

The Public Schools of Brookline  
School Committee Meeting of Tuesday, June 19, 2018  
Superintendent Report  
Andrew J. Bott  
Superintendent of Schools

**Tree Planting at Lincoln School**

On Tuesday, June 12, I had the solemn honor of joining with Lincoln School 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students for a tree planting and dedication ceremony in memory of former student, Jeremy Cohen. Jeremy passed away unexpectedly in December 2014 at only 10 years of age. His peers at Lincoln School worked together to plan a special celebration in the Lincoln Auditorium that included a slide show, student reflections and words from Jeremy's mother, Dr. Amy Ship, and Jeremy's father, Dr. Robert Cohen, followed by a student procession past the autumn flower cherry tree planted in his memory in front of the school. Students placed their hand-painted rocks around the base of the tree as they walked past. It was a moving and heartfelt ceremony and I was honored to take part.

**School Visits**

Since our last School Committee meeting on June 7, I was able to visit classrooms at Pierce School with Principal Lesley Ryan Miller and visit classrooms at Brookline High School with Head of School Anthony Meyer.

I also joined the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Portfolio Day at Upper Coolidge Corner School on Friday, June 15. I was able to be a part of two student presentations of their capstone project. I first joined Jaida Kelley in her portfolio presentation. Jaida had a commanding presence, skillfully engaging all members of the audience throughout her presentation. Most powerful were Jaida's reflections on her learning and growth, as well as her plans for how she will apply this learning to her time at BHS. Following Jaida's presentation, I joined Madhav Krishna. His presentation included samples of his writing, reflections on his learning, and a powerful conversation about belief systems. Madhav explained how he uses magic to help him understand the belief systems of those around him. All of the student presentations on Portfolio Day were thoughtful and engaging, and truly reflected the hard work that students and teachers engaged in over the last the course of this school year.

I was happy to join the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Windows and Mirrors presentation at Lincoln School on Monday, June 18. Students invited their parents into the school to showcase the work they had done on this project. Through this unit, student used literature to better understand their own experiences in, and perspectives of, the world. Students selected scenes from literature that moved them and acted out these scenes as part of Monday's presentation. After performances in the library, students shared projects which captured how they identified "windows" (insights into people not like them) and "mirrors" (ways that their identities were reflected) from the books they had read. It was a powerful and inspirational morning, where a literary unit served as a means to expand students' understanding of themselves and the world.

### **Lawrence School Hiring Update**

Over the course of the spring, Interim Principal Monica Crowley and her team have been working hard to fill the two vice principal vacancies at Lawrence School. I am pleased to announce that Maisha Rounds and Peter Cipparone have been hired as vice principals for the coming year.

Mrs. Rounds comes to Brookline with 17 years of experience as a teacher and school leader, coming most recently from the Charleston County School District. Mrs. Rounds' North Star is her belief that all students deserve equal access to educational opportunities. She believes strongly in collaborative leadership and in the need for culturally responsive learning opportunities for all students.

Mr. Cipparone comes to Brookline with a wide range of experiences. He taught English in Spain as a part of the Fulbright program, trained at the Shady Hill School in Cambridge, and taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade in New York City. Mr. Cipparone helped co-found the NYC Math Lab, a professional development workshop for elementary and middle grade educators.

I am very pleased to welcome both Mrs. Rounds and Mr. Cipparone to the Public Schools of Brookline. Included with this report is a comprehensive update that Mrs. Crowley sent earlier today to the Lawrence community. This includes additional information on both Mrs. Rounds and Mr. Cipparone, along with information about other teachers joining the Lawrence community. I also want to thank Mrs. Crowley for her unwavering leadership. While finishing the year at the Upper Coolidge Corner School, Mrs. Crowley has been able to meet with, listen to and learn from close to 60 Lawrence staff members. Mrs. Crowley also joined me for a listening session with Lawrence parents and guardians on Wednesday, June 13. The time Mrs. Crowley is spending with the Lawrence community is invaluable, and she has committed to sharing back all she has learned with the community so everyone can move forward together in September.

