

The Public Schools of Brookline  
School Committee Meeting of Thursday, October 26, 2017  
Superintendent Report  
Andrew J. Bott  
Superintendent of Schools

### **Anti-Defamation League Peer Training Program**

As you may recall, last year we embarked on a partnership with the Anti-Defamation League through which a team of students from Brookline High School participated in the ADL's World of Difference Peer Training Program. The training - which represents one of the ways that we support students as they build and practice the leadership skills needed to be upstanders in our schools, our community and our society - was incredibly well-received by students and staff alike.

We are now launching the program at the middle school level. This year student teams from Heath, Lawrence, Lincoln and Pierce will participate in the ADL's World of Difference Peer Training Program over four days (two in December and two in January). I have attached the letter I sent last week to families at these four schools that explains the program in a little more detail. We look forward to expanding the program to Baker, Devotion, Driscoll, and Runkle schools in the 2018-2019 school year.

### **Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) Student Conference**

Last week Brookline sent a delegation of 10 young women to the MSAN Student Conference in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. At the conference our students engaged in deep learning about racial equity, collaborated with over 300 students from across the country, and planned for actionable ways to improve racial equity in Brookline.

The students' planning focused on improving consistency and clarity of classroom-level discipline practices. The team wants to work with teachers, administrators, and other students to establish more consistent and objective practices that are easy for students to understand and straightforward for educators to implement. The group is excited to report on their findings and their proposal to high school and district administration.

The students were joined by chaperones Erin Blette, Clifton Jones, and Gabriel McCormick. Deputy Superintendent Nicole Gittens and BHS Headmaster Anthony Meyer joined the group on Friday to observe and support the action planning process.

### **Visiting Teachers from Brookline's Sister City: Quezalguaque, Nicaragua**

BHS Headmaster Anthony Meyer and I had the pleasure of meeting with the team of teachers visiting Brookline as part of the Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Project. As you may know, October 15 - 21 was Sister City Week in Brookline, featuring a host of community events celebrating this 30-year partnership.

This year, three English teachers from Quezalguaque were in residence at Brookline High School from October 1st - 21st. This 3-week residency allowed Brookline High School and Quezalguaque teachers to learn from one another, for our students to learn directly from Quezalguaque educators, and for stronger bonds to be built between our towns. Thanks to Dean of Faculty Jenee Ramos for coordinating the visit, and to BHS educators Marta Fuertes-Rodriguez and Lindsay Davis for opening their classrooms and their practice to our colleagues from Quezalguaque.

## MCAS Parent Reports

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) delivered the 2017 MCAS Parent Reports to the District on Tuesday. These reports have the individual student results from the MCAS tests taken in the spring of 2017. Our administrative staff at each school is preparing the mailing to families, which will go out tomorrow (Friday). For your information, I have attached the letter and FAQ sheet that DESE asked us to include in the mailing to grade 3-8 parents.

## School Visits and Observations

Since our last School Committee meeting, I have had the opportunity to visit many classrooms across the district. These visits included:

- Baker and Lawrence                      October 12
- Lincoln                                      October 13
- Pierce                                        October 16
- Lawrence                                    October 18
- Brookline High School                  October 19
- Driscoll                                      October 25

There is much that can be highlighted, recognized and celebrated from each of these visits.

I want to highlight the visit to BHS on October 19. Headmaster Anthony Meyer and I visited each of the classrooms in the Unified Arts (UA) building. We started in the engineering/maker space created by BHS educators Aubrey Love and Andrew Maglathlin, with the generous support of the BHS Innovation Fund. Our visit included ceramics, drawing, business and cooking classes. In each of these classes BHS educators led classes in which students were highly engaged, highly motivated, and developing a range of skills, including critical thinking, creative problem solving, design, and collaboration, that are essential for success in our ever changing world. The UA team is a key part of what makes BHS such an exceptional place.

Elementary faculty meetings are scheduled twice per month on Tuesday afternoons. On each scheduled faculty meeting date I join a different school and participate in their work. On Tuesday, I joined the Heath faculty and observed two of the break out groups that were meeting that afternoon. In one group, a team of educators was using Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) information to design instruction. In the second group, a team of educators was engaged in disciplinary literacy work.

## Brookline Education Foundation

Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Nicole Gittens and I attended the Brookline Education Foundation's monthly board meeting on Monday evening, October 16. The potluck dinner and board meeting was held at the home of BEF Board Member Karyn Wang. We discussed the many important ways that the Brookline Education Foundation supports the educators in our district.

To that end, the BEF is currently soliciting proposals for *Idea Lab* funding. Proposals will be accepted through November 6. *Idea Lab* grants of up to \$1,000 will be awarded to Brookline teachers who propose a new idea for work related to hands-on experiential learning, to be carried out in their classroom this year. Full details, and a link to the quick and easy application, are available on the BEF website: [www.brooklineeducation.org](http://www.brooklineeducation.org)

### **Baker School 8th Graders Support Hurricane Victims in Puerto Rico**

Eighth graders at Baker School held a Pajama Day fundraiser on Friday, October 20 and are proud to announce that they raised \$2,455.79 for the victims of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. They sent their donation to the *Save the Children* charity. Congratulations to the 8th grade students at Baker, led by their teacher Jackie Hallo, on this commendable effort!

### **Casco Bay High School Site Visit**

As part of our work planning for the expansion and renovation of Brookline High School, I will join a small team of educators tomorrow in a visit to Casco Bay High School in Portland, Maine. Casco Bay High School is a public Experiential Learning school, recognized as a leader in the field. We are eager to tour their facility and observe first hand their project based learning work with students. I look forward to sharing our observations with the Committee.