

Conclusion

The recommendations in this roadmap report, if vigorously pursued and carried out, will take BPS to its destination: academic success for all students in a high-achieving Boston Public Schools system.

Building the organizational capacity to arrive at this destination is the main challenge facing the next superintendent. Laudatory goals and aspirations turn into empty promises in the absence of fierce internal discipline and teamwork focused on achieving results. A high-performing managerial team, strategically deployed to shape and implement sound organizational policies and innovative practices, is essential to creating and sustaining a new culture at BPS. With the correct alignment of management, School Committee, teachers, parents, community leaders, external funders, and community-based organizations, the essential conditions for transformative change will exist. Community leaders and parents must be in a state of constant mobilization, actively supporting a school-change agenda that they own. If not, the platform for change bequeathed to the city by Superintendent Thomas Payzant will be squandered.

Our Commission is convinced that only a comprehensive, integrated strategy for transformative change, energized by a value-laden vision, will achieve the academic success that our city craves and that all Boston students deserve.

Let us be clear: This report is not about the past, it is about the future. It is not about finger-pointing or casting blame. It is not so much about our grievances as it is about our high aspirations for the education of all our children. This roadmap report is a cry for skilled execution driven by a compelling vision. Therefore, there is no better way to conclude than to restate our vision, articulated in the Introduction:

Every child in the Boston Public Schools will be treated with respect and supported to succeed academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. All students will be enthusiastically engaged in learning. The racial and cultural diversity of students will be seen as a great asset for building a vibrant school community. This diversity will be respected, honored, and celebrated through instructional practices and adult behavior. Understanding the unfortunate legacy of racism in our society, school personnel will do the deep personal work and training to achieve cultural competence. Such knowledge and skills will be viewed as indispensable to understanding the needs and perspectives of students and parents and as necessary for preparation of curriculum and effective instruction.

The educational enterprise will be driven by high quality instruction, high standards for performance, and high expectations for students, all of which will be articulated and demanded by organizational leadership. Teachers and principals will take ownership for the success or failure of their students. Principals and teachers will be given the tools

and support that they need to be successful educators. Research and evaluation data will be used to influence policy decisions and instructional practices.

Each child's family and community will be valued as critical educational partners that make unique contributions to the child's success in school. A predictable, civil, loving, and caring school climate will be pervasive and considered essential for effective learning. Parents will see clear pathways for their children to reach full potential and achieve excellence, and students themselves will follow those pathways. The outside community will be heavily invested in supporting BPS, parents, and students in a powerful transformational process to achieve academic success for all Boston children.

To this great task and great cause, individually and collectively, we pledge our enduring support and sacred honor.

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