other opportunities include college tours and fairs, FAFSA and MASFA support, career exploration, and training programs.

We also launched the BPS College and Career Hub, a new online resource that brings these resources together in one place year-round. You can find this bostonpublic schools.org/careermonth.

Thank you to the Boston Foundation and Success Boston Completion Initiative for providing the resources for the College and Career Month Initiative. They have been tremendous supporters over the past 20 years. And many thanks to the BPS Office of College, Career and Life Readiness for facilitating this annual campaign.

That is my Superintendent's Report. Back to you, Chair Robinson.

Member Polanco Garcia raised concerns about ongoing transportation issues for both families and teachers, and asked what the district is doing to address these issues and communicate its plans to families. Superintendent Skipper said that BPS is working with Transdev to reduce uncovered routes, address recurring delays, and improve communication with families. She also said that routes are regularly reviewed and adjusted, reaffirming the district's commitment to reliable, on-time transportation.

Vice Chair Skerritt clarified that the cell phone policy will be presented to the Committee for a vote in the new calendar year, with potential modifications based on ongoing engagement and additional implementation guidance. Superintendent Skipper said BPS will continue gathering feedback before the policy is formally presented. If approved, the cell phone policy will take effect next September, with implementation guidance for schools so they have time to prepare for restrictions on cell phones, smartwatches, and other distracting devices. Vice Chair Skerritt suggested providing examples of schools' current cell phone policies, including successes and challenges, to inform the Committee's January discussion.

Vice Chair Skerritt asked if moving responsibilities under the CFO would affect staffing levels and what the cadence for the updates would be. Superintendent Skipper they are still evaluating the staffing impacts as BPS plans to consolidate transportation, food services, and facilities under the CFO, with a timeline and implementation plan to follow. Deputy Superintendent Dr. De Pina said BPS is reviewing staffing and responsibilities, with an update planned for January.

Member Tran expressed concerns regarding the OIG's timeline of procurement reforms, as they began in 2023 and asked if the improvements implemented over the past three years meet the OIG's expectations. Superintendent Skipper said BPS began implementing procurement reforms in 2023 but recognized there were remaining holes identified by the OIG. She added that consolidating procurement oversight under the CFO was a key step toward improving accountability and consistency.

Member Tran asked if BPS complies with MWBE (Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise) procedures in the bidding and procurement process, and requested a breakdown of vendors' MWBE status, including linguistic minority bidders. Superintendent Skipper said BPS has strengthened procurement training and oversight to prevent schools from exceeding vendor contract thresholds, and will need to continue this training. Chief Financial Officer (CFO) David Bloom said BPS can provide vendors' MWBE status and uses city and state databases to promote equitable access to contracts. Member Tran recommended outreach to minority-owned, linguistic minority, and disability-owned businesses to inform them about the procurement process and encourage registration.

Member Torres shared her experiences visiting the Oliver Wendell Holmes Innovation School, Henry Grew Elementary School, and Dr. Catherine Ellison-Rosa Parks Early Education School,. She highlighted inclusive classrooms, student engagement, and effective teaching practices. Member Torres also gave a shoutout to the district's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration.

Member Peralta commended Principal Antonelli Mejia from the Sarah Greenwood K-8 School, for being recognized among Latinx leaders in Massachusetts. He praised Principal Mejia's

leadership, and described him as proof of what is possible with the right support, and emphasized the need for further student investments, including summer jobs and paid internships.

Approved - The committee approved the Superintendent's Report by unanimous consent.

REPORT

Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement: Local Union 1952, Painters & Allied Trades District Council No. 35 (Custodians), and the Boston School Committee, effective September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027 - Legal Advisor Mike Ryan, Office of the Legal Advisor, presented the tentative one-year, wage-only contract with the Custodians, including a 2% wage increase and $800 distributed across employees' paychecks, effective September 1, 2026. He also presented the FY27 supplemental appropriation request of $787,501.

Member Peralta asked where the money to pay the staff raises comes from. Chief Bloom explained that the raises would be funded through the city's collective bargaining reserve.

Vice Chair Skerritt asked about the implications for bargaining in subsequent years, given that the contract was for one year only. Legal Advisor Ryan confirmed that the contract would run through August 31, 2027, and that bargaining with union partners would continue in preparation for the next negotiations.

Mr. Tran commended the team for adding $800 to custodians' base salaries to supplement the 2% increase.

Chair Robinson said that the Committee would vote on the contract later in the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

City Councilor Ben Weber, Jamaica Plain resident, Boston City Council, Ways and Means Committee Chair, testified in favor of continuing early collaboration between the City Council and School Committee on the FY28 BPS budget process.

