



**Office of the Superintendent**

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May 15, 2017

Dear Boston Arts Academy Community,

This is an exciting time for your high school as we near closer to making the vision of a new Boston Arts Academy (BAA) a reality, complete with state-of-the-art practice and performance spaces.

As you may know, the Boston Arts Academy School Building Committee recently approved submission of a plan to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) that involves the razing of BAA's current facility in the Fenway neighborhood and the construction of a new five-story building that will be specifically designed to meet the unique needs of BAA's students and the school's functions as an arts academy. This plan is now before the MSBA, pending approval for state funding.

Among the many features in the proposed new building will be an auditorium with a proscenium stage, a Black Box Theater, and other associated theater arts spaces and four dance studios. For vocal and instrumental instruction, the design includes a choral room, a band/orchestra room, a multi-purpose recital/lecture hall, a recording suite, several practice and ensemble rooms, and a Clothing Construction Lab to enhance BAA's Fashion Technology program. Overall, every floor will be designed to double as a stage, every wall a gallery.

As part of BuildBPS, the 10-year educational and facilities master plan, the District, in collaboration with the City of Boston, is actively looking to create what is known as "swing space" — unoccupied locations that can house schools on a temporary basis while their buildings undergo reconstruction or large-scale renovations. At the present time, BPS has limited swing space throughout the district.

To allow the BAA project to proceed with MSBA review and approval, the MSBA requires a plan for students in the impacted schools, which in this case include: BAA, Dorchester Academy, and the Community Academy of Science and Health (CASH).

BPS has developed a plan to relocate students in the Dorchester Academy. Currently, Dorchester Academy and CASH operate in separate and distinct areas of the former Cleveland School building on Charles Street in Dorchester, with minimal shared space between them, specifically the auditorium, gymnasium, and cafeteria.

The BPS plan proposes a September 2018 relocation of the Dorchester Academy to the former Endicott School in Dorchester on McLellan Street. This move will provide an appropriate site for Dorchester Academy — one that is better suited for the school's current student population of under 100 students. The resultant vacancy at the Cleveland School will provide the district an ideal swing space that can be used during school construction projects that is capable of accommodating up to 500 students.

Relocating the BAA to the Cleveland School in September 2018 will provide an appropriate, temporary home for BAA students while their school on Ipswich Street is constructed because of its building capacity, its accessibility to public transportation — it is directly across the street from the Fields Corner Red Line MBTA station — and its ability to meet BAA's programmatic needs. This proposed plan will allow BAA to fully operate during the anticipated three-year construction period. BAA students will return to their new school in the Fall of 2021.

We will update you soon on the date of a future community meeting at which BAA and district leaders will answer any questions you may have. We look forward to working with your school community to develop a smooth and carefully planned transition to ensure the academic success of all students.

It is important to note that the proposed moves will not take place until the start of school in September 2018, allowing us considerable time to work thoughtfully with all the impacted school communities and their neighbors to gather input and to share preliminary schedules, ideas and concepts of the proposed changes.

Sincerely,



Tommy Chang, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

Boston Public Schools  
Tommy Chang, Superintendent

Boston School Committee  
Michael D. O'Neill, Chair

City of Boston  
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor



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