

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS
BOSTON DIVISION**

BOSTON PARENT COALITION FOR
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE CORP.,

Plaintiff,

V.

BOSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE and
MARY SKIPPER, in her official capacity as
Superintendent of the Boston Public
Schools,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 1:25-cv-12015-WGY

DECLARATION OF ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDERS CIVIC ACTION NETWORK

I, Jaya Savita, do hereby state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge,
information and belief:

1. My name is Jaya Savita. I am the Executive Director of the Asian Pacific Islanders Civic Action Network (APIs CAN), Massachusetts' statewide Asian American civic engagement alliance.
2. The mission of APIs CAN is to advance the interests of Massachusetts' Asian and Pacific Islander American communities by promoting a shared agenda to further equity and is rooted in a commitment towards racial and wealth equity of the Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities.

3. Our member organizations represent thousands of low-income and immigrant Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Indian, Nepalese, and Korean families, parents, and students throughout Boston and Massachusetts.

4. APIs CAN advocates for the visibility and representation of all Asian and Pacific Islander American residents in Massachusetts, including groups that have been historically undercounted and excluded from aspects of civic life including voting rights, education equity, and housing and economic justice. The disaggregation of data concerning Asian Americans is important for greater understanding of the significant differences between ethnic groups. The wide range of ethnicities that our member organizations represent is reflective of the variety of experiences and backgrounds within the Asian American community.

5. In 2021, APIs CAN's commitment to education equity and solidarity with other marginalized groups led to our intervention alongside a multi-racial coalition in support of the BPS Exam Schools admissions policy challenged in *Boston Parent Coalition for Academic Excellence Corp. v. School Committee of the City of Boston* ("Boston Parent I"). While the *Boston Parent I* plaintiffs purported to represent Asian interests, our intervention provided important resistance to a harmful narrative putting communities of color at odds with one another.

6. APIs CAN regularly coordinates and engages Asian communities in voter registration and civic engagement work. In recent election cycles, our member organizations have gone door-to-door and made thousands of phone calls to ensure that limited English proficient Asians are able to exercise their basic rights.

7. APIs CAN also works closely with Asian youth organizations and community centers to provide access to benefits, housing, and immigration resources and coordinate know-your-rights trainings for limited English proficient populations, including immigrant students.

8. Our initiatives to disaggregate data, improve language access, and strengthen community youth resources go hand in hand with advocacy for increased representation and equity in public school systems, including BPS. In 2023, APIs CAN member organizations coordinated with the Massachusetts Asian American Educators Association to analyze BPS school climate data. The study found that that Asian students feel disproportionately unsafe and lack a sense of belonging at BPS schools compared with their peers.¹

9. Given our mission and day-to-day work in low-income and immigrant Asian communities and families, APIs CAN is intimately familiar with the needs, language barriers, and challenges that Asian families face in accessing quality public education in Boston. Many of our member organizations' constituents are impacted by Boston Public Schools (BPS) Exam Schools' policies, either as prospective applicants, current students, or alumni.

10. Asian American communities are not monolithic and educational outcomes depend heavily on socioeconomic status and immigration history. Stereotypes like the model minority myth, the wealth and academic achievement of a few Asian Americans, many of whom are East Asian, also obscure the reality that not all Asian Americans have the same educational opportunities and attainment.

11. The Exam Schools' admissions data from BPS does not reflect the socioeconomic backgrounds of all Asian Americans in Boston. In assessing the admissions policy of the Exam Schools, BPS categorizes invitees by race, not ethnicity.² Without disaggregation of data, low-

¹ Deanna Pan, 'Asians Are An Afterthought': Asian American Students At BPS Report Feeling Less Safe, More Undervalued, Bos. Globe (March 20, 2023), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/03/20/metro/asian-students-bps-report/>.

² See Boston Public Schools, *Exam Schools Admission Policy Review, 2020-2025*, 3 (June 2025), <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1750197948/bostonpublicschoolsorg/xufi2a6hscvabhc2yrzo/FINALReportonExamSchoolAdmissions-Spring2025.pdf> (providing demographic data on exam schools invitations by race).

income Southeast Asian households who experience higher rates of poverty, for example, are lumped in with other Asian subgroups.

12. Within Boston, Asian communities have differing socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. Dorchester is home to one of the largest Vietnamese communities on the East Coast.³ According to the 2015-2019 American Community Survey, Vietnamese Americans have lower education attainment and per capita income than Chinese Americans in Boston. 33.6% of Vietnamese Americans in Boston have less than a high school diploma, as compared to 24.3% of Chinese Americans in Boston and 12.8% of Boston residents overall.⁴ 48.2% of Chinese Americans in Boston hold a bachelor's degree or higher, as compared to only 19.9% of Vietnamese Americans.⁵ The per capita income of Vietnamese Americans in Boston is \$22,688, lower than both the \$31,200 per capita income for Chinese Americans and \$43,445 for Boston residents overall.⁶

13. The social inequities and resulting educational disparities many Asian Americans face often go unnoticed. Many BPS Asian students are the children of restaurant, hotel, home care, and nail salon workers. APIs CAN member organizations represent and serve many of these students and parents.

14. APIs CAN's work with public school students and parents has built a deep understanding that racial inequity will continue so long as communities of color are pitted against each other. Our intervention would reflect the strong cross-racial support that exists for a more equitable admissions policy for Exam Schools. Ensuring that Black and Latinx communities have equal

³ Shauna Lo, *Asian Americans in Massachusetts Including Boston and Other Selected Cities: Data from the 2020 Decennial Census and American Community Survey*, Instit. for Asian Am. Studs. Publ'ns, 34 (2022), https://scholarworks.umb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1047&context=iaas_pubs.

⁴ *Id.* at 35 tbl. 43.

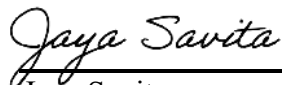
⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.* at 35 tbl. 42.

access to educational opportunities and resources will in turn uplift the educational experiences for all BPS students.

15. Our intervention in this lawsuit would help prevent Asian students from being further used as a wedge to block efforts to make the Exam Schools admission policy fairer. APIs CAN member organizations and constituents support increased equity of access to the Exam Schools for historically underrepresented populations, including Black and Latinx communities and students with low socioeconomic status. We recognize that the Exam Schools have many more resources than other BPS schools and that students who attend Exam Schools often have more opportunities. We believe all students should have a high-quality education regardless of the school they attend.

I declare under the penalty of perjury of the United States the foregoing is correct and executed this 12th day of November, 2025.



Jaya Savita