Ghada Alkhatib, East Boston resident, Josiah Quincy Upper School parent, testified regarding delays in her son's testing accommodations and academic documentation.

John Mudd, Cambridge resident, Community Advocate, Multilingual Learners Alliance, Boston Network, testified regarding the MCAS 2026 Subgroup Results.

Deirdre Manning, Dorchester resident, BLS parent, testified regarding transportation issues for student athletes.

Muhammad Burhan, Dorchester resident, Teacher, Community Advocate, III LABS, testified in support of a financial literacy graduation requirement.

City Councilor At-Large Julia Mejia, Dorchester resident, Parent, Community Advocate,

testified in favor of a Citywide plan to improve equitable support for multilingual learners.

Alexandra Oliver-Davila, Roslindale resident, Community Advocate, Sociedad Latina, testified regarding the bell-to-bell phone policy, proposed a technology advisory committee, and urged a one-year pause on student-facing AI.

Rebecca Ostapchuk, South Boston resident, Trotter and Mason elementary school parent, testified regarding transportation issues.

ACTION ITEMS

Member Polanco Garcia asked about Title I and Title III federal funding for multilingual learners and requested detailed comparisons of school-level spending and student outcomes between the previous and current fiscal years, including how many schools used the funds and their results.

Chief Bloom said there was a slight decrease in funding and explained unspent funds support summer programming for multilingual learners. He offered to provide school-level data on federal funding allocations, purchased supports, spending, and unspent balances, along with summaries of each school's programming, but explained that individual student outcomes could not be directly linked to the programs. Superintendent Skipper explained BPS's efforts to improve Title I and Title III spending, strengthen support for multilingual learners, and establish clearer goals and outcome measures. Chief Bloom also highlighted efforts of the Grants team to educate the families on school-based Title I programs through guidance developed with the Office of Family and Community Advancement.

Member Peralta thanked the team for providing detailed information on grant recipients.

Member Torres asked how BPS measures grant outcomes and ensures funds are used as intended. Chief Bloom said BPS is launching a redesigned outcomes grant reporting process with specific SMART goals to better measure outcomes and track progress toward targets.

Member Tran asked if it was permissible to combine Title III funds with Title I to better serve multilingual learners, and what safeguards ensure compliance with federal funding requirements. Chief Bloom explained that BPS works with DESE to ensure funding compliance and that Title III can directly support multilingual learners' curriculum needs.

Chair Robinson asked when the Committee would receive the updated grant outcomes report. Superintendent Skipper said grant outcomes would be embedded into presentations, with improved reporting tools to help the Committee track results.

Approved - The Committee approved, by unanimous consent, the grants, with a total estimated value of $82,289,934.

Approved - The Committee approved, by unanimous consent the In-kind donations with a total estimated value of $21,078.99.

Vice Chair Skerritt asked how Horace Mann charter schools factor into BPS's accountability data. Superintendent Skipper said they are not included in the district's accountability and enrollment data, but beginning July 1 due to a change of law that is going to change.

Member Peralta asked what the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School was doing to be a school of recognition.

Superintendent Skipper commended the school's intimate environment, strong relationships with students, and effective use of autonomy in curriculum and scheduling. Assistant Superintendent of Autonomous Schools Dr. Anoh added that the strong sense of community within a school helps foster a culture where every student feels seen and supported, creating conditions every student can maximize their learning, which is key to their success.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee approved the Horace Mann Charter Governing Update for the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee approved the Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement: Local Union 1952, Painters & Allied Trades District Council No. 35 (Custodians), and the Boston School Committee, effective September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2027.

Approved - On roll call, the Committee approved the FY27 Supplemental Appropriation Request Totaling $787,501 to Support the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Local Union No. 1952, Painters; Allied Trades District Council No. 35 and the School Committee of the City of Boston.

RECESS

At 7.44 p.m., the Committee took a short break and resumed the meeting at 7.54 p.m.

REPORTS

2026 State Assessment and Accountability Report - Deputy Superintendent of Academics Dr. Simone Wright, Chief of Data, Information and Systems Improvement, Monica Hogan, Executive Director of School and District Transformation Andrew Rollins, Region 4 School Superintendent Christine Landry, Blackstone School Principal Courtney Sheppeck, presented different aspects of the district's state assessment results, accountability ratings, and student achievement.

Dr. Wright highlighted district success measures, school performance trends, and the use of disaggregated data to address achievement gaps and establish five-year targets for MCAS, English language proficiency, and chronic absenteeism. Executive Director Hogan gave an overview of the 2026 academic performance and accountability results.

