



**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE**  
**LOWER EDWARD DEVOTION SCHOOL**  
345 HARVARD STREET  
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David O'Hara, Co-Principal

Jennifer Buller, Co-Principal

Dear Kindergarten – Grade 4 Families,

It is hard to believe that we are already working on building out the systems and supports to ensure a successful 2017-2018 school year. It feels like it was just yesterday that we were welcoming most of you into 30 Webster Street for summer tours and navigating our way through the crowds of families on the first few days of this school year!

Each year, beginning in April, we devote a great deal of time, care and thought to creating the following year's classes. This letter describes our class placement process. The goal of the placement process is to create balanced and equitable classes that provide the optimal learning environment for both the individual child and the group of children as a whole. We strive to create groupings that provide academic peers for each student and make it possible to provide high quality instruction and the most effective student services. As we balance classes, we create clusters as follow:

- Each class will have students who can spark each other, have common interests or will work well together.
- Each class will have students with varied learning strengths, and students with special needs will be clustered to facilitate service delivery.
- Given sufficient numbers, students will not be isolated in terms of gender, race or ethnicity

Friendships are considered, but our primary focus is to provide appropriate learning peers for each student, understanding that each year brings new opportunities for friendships. The Brookline School Committee's "Student Grouping, Inclusion and Placement Practices" policy states:

*"When determining class placement of students at any grade level in elementary school and in the creation of middle school class lists, consideration shall be given to various student learning needs. In order to create effective learning environments and maintain valued diversity within each classroom, efforts will be made to place students with some peers who share similar profiles so that teachers can more effectively address the strengths and needs of all students."*

Class building is a team effort to which we devote a great deal of time and thought. Grade-level teachers, literacy and math specialists, special education teachers and related service providers, ELL teachers, guidance counselors, and principals all work together on our placement process.

## Family Role in the Placement Process

Our placement process includes an opportunity for families to provide information or share unusual circumstances that you feel are important or which you believe we may not know. We respect your right to advocate for your child and understand that you know your child best over time. If you feel that you have additional information that the placement team is not aware of, you are invited to write a letter to be considered in the process.

*All information must be submitted in writing or via e-mail ([david\\_ohara@psbma.org](mailto:david_ohara@psbma.org) and [jennifer\\_buller@psbma.org](mailto:jennifer_buller@psbma.org)) no later than Thursday, April 13th.*

**Submitting a letter is optional.** The same care and consideration will be given to every child during the placement process whether a parent/guardian submits input.

If you do submit a letter, your information will be shared with the placement team. Please remember that our primary objective is to ensure that each student will be assigned to a class that he/she can learn and grow academically and socially, and to build classes that function as lively heterogeneous cohorts. Requests for specific teachers in writing or in person will not be considered as part of this process. We take our responsibility seriously and, therefore allocate ample time and care as we engage in reflection while looking forward to plan for next year's classes.

If you are planning on moving and/or sending your child(ren) to another school for the 2017-2018 School Year please fill out this online form to help us gather information regarding next year's students: <http://goo.gl/forms/MKmjRBrG6C> (You only need to fill out one form for all your children)

Sincerely,

Dave O'Hara

Co-Principal

Jen Buller

Co-Principal