

Citywide Parents Council II

1971 - 2004; bulk: 1986 - 2000

Boston Public Schools: Desegregation-era Records Collection

Project funded by a grant from the National Historic Publications and
Records Commission (NHPRC)

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Collection Summary

Creator:	Citywide Parents Council	Abstract:	
Title:	Citywide Parents Council Records II		
Physical Description:	43 cubic feet		The Citywide Parents Council, Inc. (CPC) was a community/school based, non-profit, advisory organization established by Federal District Court mandate (Judge Arthur Garrity in the case of Tallulah Morgan vs. James Hennigan) in 1974. The CPC operated as an autonomous entity of the school system from 1974 to 2004. The Citywide Parents Council Records document the organization's mission to foster parental involvement in the schools, provide positive input into educational policies, and hold the Boston Public Schools accountable for providing a quality education to all students.
Language:	English		
Repository:	City of Boston, Office of the City Clerk, Archives and Records Management Division 201 Rivermoor St. West Roxbury, MA 02132 archives@cityofboston.gov		

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Agency History

In the June 1974 decision for Morgan vs. Hennigan, Federal District Court Judge Arthur Garrity released a four-part plan linking quality education to desegregation in the Boston Public Schools. This plan was unprecedented in that it was the first time an education/desegregation case sought to improve quality of education as well as desegregate. Also, it was the first case a state level department and a citizen body monitored compliance with court orders. The mechanisms Garrity ordered for the plan were as follows: desegregate through reassignment of students and staff; decentralize through redistricting to eight community school districts and one citywide magnet school district; increase parent participation through citizen monitoring committees; utilize metropolitan resources via collegiate, and create cultural or business pairings with individual schools.

In two orders, issued in 1974 and 1975, Judge Garrity mandated that a three-tiered structure of citizen participation groups be established to cover all levels of the school system from individual schools, to community districts, to the entire system. In October of 1974, Garrity ordered the creation of Racial Ethnic Parent Councils (REPCs) and a Citywide Parents Advisory Council (CPAC). Garrity stated that the function of

these parent groups was to "insure adequate and impartial investigation and responsible recommendations on racially and ethnically oriented problems arising at the school; to create means of communication between parents, students, teachers and administrators regarding the solution of such problems; and to promote an environment of understanding and common purpose among the various elements of the community so that the best available education may be offered to all children." The CPAC was established to assist the REPCs in fulfilling their mission. In June of 1975, Garrity ordered the creation of nine Community District Advisory Councils (CDACs) to act as advisory groups to the districts. The three parent groups, CPAC, CDAC and REPC, comprised a three-tiered structure of citizen participation groups.

The first tier, REPC, dealt with school level problems at each individual school. REPCs were comprised of parents representing different races, with three parent representatives for each elementary school, four for middle schools and five for high schools. The second tier was the CDAC, which dealt with district level issues and monitored each district for compliance with court orders. CDAC had ten elected (chosen by REPCs) and ten court appointed members representing teachers, police school department, business, university and labor groups. The third tier, the CPAC, dealt with citywide issues and monitored student discipline. CPAC had a total of 22 elected parent representatives according to these court ordered racial guidelines: one Black, one White for each district, two Asian and two Hispanic citywide.

Monitoring the schools for compliance with court orders was an integral responsibility of the parent councils. The court divided monitoring into twelve areas: student assignments; school capacities/program locations; faculty/administrative desegregation; special desegregation measures; special education; bilingual education; vocational/occupational education; student transportation; construction/renovation and closing of school facilities; school safety and security; student discipline; institutional pairings.

Also of note, Garrity mandated the Citywide Coordinating Council (CCC) in 1975 to foster public awareness of the process of implementing the court's desegregation orders. In 1977, the Citywide Coordinating Council was disbanded by court order and its responsibilities were split between the Department of Implementation's External Liaison Unit and the parent/citizen councils.