### **Coolidge Corner School Renaming Process**

Since the last School Committee meeting, Ben Lummis and I have met with PTO representatives and several parents from the Coolidge Corner School to discuss possible paths for the Coolidge Corner School renaming process. In these meetings, there has been a common, strong theme: students of the Coolidge Corner School should play a key role in the process through which a new name will be selected. The decision to remove the Devotion name from the school was made because the name of a school holds a special status in the life of students and the life of a community. As I wrote on May 30, 2018, "We ask our students to form a deep connection to their school and school community: to root for its sports teams, to wear the school's name on their clothes, and to take pride in representing their school to the larger community. The name of the school is the symbol of this pride and, as such, the name should represent the spirit, virtues, and the soul of the community." Having made this decision for our students, we should now embrace the opportunity for our students to be civic leaders, to learn leadership skills, and to use their voice in the process of renaming their school. With this idea as a foundation, I have three possible pathways for the committee to consider. Each option involves significant student involvement and leadership in the renaming process and the selection of names for the Town to consider. I have provided the Committee with a brief overview of each possibility, and look forward to a discussion and possible decision on the path forward at the July workshop.

### **Brookline Education Foundation Year-End Board Meeting**

The Brookline Education Foundation (BEF) hosted their end-of-year board meeting on Monday evening, June 11 at the home of Devon Powell and it was my pleasure to attend. I was happy to be able to thank the dedicated BEF board members - in person - for their unwavering support of the district's initiatives and their steadfast support of our educators, year in and year out.

### **28th Annual Brookline High School Scholarship Breakfast**

I have attached the Brookline Community Foundation's press release with highlights of the 28th Annual BHS Scholarship Breakfast, held on graduation morning. Scholarships totaling \$298,200 were awarded to 142 graduating seniors, thanks to the tireless efforts of Dean Scott Butchart and BHS Registrar Linda Wentzell. Four years ago, the Dean Butchart worked with the BCF to create the Brookline Community Fund Scholarship Fund for BHS, seeking to raise \$3.7 million over the next ten years to double the scholarships provided to our most deserving students. With the generous support of several community members and institutions, including Brookline Bank, The Country Club, and Bo Winiker and the Rotary Club of Brookline, the BCF is well on the way to meeting its fundraising goal.

### **Brookline High School Deans of Students**

Yesterday, Brookline High School Head of School Anthony Meyer announced the successful conclusion of the school's two searches for Dean of Students. Below is an excerpt of Mr. Meyer's announcement to the BHS community.

*As final exams and summer approach, I share exciting news: Lisa Gilbert-Smith and Lisa Redding will serve as Brookline High School's Deans of Students beginning July 1. Dean Gilbert-Smith and Dean Redding will work together to support teachers, families, and most of all, students, to learn, grow, and achieve, at and beyond BHS.*

*For Lisa Redding, this means continuing in a role she has held for the last two years. We finally subtract "interim" from Lisa's title and benefit more permanently from her leadership. Dean Redding is an excellent teacher and administrator who provides candid feedback, robust support, and tenacious love in setting high expectations and helping all of us, young people especially, to meet and exceed them.*

*Lisa Gilbert-Smith comes to Brookline High School with a wealth of leadership experience in the Boston Public Schools. For the last three years, Lisa has served as the Headmaster of Dearborn STEM Academy in Dorchester. Before coming to Dearborn, Lisa was both Dean of Students and Headmaster of Another Course to College in Brighton. Throughout the process, Lisa impressed everyone with her intelligence, student-centered approach, and humble confidence. Rachel Skerritt, current Headmaster of Boston Latin School, wrote in her reference that Lisa has "the ability to connect with young people, hold them accountable, partner with families, and contribute visioning and future direction." We are excited to have Ms. Gilbert-Smith join the BHS team, and I know she, too, is eager to learn about and begin contributing to Brookline High School.*

*I am grateful to the interview committee for winnowing candidates, conducting interviews, and delivering four strong finalists. The interview committee included Assistant Head of School Hal Mason and English Curriculum Coordinator Mary Burchenal led a diverse team of BHS stakeholders: Spanish Teacher and Innovation Fund Liaison Astrid Allen, Associate Dean Alexia Thomas, Dean of Faculty Jenee Ramos, parent Ginny Friedman, junior Caroline Kaplan, Steps to Success Advisor Melissa Sirin, Registrar Linda*

