

# **The Boston Public Schools (BPS) Budget: How it works and how families and students can make a difference**

**2/8/15, 3 to 5pm**

- Welcome and introduction
- Defining our questions
- **Where the \$ Comes From:** Who pays for what?
- **How Decisions Get Made:** Who decides what to fund and what to cut? How do they decide?
- **Funding for BPS:** Why don't the city and state spend more for public education in Boston?
- **Creating Change:** What actions should we take to make sure our schools get the funds they need?
- **Wrap Up**

All slides and more information about the budget can be found at [www.Curleyk8.com/budget](http://www.Curleyk8.com/budget). A video version can be found on youtube by searching "The 2015 Boston Public Schools Budget - An 11-Minute Guide."

# **El Presupuesto de las Escuelas Públicas de Boston: Como funciona y como las familias y los estudiantes pueden hacer la diferencia**

**el 8 de febrero, 3-5pm**

- **Bienvenido y presentaciones**
- **Aclarando nuestras preguntas preguntas**
- **De Dónde viene el \$:** ¿Quién paga y para qué pagan?
- **Como se tomen las desiciones:** ¿Quién decide dónde va el dinero? ¿Cómo lo deciden?
- **Fondos para BPS:** ¿Por qué la ciudad y el estado no dan mas apoyo ala educación pública en Boston?
- **Crear Cambios:** ¿Qué acciones debemos tomar para asegurar que nuestras escuelas reciban los fondos que necesitan?

Tanto esta presentación, como más información sobre el presupuesto escolar se encuentran en el sitio: [www.curleyk8.com/budget](http://www.curleyk8.com/budget) . También en YouTube hay un video informativo en inglés sobre el mismo tema. Sólo busque "The 2015 Boston Public Schools Budget - An 11-minute Guide."

# **The Citywide Parent Council and QUEST**

## **Citywide Parent Council**

The Citywide Parent Council (CPC) is the parent body of all School Parent Councils of all Boston Public Schools. The CPC, formed under Judge Garrity's 1974 ruling, is the officially recognized representative body of all BPS parents. Drawing from schools from every part of Boston, and newly invigorated this year, the group meets every third Tuesday of the month, and works closely with BPS and with members of the City government, to effectively advocate for the interests of all parents and students in BPS.

To contact the Citywide Parent Council, email Heshan Berent-Weeramuni at [heshanbw@gmail.com](mailto:heshanbw@gmail.com) or contact the Office of Engagement at BPS (Michelle Brooks at 617-635-9600, [mbrooks3@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:mbrooks3@bostonpublicschools.org)).

## **QUEST**

QUEST (Quality Education for Every Student) is a grassroots organization of Boston Public School parents whose central focus is quality and equity in our city's schools. The group formed in 2012 around concerns about the equity of proposed changes to the BPS assignment process. Since that time, QUEST has focused on implementation of the assignment plan and the related issue of how Boston measures the quality of our schools; the District Superintendent search; facilities and long range capital plans; sufficient and equitable funding from the city and state; and accountability and equity in charter schools.

To contact QUEST, email [qualityforeverystudent@gmail.com](mailto:qualityforeverystudent@gmail.com) or at [questbps](https://www.facebook.com/questbps) on facebook.

## **Upcoming events related to the BPS Budget:**

### **Boston School Committee**

*Wednesday, February 25th, 6pm: **School Committee Meeting*** where an in depth set of budget and school closing recommendations will be made. Location not yet announced (check "Upcoming Event" on BPS website for info).

*Thursday, February 26th, 6pm: **School Committee Budget Hearing***, with a focus on schools. Location not yet announced.

*Monday, March 9th, 6pm: **School Committee Budget Hearing*** with a focus on central services. Location not yet announced.

*Wednesday, March 11th, 5pm: **School Committee Budget Hearing*** followed by regular School Committee Meeting at 6pm. Location is the new Bruce Bolling Municipal Building in Dudley Square.

*Wednesday, March 25th, 6pm: **School Committee votes on budget.*** Location is the Bruce Bolling Municipal Building in Dudley Square.

### **Chapter 70, Foundation Budget Review Commission**

*Monday, March 9, 4:30pm: **State Hearing*** on the way foundation budgets are calculated. (The foundation budget is what the state believes is the minimum amount of money that must be spent to educate students. This amount is determined through statewide Chapter 70 laws. This law also determines how much of that money will come from the state and how much will come from the town in which the schools are located.)

## What Else Can We Do?

### Keep Educating Ourselves:

- **Share your knowledge about the budget and your BPS experience** with friends, other parents, teacher and administrators. Ask questions!
- Read a **presentation on the budget** at [www.Curleyk8.com/budget](http://www.Curleyk8.com/budget). A video version can be found on youtube by searching "The 2015 Boston Public Schools Budget - An 11-Minute Guide." (The pause button can really help!)
- Learn more details about this year's BPS budget on the **BPS website** at <http://bostonpublicschools.org/budget>. The school-by-school comparison of enrollments and projected budgets is especially interesting.
- BPS parents will be doing **presentations** throughout the budget season. Bring fellow parents or hold a budget info session at your school.

### Connect with Organizations Who Work on These Issues

- **Parent Councils and Site Councils** at individual schools meet monthly and may be talking about the budget. Attend a meeting or reach out to school leaders and ask how this year's budget will affect your school; share what you know.
- Does your school have a representative on the **Citywide Parent Council**? If not, consider becoming that rep. (Contact [heshanbw@gmail.com](mailto:heshanbw@gmail.com) or the Office of Family and Student Engagement at BPS for more information.)
- Join **QUEST**. We have meetings every two weeks and work on the budget and other issues related to quality and equity in our schools.
- Join another **community organization** that works on these issues. Some examples include the BPS Parent Budget Group (contact [heshanbw@gmail.com](mailto:heshanbw@gmail.com)) and the Boston Alliance for Educational Justice (contact Marlena Rose, [otlmacampaign@gmail.com](mailto:otlmacampaign@gmail.com)).

### Contact Boston Public Schools:

- Attend **Boston School Committee** meeting and voice your concerns. (See attached meetings list.) Bring other parents with you and speak in the public comment period. Usually there is a sign up sheet for speaking.
- **Email feedback** and concerns regarding the budget to the School Committee at [budget@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:budget@bostonpublicschools.org).

### **Contact City and State Officials:**

- Contact the **Mayor's office** at mayor@boston.gov, (617)635-4500 or @marty\_walsh.
- Contact the Governor via his website at <http://www.mass.gov/governor/constituent-services/contact-governor-office/>, (617)725-4005, or @massgovernor.
- Contact the **Boston City Council Ways and Means Committee** at ccc.wm@boston.gov and/or Committee Chair Mark Ciommo at mark.ciommo@boston.gov or (617)635-3113 or Vice Chair Michelle Wu at michelle.wu@boston.gov, (617)635-3115 or @wutrain.
- Contact **City Councilors**. Go to <http://www.cityofboston.gov/citycouncil/> for individual emails. Contact the City Council Education Committee at ccc.education@boston.gov.
- Contact the Chairs of the State **Joint Committee on Education** (State): Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz at sonia.chang-diaz@masenate.gov, (617-722-1673), @soniachangdiaz and Karen Spilka at karen.spilka@masenate.gov, (617-722-1640) or @karenspilka. The Chairs from the House side have not yet been named.

### **Use Social and Other Media to Express Concerns**

- Use **facebook**, **twitter** and other **social media** to share concerns. Tweet @bostonschools, #bospoli, #mapoli.
- Write letters to the editor of local papers; respond to online articles.