



LAWYERS' COMMITTEE  
FOR CIVIL RIGHTS AND  
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January 24, 2018

Dr. Tommy Chang, Superintendent  
Boston Public Schools  
Bruce C. Bolling Municipal Building  
2300 Washington Street  
Roxbury, MA 02119  
*Sent via email*

**RE: Student Assignment Evaluation**

Dear Superintendent Chang:

From the outset of Boston Public Schools' (BPS) efforts to redesign its student assignment process in 2012, our organizations called upon the district to ensure equitable and meaningful access to high quality schools across Boston's racial and neighborhood lines. As BPS finalized its student assignment policy in 2013, the district announced it would review the results of its implementation after its first year. Now, as BPS undertakes its first review of the student assignment system's impact, we maintain our call for a quality education for all and urge the district to address the following in its review.

For each question, we request that BPS include data from the first three years of implementation as well as the three years prior. We also request that BPS disaggregate and compare the results by student demographic (race/ethnicity, special educational status, socioeconomic status, English learner status) and by neighborhood:

1. How many students were assigned to their first choice, second choice, and third choice?
2. Beyond the number of "high quality" schools on a student's list of options, how many seats at the "high quality" schools on that list were open?
3. What does the data suggest about trends in students' preferences? Do families prioritize quality over proximity? How do these preferences compare to BPS' own School Quality Indicators?
4. For each school, organized by tier:
  - a. How has its student demographics changed?
  - b. How many students listed it first (per seat available)?
5. How have more recent changes to student assignment impacted the results? E.g., school closures, removing or adding strands at schools, amending ELL and special educational overlays, etc.

Pursuant to BPS' Opportunity and Achievement Gap Policy, we request and expect the publication of an Achievement Gap Impact Statement that explicitly examines whether the student assignment system has helped or hindered the elimination of both opportunity and achievement gaps. This analysis should be disaggregated by the student demographics identified above.

As Boston well knows, student assignment is at the heart of *Brown v. Board of Education* and its progeny's efforts to ensure that education is "a right which must be made available to all on equal terms." The questions above are those by which we intend to judge the district's efforts to provide equal access to a quality education.

Sincerely,

Black Educators' Alliance of Massachusetts (BEAM)  
Boston Education Justice Alliance (BEJA)  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice  
NAACP – Boston Branch  
Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST)

Contact: Matt Cregor, Lawyers' Committee: 617-988-0609, [mcregor@lawyerscom.org](mailto:mcregor@lawyerscom.org)

Cc: Dr. Lisa Harvey  
Dr. Colin Rose