*Wentzell, and Guidance counselor Eric Schiff. Huge thanks to these members of the BHS community for serving on this important interview committee.*

As a part of this announcement, Mr. Meyer also announced to the BHS community a new school leadership position for BHS. As you will remember from the budget development and override process, 2.8 FTE for educational leaders have been budgeted for BHS over the next three years, with 1.0 of this increase allocated for FY19. With Mr. Meyer's leadership, BHS has now begun an important search for a Dean of Student Support Systems. Mr. Meyer described this position as follows:

*This is a new role at Brookline High School and one that I am excited to develop in collaboration with many. We have long needed a leader to help BHS establish and share common, predictable, and transparent interventions and practices across classrooms and student support domains. Our Dean of Student Support Systems will focus on early warning systems to help struggling students, school-wide anti-bias education, school-based investigations, restorative practices, and systematized general education interventions and support. As you can imagine, our Dean of Student Support Systems will work closely with Deans Gilbert-Smith and Redding.*

June 19, 2018

Dear Lawrence Staff and Families,

I have really enjoyed meeting with so many of you over the past few weeks. So far, I have been able to meet, listen and learn about the Lawrence learning community from close to sixty staff members. I also met with the parent community last week. My goal is to synthesize all the information I have collected, and then share back with you the patterns of concerns, and ideas and possible suggestions of how we can move our work forward as we start together in September with the goal of meeting the needs of all learners.

Additionally, many hiring committees have completed their searches and I am able to share the information below about new staff that will be joining the Lawrence School at the start of the 2018-2019 school year! I want to thank all staff, parents/guardians, and students who participated on the committees as their time and efforts have helped us secure some impressive educators.

### **Maisha Rounds-Vice Principal**



I believe in ensuring equity and access in education for all through collaborative leadership. With seventeen years of experience as a school leader, National Board Certified Teacher, Charleston County School District Teacher of the Year, and South Carolina Teacher of the Year Nominee, I have catalyzed a cadre of over 3,500 teachers to close achievement and opportunity gaps for 40,000 students in the second largest school district in South Carolina. This year, I completed principal residencies at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School and Putnam Avenue Upper School in Cambridge through Harvard's School Leadership Program.

I hold two degrees in education from Winthrop University in South Carolina, an Ed.M. in School Leadership with Principal Licensure from Harvard Graduate School of Education, and I am pursuing a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy. I am a devoted wife and mother of four (Faith-15, Hope-12, Charity-11, and Immanuel-6), and I am passionate about cultivating culturally responsive learning to empower teachers to help students achieve their version of the American Dream.

When not on the job, I love playing the piano, swimming, rollerblading, writing, and spending time with family and friends. I am excited to join the Lawrence School family and look forward to building strong relationships to move the school forward into its next chapter!

### **Peter Cipparone-Vice Principal**



I have worked to provide high-quality public education throughout my professional career. After receiving a BA from Brown University and teaching English in Spain on a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship, I trained at the Shady Hill School TTC and received a Masters from Lesley University. I then taught 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the NYC Public Schools, where I helped found the NYC Math Lab, a professional development workshop for elementary and middle school teachers. I am currently a PhD candidate in Teaching and Teacher Education at the University of Michigan. This past year, I conducted my dissertation research in a 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom in Arlington while working with a number of schools as a Units of Study staff developer for the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.

I am thrilled to be joining the Lawrence community and have heard many wonderful things about the school. In my free time I enjoy playing basketball, running, traveling, trying new cuisine, and reading the newspaper.

### **Brandon Chan-Grade 6 Science**



I graduated from Boston University this past May with a degree in Science Education, and over the summer I will be a tutor for Boston University's "Upward Bound Math Science" program. Although I am new to Lawrence, I completed my senior year student teaching practicum in Brookline at the Pierce School. I'm excited to join the Lawrence School community because I get to work with a passionate group of educators and parents that care about the success and well-being of all the students. I'm looking forward to an exciting year of learning and growth!

