

The Public Schools of Brookline
School Committee Meeting of Thursday, February 15, 2018
Superintendent Report
Andrew J. Bott
Superintendent of Schools

Death of Ryan Hu, Runkle 1st Grader

It is with profound sadness that I share the news of the unexpected death of Runkle 1st grader, Ryan Hu. Ryan passed away on Sunday evening, February 11. Out of respect for the family's privacy we are not sharing any additional information about his death at this time.

Ryan joined the Runkle community as a kindergartener last year. In conversations with Principal Jean-Michel his mother expressed what a happy time he had at Runkle with so many unforgettable experiences. She thanked the entire faculty for their love, care and support.

We communicated this sad news to Runkle faculty and parents on Monday, February 12. At that time we shared resources to help support families and children during this time of grief. On Tuesday evening we hosted a parent session in the Runkle Library with our guidance staff and staff from the Riverside Trauma Center to support families as they have difficult conversations with their children around loss. Additional support will be provided as long as necessary.

I know you join me in expressing our deepest condolences to Ryan's family at this time of such unspeakable loss.

Lawrence School Principal Transition

On February 13 I shared the news with the Lawrence School community that Principal Allyson Hart has submitted her resignation, effective at the end of the school year. Ms. Hart made this difficult decision for personal and family reasons. I will be working closely with the parents and faculty at Lawrence over the coming weeks to develop a plan to ensure a smooth transition to the school's next principal. Vice Principals Laura Horst and Greg Porter will be working closely with Ms. Hart to help make the remainder of the school year successful for all students, families and staff.

Brookline High School Student News

Seven Brookline High School students have been named Finalists in the 2018 competition for National Merit Scholarships, including: Brandon Chen, Jonathan Chow, Shahar Hartman, Henry Heffan, Nathaniel Liberman, Cynthia Liu, and Syed Rasool. In September, 16,000 *semifinalists* were named nationwide and the *final* 7,500 National Merit Scholarship winners will be named in March. We wish our BHS students continued good luck and congratulate them on their remarkable success.

The Brookline High School Wrestling Team also has exciting news to share. The team finished strong at the MIAA Division 1 Central Sectional tournament last weekend. Eight members of the team earned medals and seven members of the team advanced to the State Tournament. I would like to congratulate Luke Albanese, Atman Barrile, Joseph Clark, Marco Georgaklis, Evan Hsu, Lucas Mitchell, Daniel Solomon and Abe Spurlock on their achievements. The State Tournament is scheduled for February 16 and 17 at Newton South High School and I wish our BHS grapplers the best of luck.

2018 MSAN Student Conference

As you know, Brookline will proudly be hosting the 2018 Minority Student Achievement Network’s Student Conference this year. We have confirmed the dates: Wednesday, October 24 through Saturday, October 27, 2018.

Director of Professional Development Gabe McCormick, Headmaster Anthony Meyer, and I recently met with Brookline’s MSAN student representatives to begin the planning process for the conference. We had a productive meeting and came to agreement on a theme for the conference: *The Deeper the Roots, the Stronger the Tree*. We had thoughtful conversations about possible high-quality and engaging speakers that we might invite to the conference. I am impressed with the incredible initiative our MSAN students are taking to plan the conference, and I am grateful to Gabe for his leadership for this important event. I’m confident that the conference will be a great success and I will continue to keep you updated as plans progress.

Brookline High School Discipline Data

At several prior meetings, I have updated the School Committee on suspension rates at Brookline High School. Specifically, I have updated the Committee on the work BHS has done to address the suspension rates this year for students with disabilities. These updates have demonstrated the strong work and progress in reducing the number of suspensions issued for students with disabilities. Tonight, I am providing the Committee with additional suspension information, particularly a breakdown of suspensions by both race and by income.

The table below compares BHS suspension rates for the first five months of the 2016-2017 school year to the suspension rates for the first five months of the current school year. You will see an overall reduction in both in and out of school suspensions at Brookline High School. The suspension rate for students with disabilities has dropped 76% and the suspension rate for economically disadvantaged students has dropped by 59% over the same period last year. The suspension rates for all student groups with the exception of Asian students have also dropped significantly as compared to the same period last year.

I want to thank the collective work of all BHS educators, and specifically the work of BHS Deans, Associate Deans, and Program Coordinators, which has led to this significant reduction in suspensions at Brookline High. As with so much of our work, these efforts at reducing the disproportionality in suspension rates are continuous and ongoing. We mark this progress, and know that there is much work still to be done.

Brookline High School Student Suspensions: All Students by Suspension Type			
	Sept 2016 - Jan 2017	Sept 2017 - Jan 2018	Percent Change
In School	51	27	-47%
Out of School	37	21	-43%
Total	88	48	-45%

Brookline High School Student Suspensions: All Suspensions by Student Subgroups			
	Sept 2016 - Jan 2017	Sept 2017 - Jan 2018	Percent Change
SWD	59	14	-76%
Economically Disadvantaged	34	14	-59%
Asian	1	6	500%
African American	21	11	-48%
Hispanic	25	10	-60%
Multi	7	2	-71%
White	34	19	-44%
Unique Students	43	35	-19%

Superintendent's Parent Forums

My open forums with parents at each school continue. I met with parents at Pierce School on Friday, February 2 and I look forward to meeting with parents at Heath School tomorrow morning. My final parent forum will be at Runkle School on Friday, March 2.

School Visits

My in-depth visits with principals to schools and classrooms continue. I have recently had the opportunity to visit the following schools:

- Baker School on February 2
- Brookline High School on February 7
- Pierce School on February 8
- BEEP @ Lynch Center on February 15