Data Highlights:

Accountability

- The district does not require assistance or intervention as it is making moderate progress

towards meeting its improvement goals. The district is meeting or exceeding 49% of its improvement targets as set out by the state.
- Four schools were named Schools of Recognition: Grew Elementary School, Boston Latin School, and two Horace Mann Charter Schools: Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School and Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers..
- 53 schools do not require assistance or intervention, while 42 schools are designated as requiring assistance or intervention.
- The district exceeded targets for advanced coursework completion and the annual drop out rate, and met targets for the four-year cohort graduation rate.
- 39 schools improved in their accountability ranking since 2025, with 23 schools increasing their percentile ranking by 5 or more points.
- Schools in every region improved in comparison to 2024, with 6 schools improving in region 1.
- 40 schools are at or above the 20th percentile statewide, and 18 schools are at or above the 50th percentile. For two consecutive years since before the pandemic, there are 0 schools in the 1st percentile.

MCAS Grades 3-8
- Grades 3-8 ELA performance saw no change compared to 2025 and fell below the 2026 Recovery Path Accountability Target of 488.6.
- Grades 3-8 Math performance increased by 0.9 scaled score points and fell below the 2026 Recovery Path Accountability Target of 487.8.
- Grades 5 and 8 Science performance demonstrated an increase of +2.9 ppts of students meeting or exceeding expectations, with Grade 8 performance increasing by +6.0 percentage points.
- The percent of 8th grade students meeting/exceeding expectations in Civics improved from 2025 to 2026 (+3.3 ppts) in the second year of the test.

MCAS Grades 10
- Beginning with the Class of 2026, Massachusetts has changed its graduation criteria, eliminating the need for students to earn a required MCAS score to graduate high school. While MCAS continues to be required in Grade 10, MCAS performance no longer determines whether students earn the Competency Determination (CD). Grade 10 MCAS trends are interpreted with this change in context in mind and examined alongside other evidence of student learning.
- Grade 10 ELA performance declined in the percent of students meeting/exceeding expectations from Spring 2025 to Spring 2026 (-7.0ppt)
- Grade 10 math performance declined in the percent of students meeting/exceeding expectations from Spring 2025 to Spring 2026 (-4.3ppt)

ACCESS for ELLs
- The overall percent of students making progress increased by 1 percentage point between 2025 and 2026.
- The overall percent of students meeting exit criteria increased slightly from 11% in 2025 to 13% in 2026. One-year gains are highest in Grade 2 (+6 ppts) and Grade 4 (+8 ppts).

Chronic Absenteeism

- The chronic absenteeism rate for all students dropped to 30.8% in the 2025-26 school year. This represents a 2.2 percentage point decrease from the 2024-25 school year (33.0%) and a 11.4 percentage point decrease from the 2021-22 school year (42.2%).
- The district exceeded its targets for chronic absenteeism rates in non-high school grades, with a chronic absenteeism rate of 24.2%. The district met its targets for chronic absenteeism at the high school level, with an average chronic absenteeism rate of 43.8%.

Dr. Landry presented the Rafael Hernández Dual Language School's data, including the 29-point accountability improvement. She attributed its success to strong instructional leadership, a deeply committed staff, and coherent systems of support. She emphasized bilingual teacher development, high-quality Tier 1 instruction, targeted student support, attendance, family engagement, and systems that ensure every student gets what they need.

Executive Director Rollins highlighted accelerated progress among several transformation schools. He explained that twelve schools reached the 11th percentile or above, with four meeting the criteria to exit transformation status: the Kenny, Mason, TechBoston, and Trotter. He also highlighted the Ellis, which rose above the 11th percentile, and the Blackstone, which reached its highest accountability percentile since 2018, due primarily by its strong growth in ELA and math. He attributed schools' progress to concise 90-day plans, high-impact instructional strategies, stronger professional collaboration, targeted support, and an emphasis on student belonging and attendance.

Principal Sheppeck highlighted the Blackstone School's improvement in its accountability rating from 3 to 8, with strong growth in ELA and math. She described four high-impact strategies: increased consistent instructional coaching, focused multi-tiered systems of support, strategic use of instructional liaisons, and stronger educator commitment. She also mentioned high-quality instructional materials, data tracking, and targeted support to improve student learning and close achievement gaps. The school also reduced chronic absenteeism from 42% to 34%.

Dr. Wright concluded the presentation by emphasizing the need to improve grade-level achievement through high-quality instructional materials, culturally affirming learning experiences, academic language support, student progress monitoring, data-informed teaching, and stronger instructional leadership.

