

# **BOSTON PARENT GROUP TAKES POSITION ON SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT PROPOSALS**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Date:** February 20, 2013

**Contact:**

qualityforeverystudent@gmail.com [personal information of press contacts removed]

Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), a grassroots organization of Boston Public School parents, has released a position paper outlining the steps the district will need to take to provide all Boston children with a fair and equal chance to attend a quality school through one of the new assignment plans.

QUEST says the “home-based” plans are creative solutions that offer all students at least some access to quality schools. But the organization points out that even if the city selects one of the home-based plans, three factors that could torpedo chances for assignment success must be addressed: an unequal number of quality school choices given to each family, a walk zone preference giving advantage to students living in certain neighborhoods, and an inadequate way of measuring a school's quality.

Calling equitable access to quality schools “a precious right and our greatest need,” QUEST makes suggestions for how the home-based proposals can be made more fair. They include adjusting families' choice lists to give kids in areas with weaker schools a greater chance to attend a quality school; eliminating the walk zone preference; and looking at a variety of ways schools are successful, not just their test scores.

"Because the Home Based plans naturally get us all closer to home," says BPS parent Carol Ridge Martinez, "we don't need a walk zone preference anymore. All it would really do is give some children a better chance than others, and that doesn't really seem fair."

Maura O'Toole, a graduate of the Boston Public Schools and current BPS parent, underscored the urgency of addressing equity in the home-based models: “This is a chance to shape the future of Boston and we have to get it right. Choosing a plan that says where you live determines your chances in life just isn't where we should be as a city in 2013. We have to make sure that all kids have the chance to go to a good school, no matter who they are or where they live.”

QUEST concludes its report by finding that only if these three conditions are met will Boston have created an assignment plan that provides all children, regardless of where they live, increased opportunities to access quality education.

Position paper attached and available

at [https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BzwwRmzZ74g\\_dnY5S29HdDRzRIU/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BzwwRmzZ74g_dnY5S29HdDRzRIU/edit?usp=sharing).