

February 1, 2012
Boston School Committee Meeting
Tania Tavarez, Heshan Berents-Weeramuni

Statement of the Curley K8 SSC and SPC to the Boston School Committee

We are Heshan Berents-Weeramuni and Tania Tavarez. We are parents at the Curley K-8 School in Jamaica Plain. We are concerned about next year's budget cuts. Again, we say "Enough. No more."

Like all Boston public schools, our bright and diverse student body comes from every type of family. 72% are from low-income households who qualify for free or reduced lunch, 83% are ethnic minorities, 39% have limited English Language Proficiency, and 23% are special education students. In almost every category, we are above our district's average. (1)

We are one of the 3 largest K-8 schools in the district. We are a highly popular, vibrant school that works hard to close access and achievement gaps. We are an engaged community that even attracts the Mayor on his election day, and Elizabeth Warren on Martin Luther King Day.

Despite all our work, your proposed budget continues a pattern that undermines the very success YOU seek.

- In 2009: we had 685 students, a budget of \$7.6M
- 2010: 667 students, a budget of \$7.4M
- 2011: 710 students, a budget of \$7.3M
- 2012: 814 students, a budget of \$6.6M
- 2013 (Projected): 824 students, a budget of \$6.2M

Enough. No more. Restore our funding.

We chose BPS because we believe in its 365 year legacy. We are your allies, your cheerleaders, your funders. Don't chase us away to the charter schools, or to the scholarships of the Park School or BB&N, or to Cambridge, Brookline or Belmont. You know the spiral will happen: more cuts lead to reduced enrollment, lead to more cuts, lead to less schools.

You are the most important body in Boston. Next year you will determine the job prospects, social mobility, and crime and incarceration rates for our 824 children. You determine the future of this city. Don't make it a bleak one.

Thank you for your time. Thank you for your service.

(1) Massachusetts Department of Education - <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=00350020&orgtypecode=6&leftNavId=305&>