Member Polanco Garcia commended both the Blackstone and Hernández school for their progress and the support of their students. She raised concerns about the consistently low results for multilingual learners and asked how the district was addressing this. Chief of Multilingual and Multicultural Education Joelle Gamere emphasized improving support for multilingual learners through stronger instruction, educator training, and community partnerships. She mentioned successful practices at Blackstone, Hernandez, and Margarita Muñiz that could be expanded across BPS to improve student outcomes.

Member Polanco Garcia wondered about the different English learner programs and asked how the district evaluates their effectiveness. Chief Gamere explained that the district conducts

comprehensive program evaluations of the dual language and SEI programs, reviewing student data and feedback from teachers and school leaders to identify areas for improvement, establish measurable outcomes, and work with the community. Superintendent Skipper mentioned improvements in English language acquisition among multilingual learners and emphasized the need to continue expanding effective classroom practices, update ESL curricula, and strengthen districtwide support through collaboration and data-driven instruction.

Member Peralta questioned the district's results for multilingual learners, stressed that outcomes must improve, and wondered when the district would close achievement gaps. Superintendent Skipper explained that the district has built a foundation for improvement through high-quality instructional materials, teacher training, and consistent instructional practices. She emphasized that BPS's five-year strategic plan aims to accelerate student achievement, close gaps, and ensure all students meet high standards. Member Peralta expressed hope for a commitment that these would not be the same results next year.

Member Tran praised the district's efforts and suggested reviewing testing systems to better accommodate multilingual learners and students with disabilities. Dr. Wright said that the district is working towards being a system where culture, race, language, and ability are no longer predictors of performance.

Member Torres suggested proactively identifying and supporting schools before their accountability percentiles decline. Dr. Wright explained that each school develops a quality school plan, grounded in high-quality instruction, school culture and climate, and attendance, with measurable targets. The district reviews the data and supports continuous improvement. Superintendent Skipper said that declines in school accountability ratings were less severe than in previous years and mentioned Blackstone and Madison Park as examples of progress. She emphasized proactive weekly school visits, classroom feedback, and consistent instructional practices to improve outcomes.

Vice Chair Skerritt recognized the declines in chronic absenteeism and gains in advanced coursework. She urged the district to provide more detailed data about student groups' progress toward targets, and movement toward proficiency. She also called for a high school grade-level achievement measure and asked about the primary strategy that would change student outcomes. Dr. Wright talked about the importance of high-quality materials, evaluating and updating outdated curricula, and strengthening teacher practice, grounded in research-based practicing grade level instruction. Vice Chair Skerritt asked that these strategies be more clearly outlined in the next presentation of the strategic roadmap. Superintendent Skipper said the district made moderate progress across all student subgroups and said it should be included in future presentations. She also discussed using MAP assessments to monitor student progress during the transition to new state high school assessments. She talked about reviewing data regularly with school leaders, connecting data to coaching principals and leadership teams, and communicating with parents about the importance of attendance to help close achievement gaps.

Chair Robinson asked why student achievement remains stagnant despite significant district investments and called for meaningful changes to improve student outcomes. Dr. Wright mentioned improving classroom instruction, strengthening school leadership, and providing consistent support for multilingual learners, and highlighted that clear instructional guidance wasn't established until School Year 2021–22.

Chair Robinson questioned if all teachers really believe their students are capable of learning and are committed to educating them. Dr. Wright recognized the hard work of all the teachers and expressed optimism about the district's progress. Superintendent Skipper highlighted the importance of strengthening school leadership teams, and providing teachers with the right resources, training, and support, and setting clear metrics to accelerate improvement in low-performing schools.

Chair Robinson reiterated her concerns about years of limited progress and wondered when the district will make drastic changes to achieve measurable results. Dr. Wright said the district had the right strategies, but they needed to ensure educators remain focused on student learning every day. Chief of Teaching and Learning Dr. Angela Hedley-Mitchell explained the transition from a more autonomous use of curricula in schools in the past to a more consistent use of research-based curricula. She also highlighted the importance of regular classroom walkthroughs, and curriculum-based assessments to monitor student progress and improve instruction.

PUBLIC COMMENT *(CONTINUED)*

John Mudd, Cambridge resident, Community Advocate, Multilingual Learners Alliance; Boston Network, testified regarding the MCAS 2026 Subgroup Results.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURN

Chair Robinson announced the next School Committee meeting will be in person on Wednesday, November 4 at 6 p.m.

Approved - At approximately 9.41 p.m. the Committee approved by unanimous consent a motion to adjourn to the meeting.

Attest:

Lena Parvex
Executive Secretary