



# Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

## Minutes

### Academic Excellence Committee Meeting

---

#### Date and Time

Wednesday October 15, 2025 at 9:00 AM

#### Location

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)

ID: 84614717729

Passcode: 432092

---

#### MISSION

The mission of the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School is to nurture and develop academic, social and emotional competence while building confidence, character and citizenship among its students.

---

#### Committee Members Present

A. Buckmire, D. Morris, M. Gardner

#### Committee Members Absent

*None*

#### Guests Present

Gina Matthews

---

#### I. Opening Items

##### A. Record Attendance

## **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

M. Gardner called a meeting of the Academic Excellence Committee of Boston Renaissance Charter Public School to order on Wednesday Oct 15, 2025 at 9:00 AM.

## **C. Approve Minutes**

A. Buckmire made a motion to approve the minutes from Academic Excellence Committee on 06-04-25.

D. Morris seconded the motion.

The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

## **II. Academic Excellence**

### **A. MCAS Overview**

Gina Matthews CAO:

Looking at our Accountability Report on the DESE website this is a comparison against the 2024 spring MCAS results from which benchmarks were created for us and our scholars to meet during the spring 2025 testing.

When we take a look at this, our Cumulative Criterion reference, targeted percent was at 48 and that is a combination between our performance in 2024 which was a comparative performance with respect to 2023, as well as this Spring's performance which was at 47%. This is a weighted average with the most recent spring being weighted more.

What this means is that we fell in the Moderate progress towards Target. To fall into the substantial progress we would need to be at the 50%ile mark with the accountability percentile at 13. This means that with respect to similar schools out of every one hundred schools that are similar to us we would be 13th out of 100 with 87 schools outperforming us that are similar.

According to this data DESE is saying that we do not require Assistance or Intervention. However we do need to keep in mind that we have our Charter conditions which need to be addressed.

When we look at the points earned for all students, we did not earn any points in ELA. A zero means we actually declined in our scale score average. The 1 point we earned in Math means that there was no change in our scaled score average or there was just a slight decrease within .5 Points. When looking at Science achievement, we earned 4 points. This means we exceeded the target that DESE set for us.

When we look at the achievement for our lowest performers, I just want to remind everyone that the lowest performers are the lowest 25% of our Scholars who have tested in this school for at least 2 years. We did improve with respect to the average scaled score from 2024 but we still didn't hit the target.

Taking a look at growth in ELA, we earned two points and this means that our average growth was in the 40th to 49.9% tile which is average low growth.

We earned 3 points for math which means our average growth fell in between the 50th and 59.9%ile which again is still considered average high

In order for our achievement to move we need that growth to be above that 65th%ile because growth is what pulls the achievement up and we need it to be consistent. Our lowest performing students had growth in that average low area. For our EL's with respect to ACCESS testing, we did not earn any points. Our chronic absenteeism rate increased which is why we didn't earn any points.

When looking at ELA through the years, our growth is stagnant. We are maintaining and not closing the gaps which is why the graphs look similar. In 2024, our average scaled score was 484. We decreased by 8/10 of a point which is why we decreased. Our EL's and SWD's both fell.

A board member asked about internal indicators (growth metrics) that are used.

A board member asked about what is being put into place in order to move us out of stagnancy.

For Math, the graphs look similar because we are hitting our targets, but the achievement is not moving because we are only hitting that 50th%ile. Just hitting the target is not enough.

Hitting the 50th%ile is what got us the 3 points and most of our subgroups were in the 40th%iles.

I

n Science, we did earn 4 points. We exceeded the goals that were set for us. You can see the movement from 2024-2025 scholars. In 2025, we had more students in partially meets which is what got us the points.

A board member asked what the difference was in instruction between 2024 and 2025. The Science Curriculum Coordinator had additional time to model lessons for all grades and there was additional assurances and intentionality to ensure teachers were using and teaching science during the science block., along with really committed & strong teachers. We exceeded our target with an 8 point increase.

## **B. MCAS Comparisons to State and Other Charters**

### **When compared to Boston Public Schools**

We are behind

We are closer to BPS, but overall other than in Grade 5 and in Grade 6 Math, BPS did outperform us. We have a few areas where we were competitive with BPS. When we look at our scores we can do better.

A board member shared that this is concerning, as a charter school we should be outperforming our sending district. We are not close.

### **DESE Comparison**

The enrollments from the schools they compared us to is not even close to ours. Low income is close and SWD's there are 2 schools that are comparable, but with our EL's the schools DESE compared us to are incomparable.

### **C. MCAS Conclusions/Actions**

#### **ELA:**

We are going to increase reading and reading comprehension and writing skills with writing every day across all content areas.

Our overarching goal for writing in general is being continued and writing every day is what's happening. It was happening in pockets last year and now with increased intentionality as well as increased supports for our teachers and scholars. We have renewed vigor on that piece of the puzzle. We are initiating the practice of pre-reading texts within the homework as well as with level one depth of Knowledge Questions. The rationale behind that is as adults we all know that it's really the second or third read through of any text in which you can really dig into the text and get those deeper questions. Your first read through the text really is just essentially for content. We will be grading written work according to the standardized rubric which was created for the school last year. It has been reviewed to ensure alignment with not only state standards but as well as the way in which teachers correct the open response questions.

