

## Parents give Boston School Committee cake and criticism for failure to review BPS student assignment plan

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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Parents from Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST) ironically marked the 4th anniversary of the Boston School Committee's vote to approve a new Home-Based student assignment plan by holding a mock anniversary party. The "anniversary party," held during tonight's School Committee meeting, came complete with a cake asking, *Where's the data?*

The blue-frosting question referred to the School Committee's explicit and unfulfilled promise to annually review the impact of the new assignment plan on equity. "Four years later, all they've done is a couple of updates. That's not what they promised," said QUEST parent Mary Battenfeld, referring to the School Committee's March 2013 vote to have the district prepare an annual report for the Mayor, School Committee, City Council, and community. "Where is the full data and equity analysis? It's not there. That pretty much lays things out: The School Committee and the district have been derelict when it comes to accountability in student assignment."

QUEST has many times called for the racial and socio-economic equity analysis of the 2013 assignment [plan](#), which has as its goal quality schools, closer to home. On numerous occasions, members of the School Committee have also requested this data. "How is a plan with a goal of schools closer to home affecting students and families by race, and by neighborhood? How is it impacting the ability of different groups of students, such as children with special needs, and English language learners, to access quality schools," asked parent Megan Wolf. "We don't know, and yet changes to student assignment, such as feeder patterns for middle schools, or the Boston Compact's proposal for common enrollment with charter schools, are going forward."

Parents expressed particular concern that the failure to review the BPS assignment plan has already hurt vulnerable groups of students. QUEST gave as examples diminished access of East Boston families to some higher performing schools in Charlestown, and the plan's impact on the student population and resources for the Mattahunt School. In December the School Committee voted to close the Mattahunt, over objections from parents and community activists. The group also sees the ways in which the student assignment plan negatively affects the budgets of many of the district's neediest schools.

"As parents," Kevin Murray said, "we are seeing how the home-based plan is affecting enrollment, and placing undue burdens on some families and schools. We need the data to document what is happening under the new assignment plan, and to put mitigations into place to address inequities."