

**Boston School Committee
Inclusion Task Force
June 12, 2014
6:00 – 8:00 PM
Ellison Parks Early Education School
108 Babson St., Mattapan**

Present:

Jerry Mogul, Eileen Nash, Zach Rossetti, Marty Mitchell, Carolyn Kain, Michael Loconto, Natalie Ake, Regina Robinson, Dianne Lescinskas, Bill Henderson (Co-Chair), Karen Zerby Buzzelle (Facilitator).

Absent:

Raul Garcia, Lindsa McIntyre, Elaine Ng, Maria de Lourdes Serpa, Jean-Dominique Hervé Anoh, Patricia Lampron, Richard Robison, Janet Palmer-Owens, Edward Powell.

Also Present:

Laura Wirth, Dana Girswold, Rosemary Connors, Lori Walsh.

Welcome & Introductions

Updates

- Bill reminded Task Force members to notify the host principal if unable to attend an agreed upon site visit.
- Some Task Force members attended a meeting with the BTU on Inclusion. Marty and Eileen mentioned that people in the group are interested in learning more about what schools are doing. They noted how important it is to work together and are looking forward to doing so. Priority concerns were shared.
- Bill noted how Eileen and others spoke eloquently about Special Education and inclusion in the BPS at the Boston City Council Hearing.

Future Meetings

- The Inclusion Task Force will not meet again until September with the tentative goal to end the Task Force in December. Members of the Task Force approved

the following meeting dates based on the School Committee calendar of meetings:

- September 11, 2014
 - October 9, 2014
 - November 13, 2014
 - December 11, 2014
- Bill proposed that all members be contacted and asked to recommit to their role on the Task Force. If members are unable to commit to next year, that will be considered a vacancy and the Task Force has already voted that some new appointees should be practitioners and BTU members. No one is being asked to leave. Present Task Force members agreed to this proposal.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Process

- Bill introduced the conversation explaining that Task Force members expressed interest in looking at some constructive ways to improve the IEP process.
- Carolyn Kain provided a parent perspective. She noted that while improvements have been made, the IEP form still needs to be more reader friendly. In particular the service provider grid is unclear. Parents want to know who is providing services and the way it is broken up is very complicated. The section on the Extended School Year is unclear and unspecific as to what will happen in the summer. Generally, the overall readability is better but there is still a list of items that need to be addressed to improve the form and process.
- Marty and his colleague from the Manning, Lori Walsh discussed the specific challenges the IEP process presents for students with Emotional Impairments. They suggested more emotional assessments be provided, as well as more strategies for building positive skills. They noted that it would be important to add to the counseling section an option for group counseling as well as individual. They emphasized the need for more than one meeting yearly, particularly for SEI students, and explained that at the Manning teachers currently use their own time for extra meetings. Finally, they noted that the spectrum is extremely broad for SEI students and that makes it difficult to find good placements for them.
- Eileen noted that it is important to continuously redefine “user friendly” and that her department is working with coordinators to understand better where students

need to be placed. There is will also be an increase in the number of schools who use PBIS, a comprehensive behavior model.

Discussion of Expansion Committee Recommendations

- Bill presented the proposed recommendations to expand quality inclusive options in BPS. Task Force members made suggested changes to the document. The next steps will be to get feedback from key stakeholders, review the recommendations at the September Task Force meeting and then present them to the School Committee for discussion and approval.
- There was a discussion on ratios and concentrations in inclusive classrooms. All agreed that further discussion was needed.

Discussion of School Quality Committee Recommendations

- Zach presented the draft of the proposed recommendations to ensure quality inclusive options in BPS. Task Force members made suggested changes to the document. The next step will be to continue to review and improve the document in the fall.
- Bill announced that the School Quality Working Group presented preliminary recommendations to the School Committee. Karen will send out the two completed documents to Task Force members. The Task Force will eventually align recommendations for ensuring quality inclusion to the School Quality Working Group document.

Approval of Inclusion Task Force Meeting Minutes: 5/8/14

- Carolyn motioned to accept minutes and all approved.

Public Comments

- Several visitors made some public comments.

Next Meeting:

- September 11th, 6:00 – 8:00 PM, Ellison Parks Elementary School, 108 Babson St., Mattapan