A board member asked about homework rigor and if there was differentiation happening. Is the rigor being increased for students who may need it? If so, what are we doing to differentiate when it comes to Writing Practice differentiation?

#### **Math:**

We are continuing to work on fluency with numbers, computation, number sense, and problem solving skills. We're introducing number talks which is daily mental math practice. We are initiating the practice of reading word problems as stories first and math problems second. Again, we're looking for that read through, making sure that the content of the story is understood before you can answer a question to it. This is ensuring students are writing in math. We are also introducing intentional spiraling strategies which will assist in closing learning gaps.

#### **Science:**

Although scholars did better on the selected responses on Science MCAS, there was no movement on the constructed responses. With the help of Boston Debate League, we are teaching teachers how to engage scholars in scientific writing including a claim, evidence and reasoning. We're ensuring that the scientific writing will be graded as it will be graded on MCAS so there is a science specific rubric for teachers to use when grading this.

### **Whole School:**

All of our curriculum coordinators as well as our instructional coaches will continue to model lessons. We're using PLC time as mini professional developments. We are reviewing and revising lesson plans to ensure that all lessons are well designed and tie back to the MA standards. Understanding released MCAS questions, the way questions are worded, highlighting additional vocabulary words that may appear on MCAS but not on resources we have. For example, Evaluate vs. Solve. Examining Depth of Knowledge questions and what each of them exemplifies

### **MCAS Mornings instead of Afterschool ALP:**

Those scholars scoring 470-499 and the "bubble" scholars that have the ambition, the will, and the know to bring them in to a morning sessions.

2 mornings for ELA, 2 mornings for Math, and 1 morning for Science 30-45 minutes

Currently looking at data to see which scholars fall into this category.

This will be for grades 4, 5, and 6. We will specifically be looking at how many 6th graders have been in that same pocket for years.

## **D. MCAS in conjunction with iReady data and Aimsweb Fall Benchmarking**

### **Fall Benchmarking:**

Aimsweb compared to i-ready

Aimsweb tests foundational skills

I-ready tests skills that are being applied

When looking at this data, this is where UDL training comes in to ensure students are able to access curriculum

It is important to include Spiraling reviews for gap closure and extending what they know to get them to move and grow

A board member noted that looking at foundation skills through aimsweb, students seem to have the skill, but the struggle is getting them to apply those skills

This is why spiraling is so important in order to ensure the understanding conceptually. For example, understanding the correlation between addition and multiplication

With MCAS being everybody's responsibility (Whole School), looking at Aimsweb, for K1 & K2-85% of K scholars are ready. We are seeing a lot of growth in K2

We looked at MCAS and took the top underperforming skills in grade 5 & grade 6 and worked backwards for our LS teachers to work on

Teaching LS teachers how to use MCAS data to form their instruction. This is important because they are our foundation

Board member shared that Spiraling & backwards spiraling is important as well as making teachers understand the importance of that in the younger grades. However, there is a mindset component that is not just at BRCPS. Teachers coming into the field now may have a different mindset and approach coming into the profession that needs to be addressed and cultivated. I hear the tactics from what we will do. When met with resistance what will cultivating that care look like. I wonder how teachers are internalizing and what are the accountability measures that are in place. The fidelity in which things are implemented is the hardest part of your job. The strategy and process sounds right, but the fidelity of which it is implemented and making sure there is accountability.

Gina Matthews: I agree. One example of how we are including all teachers is on our last professional development Friday, we presented our data meeting to all staff of both upper and lower school. We had our entire school starting to work on the standards that we worked on going backwards. We kept everyone in the cafeteria and assigned tables to grades and everyone stayed in the cafeteria to work on this under the supervision of the curriculum coordinators and myself so that we had them working. We had exit tickets and we observed rich and meaningful conversations taking place.

As a whole school, we're doing all those other strategies, but in particular lower school ELA and Math Coordinators are having regular optional office hours to dig deeper into lessons and preparation because preparation is a big key to this daily preparation by the teachers. Curriculum coordinators are working on stretch goals, like what is a stretch goal, where do we find a stretch goal, how do we identify it what are we doing to do that, what are we doing to extend learning further, so that we can get our Scholars into that 65th to 75th percentile and move that achievement needle. the standardization pieces are moving from presentations to interactive sessions and instructional coaches are actively coaching and modeling best practices as well as setting up peer observation opportunities for all teaching faculty not just those Identified. We are also looking at best PLC practices Additionally, there's a focus on increasing teacher efficacy with small group instruction during the core content time and to assist with the above we do have additional specialist allowing our students to be working with more direct instruction from an adult while building stamina for independent work.

During WIN, there has been an increased intentionality with the tier one win activities to be true extension activities. Some of our students are ready for it and differentiated instruction does not just occur in tier 3.

### **III. Closing Items**

#### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
M. Gardner

---

### **Documents used during the meeting**

- Academic Excellence Committee (Oct 2025).pdf