

The Public Schools of Brookline
School Committee Meeting of Thursday, April 25, 2019
Superintendent Report
Andrew J. Bott

Brookline Education Foundation

On Friday, April 12, we received tremendous news from the Brookline Education Foundation of their generous financial support for district-wide initiatives in the 2019-2020 school year. The BEF has funded FY20 System Grants totaling \$68,200, including:

- Educational Excellence and Equity: Seeding, Feeding, and Cultivating Cultural Proficiency in Our Schools (\$40,000).
- Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) Training for 2 Members of the District's Leadership Team (\$11,200)
- Reading Between the Lines: Equity, Reading and Early Intervention (\$13,000)
- System-wide Teacher Learning: By Teachers, For Teachers (\$4,000)

This generous funding will enable us to make progress on some of our most important district goals.

In addition, the BEF is funding 22 Teacher Grants (totaling \$48,000) and 19 Collaborative Grants (totaling \$157,000). This amazing level of support for the school district and our educators is unprecedented. We are incredibly fortunate to be the beneficiary the Brookline Education Foundation's steadfast support.

On a related note, it was my pleasure to join Liz Ascoli, Katie Bacon, and Emily Dolbear from the BEF on Tuesday, April 9 as we surprised this year's Caverly Award recipients: Laura Vish, Speech & Language Pathologist at Runkle School and Mark VanDerzee, Performing Arts Teacher at Brookline High School. We look forward to honoring Ms. Vish and Mr. VanDerzee at the BEF's Celebrating Teachers Reception on Tuesday, May 14 at Newbury College.

Finally, on Friday night, March 29, an intrepid team of PSB staff participated in the BEF's annual Trivia Bee held in the Coolidge Corner School cafeteria. Thanks to a complimentary table provided by the BEF, we fielded a full team of eight, including: Dr. Mary Brown, Jennifer Buller, Kelley Durgin, Meg Maccini, Gabe McCormick, Scott Moore, Saeed Ola, and Jeremy Stull. The Trivia Bee was competitive and festive, and the evening was a resounding fundraising success for the BEF. Thanks to all of my colleagues who so ably represented the entire school district – they are already looking forward to next year's Trivia Bee!

Coolidge Corner School Renaming Nights

We hosted three very successful Renaming Nights as part of the process to select a new name for the Coolidge Corner School: April 3 at CCS; April 11 at the Brookline Public Library; and April 23 at Brookline High School.

The members of the student nominations committee – the *Bee-lievers of Change* – had researched each of the semi-finalist names and were prepared at each meeting to share all that they had learned. The community members who participated in the Renaming Nights had thoughtful questions and

feedback as they circulated around the room and visited each team's table. I want to acknowledge the tremendous work that the student nominations committee members have done throughout this entire process, led by Principal Jen Buller and Vice Principal Saeed Ola. I am very grateful to all of them for their dedication to this important work.

Feedback on the semi-finalist names is being accepted through April 29. The *Bee-lievers of Change* student committee will reconvene, review and consider all feedback, and work to select 3-5 names to forward to the Brookline School Committee in May.

Interim Principal for Early Education Programs

As you know, Vicki Milstein has announced her retirement from the Public Schools of Brookline at the end of the school year. Ms. Milstein's contributions to the district's early education program are immeasurable and her dedication to the youngest learners in Brookline is beyond compare. Under her trailblazing leadership, the BEEP program became a model of early childhood education. I know you join me in wishing Ms. Milstein all the best in her well-deserved retirement.

I have decided that the program will be best served by the appointment of an interim principal for the 2019-2020 school year. On April 5, I announced that Dr. Regina Watts, current Early Childhood Program Coordinator, has been selected to be the Interim Principal for BEEP. Dr. Watts joined the Public Schools of Brookline in 1989 and since then she has served in a variety of roles including school psychologist, special education team facilitator, and program coordinator. I am very confident that under Dr. Watts' leadership the BEEP program will continue to operate seamlessly and successfully in the 19-20 school year. I have attached my announcement letter to the BEEP community.

School Visits and Community Events

Since my last report I have enjoyed many school visits. On April 4, I had the opportunity to visit Driscoll School's Arts Equinox. This annual 2-day celebration of the arts is a treasured tradition at Driscoll during which students, teachers, administrators and parents halt the normal school day to explore their creative side. Through class events and activities, and off site through field trips, students in all grades immerse themselves in artistic endeavors. It was my pleasure to see Arts Equinox in action and I am grateful to the parent volunteers who made it all possible.

The 4th Annual Brookline Youth Climate Adaptation Challenge was held on Saturday, April 6 in the Pierce School cafeteria. I was happy to be able to participate as a judge of the student projects. I was very impressed at the ingenuity of our students who displayed projects that ranged from sustainability to environmental protection to fossil fuel free urban design. The Youth Climate Adaptation Challenge is part of the larger celebration of *Climate Spring*, organized by Climate Action Brookline and the Brookline Public Health Department.

On Tuesday, April 9, I attended the Driscoll faculty meeting to update staff on the progress of the school building project and the schematic design. This was a very productive meeting and we are currently scheduling multiple follow-up meetings to continue receiving faculty input into the design of the project.

On April 10, I had the pleasure of watching 2nd graders from Pierce School perform the West African folktale *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears*. This performance was a collaborative integration of the Ghana unit of study that second graders had been working on; they prepared for weeks for their performance and it showed! It was a wonderful show.

In addition, since my last report I joined principals in visiting classrooms at:

Coolidge Corner School	April 8
Runkle School	April 10
Brookline High School	April 10
Pierce School	April 22



Andrew J. Bott
Superintendent

The Public Schools of Brookline
Town Hall
333 Washington Street, 5th Floor
Brookline, Massachusetts 02445
617.730.2401

April 5, 2019

Dear Early Education Program Parents and Guardians,

As you know, after more than 40 years of leadership in early childhood education, Vicki Milstein has announced her retirement from the Public Schools of Brookline at the end of this school year. Having had the opportunity to work with Ms. Milstein over the past five years, I am continually amazed by her leadership in early childhood education and by her unwavering commitment to our youngest learners. We are indebted to Ms. Milstein for all that she has done and I know everyone joins me in congratulating her as she embarks on new adventures.

As we celebrate Ms. Milstein, I am thrilled to announce that we have within our early childhood program our next leader. It is my distinct honor to announce that I have appointed Dr. Regina Watts as the Interim Principal for BEEP for the 2019-2020 school year.

Dr. Watts began her career in 1981 in the Bronx. She joined Brookline in 1989 and for the past 30 years she has served as a school psychologist, education team facilitator, and, since 2014, as the BEEP program coordinator.

Colleagues describe Dr. Watts as someone who always approaches her work through the lens of child development. Further, colleagues note that Dr. Watts always weighs multiple perspectives in her steadfast commitment to supporting families and children as they navigate through our early childhood programs. She has been a leader, working hand-in-hand with our exceptional team of early childhood educators to continue strengthening Brookline's trailblazing early education program.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Regina Watts on her new appointment as Interim Principal of Brookline's Early Education Program.

Sincerely,

Andrew J. Bott
Superintendent