In 1982, parent councils completed a self-evaluation study and reorganized the structure of parent councils with court approval. The new configuration included: School Parent Councils (SPCs) and School Parent Council Executive Committees (SPCECs) at each school; nine District Parent Councils (DPCs) that were restructured in 1989 into four zones and therefore four Zonewide Parents Councils (ZPCs), composed of co-chairs of the SPCECs; and a Citywide Parents Council (CPC), composed of parents elected from among SPCEC members in each district. The CPC was the umbrella organization for councils at each level, which were required to have fair representation of Black, White, Hispanic, and Asian parents where possible.

The CPC operated as an autonomous entity of the Boston Public School System, although it was housed within it. The mission of the CPC was to foster parental involvement in the schools, provide positive input into educational policies and hold the Boston Public Schools accountable for providing a quality education to all students. Staff worked to provide information; assist with student assignments and transportation; advocate for facility improvements; and arrange conflict resolution sessions at schools. The Board of Directors worked to: empower parents to become effective advocates in areas of curriculum improvement; increase visibility of parents; strengthen SPCs; and foster effective communication system wide. The CPC sponsored educational conferences, trainings and workshops; published two newsletters called Intouch, and Parents United. they also sponsored a weekly television show with the Cablevision Answer Channel A24.

The Citywide Parents Council often collaborated with other community groups in Boston, including: the Black Ministerial Alliance of Greater Boston; the Urban League Community Mobilization Project; Roxbury YMCA; Roxbury Multi-Service Center and Project Right; Quincy/Geneva Housing Corp.; Boston Plan for Excellence Access; WEATOC; NAACP; Blue Hill and Elm Hill Housing.

In the Final Orders of 1985, the court ruled that CPC was to be funded for at least three more years. In the additional ruling of May 1990, the court confirmed the necessity for the CPC, but no longer required the school department to fund it. At its inception, the CPC had over \$700,000.00 in funding. This was slowly reduced every year, by 1992 the CPC had a budget of a little over \$150,000.00, and finally lost all public funding in 2002. The 1990's were marked by a constantly shrinking budget and a search for outside

funding. On top of funding issues CPC was forced to change locations several times in a period of a few years. Despite financial issues during the late 1990's and the beginning of the 21st century, CPC was able to create the Professional Development for Student Empowerment Program, begin computer and technology trainings, and bring to fruition the Sonny Walker Multimedia Library and Training Center. Today the CPC exists as a volunteer run organization with activities funded by grant money.

Sources:

Overview of Citywide Parents Council; 1974-1999. Citywide Parents Council. n.d.

Procedural Manual for Monitoring, Dispute Resolution and Modification of Federal Desegregation Court Orders in the Boston Public Schools. Massachusetts Department of Education. May 1983.

PEP Grant: Parents Empowering Parents. Citywide Parents Council. 1993 - 1994.

Struggles of the 1990's. Citywide Parents Council. n.d.

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Scope and Content

The Citywide Parents Council (CPC) Records date from 1971-2004, and are arranged into seven series: Board of Directors, Executive Directors, Administration, Monitoring Department, External Agencies, Floppy Disks, and Audio Visual Materials and Ephemera.

The Board of Directors series comprises 5.5 cubic feet and contains Articles of Organization, correspondence, by-laws, committee files, annual reports, and Board of Directors meeting minutes and supporting materials

The Executive Directors series comprises 6 cubic feet and is divided into two sub-series arranged chronologically: Smithers, Virginia and McKinnis, Hattie. Smithers was Executive Director from 1986-1987 and her papers are primarily from this time period. The folders are arranged alphabetically by subject, including Correspondence, Finance, Boston Public Schools, and Crusade Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse. McKinnis was Executive Director from 1987-2004. The folders are arranged alphabetically by subject, including Articles, Boston Public Schools, City of Boston, School Committee of the City of Boston, Curriculum, Events, Personnel, External Agencies, Finance, Programs, Parent Support Materials, School Based Management/Shared Decision Making, and Training and Workshops.

