



**The Public Schools of Brookline**  
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**Andrew J. Bott**  
Superintendent

March 1, 2019

Dear Brookline Families and Staff,

In May 2018, Brookline Town Meeting acknowledged that it is no longer acceptable to name a school after a person who held another human in slavery and they voted to change the name of the Edward Devotion School temporarily to the Coolidge Corner School while a permanent name can be identified. I'm writing to update you on the progress we're making in choosing a school name that better represents Brookline's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to highlight the great work of our student nominations committee.

The window to nominate a new name for the Coolidge Corner School (CCS) closed on January 23. We received 119 unique nominations from over 250 entries. Since the beginning of December, our student group leading the nomination and initial selection process for new names has been engaged in weekly team-building sessions. These sessions have included an opportunity to learn from Deborah Brown and Anne Greenwald, community members involved in the initial Town Meeting warrant article petition to rename our school; Dr. Barbara Brown from Hidden Brookline; and Dr. Kalise Wornum, the Public Schools of Brookline's Senior Director of Educational Equity. In addition, the students have learned about decision-making by consensus; a skill which they used to select a new name for their group. They have named themselves the "Bee-lievers in Change - Students Making a Difference" in keeping with the school's bumble bee mascot.

We are very proud of these students. Each student has approached their role on the committee with dignity and thoughtfulness. They are stepping up, fully embracing their role as leaders, and are an example for all of Brookline of how to work together respectfully.

The Bee-lievers in Change are reviewing all of the 119 nominations to narrow the list down to 10-15 semi-finalist names for further consideration. Principal Jennifer Buller, Vice Principal Saeed Ola, and I are supporting the students' research and vetting of each of the submissions. The students are using a rubric that includes the town naming criteria, the school's core values, and whether or not the name meets any restorative justice criteria. As semi-finalist names are chosen, the students will research each nomination and develop short background summaries for each one. In mid-March, the students who applied but were not selected to be part of the committee will be re-engaged. Working together, this larger student group will develop presentations about each of the semi-finalist names to share with the public at our Renaming Nights scheduled for April 3 and 11.

I also want to thank the working group that has been organizing the process and helping with planning and outreach. This diverse group represents many different points of view and has been a powerful force in ensuring we have an inclusive process that is open to people all across Brookline. This group includes parents, teachers, district administrators, town residents, and the original petitioners of the warrant article that launched this process.

We are only part way through this journey and hope that you and many other community members will engage in the process in the coming months. Please join us at the Renaming Nights in April to learn about the names being considered and to be inspired by the tremendous work done by the Bee-lievers in Change student group. There are also opportunities to submit comments, speak at upcoming public hearings, and take part when Town Meeting considers the final recommendation.

I have included a summary timeline below. For complete details about the process, including the full list of nominations, please visit the Coolidge Corner Renaming website at [www.brookline.k12.ma.us/renameccs](http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/renameccs)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew J. Bott".

Andrew J. Bott  
Superintendent

## Coolidge Corner School Renaming Process Summary Timeline

**Nominations Accepted:** December 10, 2018 - January 23, 2019

- Nominations accepted through web-based form and nominations forms available at all schools, public libraries, and Town Hall

**Nomination Review and Selection of Semi-Finalists: February - March 11**

- The Bee-lievers in Change student committee reviews all nominations and identifies 10-15 semi-finalist names
- Semi-finalists names are further researched for viability by several members of the Public Schools of Brookline leadership staff

**Semi-Finalist Phase: March 11 – April 1**

- All the students who originally applied to be part of the student renaming committee will be re-engaged and invited to participate in Semi-Finalist phase
- Teams of 4-5 students research and develop presentations for each semi-finalist name with each team being led by 1-2 members of the Bee-lievers in Change
- The teams will develop printed media and presentations for each semi-finalist name. The media and information about each of the semi-finalists will be displayed at the *Renaming Nights* and posted on the Public Schools of Brookline website

**Renaming Nights: April 3 and April 11**

- The *Renaming Nights* will be open to the public, and the community-at-large will be invited to both events
- Families and community members will be able to interact with the student teams, learn more about each of the semi-finalist names, view the printed media created about each semi-finalist, and provide feedback about their preferred name(s)
- The student committee will use input from participants when reviewing the semi-finalist nominations
- The *Renaming Nights* are scheduled for:
  - **April 3** at the Coolidge Corner School, Multipurpose Room  
345 Harvard Street, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
  - **April 11** at the Brookline Public Library, Hunneman Hall  
361 Washington Street, 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

**Finalists Selection: April 24**

- The Bee-lievers in Change committee will reconvene, process the feedback from the *Renaming Nights*, and come to consensus on 3-5 names to send to the Brookline School Committee

**School and Town Board Consideration – May and June**

- The School Committee will consider the finalist names submitted by the Bee-lievers in Change; following a public hearing, the School Committee will vote to recommend one name to the Townwide Naming Committee as Town bylaws require
- Following Town bylaws, the Townwide Naming Committee will consider the School Committee's recommendation, hold a public hearing, and decide whether to submit a warrant article to Town Meeting with the recommended name
- Town Meeting considers warrant article recommending permanent name (likely November 2019)