The Administration series comprises 10 cubic feet and is divided into two sub-series arranged chronologically: Walker, Antoinette Sonny Roberts, Executive Assistant and Granville, Gail, Office Manager. Walker started as a volunteer with CPC in 1987 and held several positions within the organization finally becoming Executive Assistant, a title she held until her death in 1999. Her records reflect the various positions she held and the span her entire career at CPC. The folders are arranged alphabetically by subjects including: Articles; Boston Public Schools Budget, Citywide Educational Coalition, Technology, and Young Achievers Science and Mathematics Pilot School; City of Boston; School Committee of the City of Boston; Correspondence; Annual Fall and Spring Educational Conferences; Family Fun and Fitness Day; Fifteen Plus Anniversary; Parents Appreciation Night; External Agencies; Funding Agencies, Reference Materials, and Grant Proposals; Parent Council Support Materials; Parent Support Materials including Advocacy; Personnel; Programs including Professional Development for Student Empowerment; Parents United Newsletter; Answer Channel Talk Show; Intouch Newsletter; Reports and Data; School Based Management/Shared Decision Making; and Training and Workshops. Granville served as Office Manager from 1999 through CPC's defunding in 2002. The position of Office Manager held many of the same duties as the no longer existent Executive Assistant position. Granville's Papers are arranged alphabetically by subjects including: Articles, City Spree Fundraiser; Boston Public Schools; Correspondence; External Agencies; MCAS; Parent Involvement, Parent Support Materials; Personnel, Programs; Publicity and Outreach; and Sonny Walker Multimedia Library and Training Center.

The Monitoring Department series comprises 7.5 cubic feet and is divided into two sub-series. School Parent Council Empowerment Program was created in 1997 and replaced the Monitoring Department. This sub-series consists of files for each school arranged by their designated zones. Each folder contains various materials from that school's School Parent Council, primarily election materials, dating from 1988-2002. The second sub-series are the records of Greta Cameron Monitoring Coordinator. Cameron started with CPC in 1983 and served as Monitoring Coordinator from 1987-1997. Her records are arranged chronologically by subjects including: Boston Public Schools, City of Boston, Correspondence, Principal evaluations, School Parent Councils, and School Committee of the City of Boston.

The External Agencies series comprises 4 cubic feet. These records appear to be a portion of a central file. The folders are arranged alphabetically by the name of the agency.

The Floppy Disks series comprises 1 cubic foot. The files contained on the disks were primarily created using Mac software. They arranged alphabetically by subjects including: CPC Support Materials, Correspondence, Events, Finance, Intouch Newsletter, McKinnis, Monitoring, Navigating the Boston Public School System, Parents United Newsletter, Personnel, SPCs, and Training and Workshops.

The Audio Visual Material and Ephemera series comprises 2 cubic feet and is arranged alphabetically by the type of material. Audio Cassettes include meetings, conferences, and interviews from 1979-1998. Ephemera consist of buttons, magnets, a plaque, and a banner. There are four film strips with accompanying audio cassettes from the National Committee for Citizens in Education concerning parent involvement. Photographic Prints, Negatives, Slides and JPGS are images from various events including conferences, Family Fun and Fitness Day, Fifteen Plus Anniversary, and Showcase of Schools, as well as the Professional Development for Student Empowerment Program. The Video Cassettes are primarily episodes of CPC's public access television talk show from 1994-2002. Also included are interviews and Citywide Parents Council Fifteenth Anniversary Celebration.

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Related Material

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[Office of General Council Records finding aid](#)

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Acquisition Information

The Citywide Parents Council Records were accessioned Feb. 15, 2006

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Access Restrictions

Some records within this collection are restricted as mandated by FERPA guidelines and the Public Records Law (MGL C.4, s. 7, cl.26). Contact archivist for further information.

Appraisal Information

The collection was reduced from approximately 72 cubic feet. Duplicate materials, carbon copies, blank forms, personnel and personal papers were disposed of during processing.

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Box	Folder Title
	I. Board of Directors, 1976-2002
1	General n.d., 1990-2000
1	1982 Agreement 1982
1	Annual Reports 1985-1989
1	Articles of Organization n.d., 1988-1989
1	Boston Public Schools Organizational Chart 1989
1	By-Laws (2 folders) 1986-2000
1	Co-Chairs Meetings 1997
	Committees
1	Budget Action Committee 1992
1	By-Laws Committee 2000
1	Contract Negotiations Committee (3 folders) 1992-1997

- 1 Curriculum and Research Committee (18 folders)
n.d, 1992-1999
- 1 Curriculum Technology Sub-Committee
n.d., 1996
- 1 and 33a Finance Committee (12 folders,)
n.d., 1986-2001
- 1 Fundraising Sub-Committee
n.d.
- 1 Health Education Special Committee
1992
- 1 Media Special Committee
n.d., 1990-1994
- 1 Parent and Community Sub-Committee
n.d.
- 1 Personnel Committee (6 folders)
n.d., 1983-1998
- 1 Principal Evaluation Committee (5 folders)
n.d., 1989-1994
- 1 Race Relations Committee
n.d., 1997
- 1 School Department Monitoring Committee
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- 1-2 School Parent Support Committee (34 folders)
n.d., 1989-2002
- 2 Screening Committee
1988
- 2 Showcase of Schools Committee
1998
- 2 Sports and Extra Curricular Committee
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- 2 Technology Committee
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2-3	Correspondence (8 folders) n.d., 1985-2000
3	Court Orders 1986
3	Elections 1990-2002
3	Members and Committee Listings (2 folders) n.d., 1988-1999
3-6	Minutes and Supporting Materials (160 folders) n.d., 1976-2002
6	Mission Statement and Goals n.d., 1992-1997
6	Organizational Plan 1986
6	Reports of the Co-Chairs 1992-2001

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II. Executive Directors, 1971-2004

A. Virginia Smithers

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6	Citywide Education Coalition 1987
6	Deputy Superintendent Memorandum: Mileage Allowance 1986
6	Lucretia Crocker Fellows 1987
6	School Improvement Councils 1987
6	Three Year Financial Plan for Expansion of Computer Education 1983-1986 1983

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Bus Schedules
1985

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Carter School Site Committee Minutes
1971

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Casper, Joe: Position Papers
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Crusade Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse (3 folders)
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1987

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1986-1987

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Payroll
1986

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Purchasing
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1986

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School Parents Council Election Expenditures
1986

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Monitoring Update
1987

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Personnel: Skills Bank Information
1987

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Principal Evaluation
1986-1987

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Project Teams
1986

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School Committee of the City of Boston
1987

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School Parent Council Elections
1986

B. Hattie B. McKinnis

6

Appointment Books
1998-1999

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Articles
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Articles of Organization and Incorporation
1988

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"Blacks and a Selective History of the Boston Public Schools"
2002

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Boston Parent Advisory Council
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2001

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Alternative Education (2 folders)
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"Annual and Cohort Dropout Rates In Boston Public Schools"
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J.M. Curley School
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Curriculum Renewal Team
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1997

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2000

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Family Literacy, Center Stage of a Child's Schooling
1992

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Family Resource Center Advisory Committee
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1994

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Hispanic Dropout Prevention Program
1989

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Office of Guidance and Support Team Services: Sources of Financial Aid
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Operations Committee Meeting
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Superintendent's Address: "Systemic Change, Empowerment and Accountability"
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Boston Public Schools Custodian's Association Arbitration
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"Creating Opportunities Out of Challenges, An Educational Plan for Boston"
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Action for Boston Community Development: Head Start
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Boston Bar Association: Truancy Report
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Massachusetts Task Force on Special Education: "The Impact of Special Education
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