#### **Molly Centore-Grade 4**



I completed both my undergraduate and graduate work at Wheelock College, acquiring a BS in Education Studies and Mathematics and a Master's in Elementary and Special Education. I have been lucky enough to work at Lawrence in different grades over the past two years. During the 2016-17 school year, I worked both as a graduate intern in 1st Grade with Mr. Norwood and as a teacher alongside Ms. Mahesh in the 3-5 Learning Center. During this past year, I had the pleasure of working with the 3rd Grade team as the long-term substitute for 3M. Both experiences have been incredibly rewarding and I have loved working with and getting to know the Lawrence staff and community. I am very excited for the opportunity to be part of the 4th Grade team for the upcoming school year and I am looking forward to being a member of the Lawrence family for another year!

#### **Lauren Azzolini-Grade 2**



I grew up in Central Massachusetts and recently moved back to MA. I attended Loyola University Maryland and graduated with a degree in Elementary Education. After college I moved to Hoboken, NJ where I taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade for several years at Stevens Cooperative School. This past September my husband's career gave us the opportunity to move to Boston. I was excited to move closer to family but was also sad to leave the wonderful learning community at Stevens. I knew it was important for me to find a school district that I felt had this same sense of community. We arrived in Massachusetts after the school year had started and I had the opportunity to get to know Brookline as a paraprofessional at Baker School. In February, I took over as the long-term substitute in 2SC at Lawrence. It feels great to be back in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and the Lawrence learning community is exactly what I was looking for. I am so

excited to continue at Lawrence next year. I am looking forward to getting to know a new group of students and having a great 2018- 2019 school year together!

#### **Jessica Falzone**

Jen Heylin (Gr. K-3 special education teacher) will be taking a one-year leave and Jessica Falzone will be teaching in the learning center during this time. Jessica was formerly a special education teacher at the Lower Coolidge Corner School.

#### **Change in Position:**

**Alissa Ovdia**, guidance counselor, will be transitioning to the Heath School for the 2018-2019 school year. Dr. Maria Letasz, Director of Guidance, will be overseeing the hiring process and I will participate in interviewing candidates during the summer. This position has been increased to .8 from .4. In basic terms, that means we will have more guidance support.

As you all likely know, **Greg Porter**, on his own accord is returning to the classroom next year in his prior role as middle school social studies teacher! He sent an email on June 4 sharing information about his decision.

#### **Positions to be Hired:**

- Literacy Specialist: The hiring process is underway and being led by Joanna Lieberman, K-8 English Language Arts Coordinator
- Guidance Counselor (mentioned above)

Once I have more information about these additional hires I will be sure to share it with you.

Sincerely,  
*Monica Crowley*

**Public Schools of Brookline  
Renaming Coolidge Corner School  
Name Nomination and Selection Process**

**Summary of Option 1**

**Completely Student-led Process**

1. The Nominating Committee is run by Coolidge Corner School students with organizational support from a school-based administrator and central office staff
2. The Nominating Committee reviews all nominations and decides on 5 to 10 finalists to bring forward to School Committee
3. School Committee reviews all nominations, holds public hearings and decides on one name to recommend to the Town's Naming Committee

**Summary of Option 2**

**Parallel Process that Merges into One; Student-led and Subcommittee-led**

1. Two Nominating Committees work in parallel - one organized by students for the Coolidge Corner School community and one organized by the School Committee Capital Subcommittee for the general public
2. The Coolidge Corner School community is organized and run by students with support from a school-based administrator and central office staff. It runs the process for soliciting names from current students, staff, and families of the Coolidge Corner School community.
3. All other nominations from the general public, other schools, and alumni are received and handled by the School Committee Capital Subcommittee.
4. Each Nominating Committee decides on 5 names to be forwarded to the School Committee
5. School Committee reviews all 10 nominations, holds public hearings and decides on one name to recommend to the Town's Naming Committee

**Summary of Option 3**

**Hybrid Process that is led by student-run nominating committee that works with School Committee Capital Subcommittee to identify finalists**

1. The Nominating Committee is run by Coolidge Corner Students with organizational support from a school-based administrator and central office staff
2. This Nominating Committee runs the process for collecting all nominations, reviewing all nominations, and then it decides on up to 10 names to bring forward
3. Joint Committee made up of the School Committee Capital Subcommittee and some members of the student-run Nominating Committee reviews names and selects finalists to move forward for consideration by the School Committee
4. School Committee holds public hearings on finalist names, deliberates and decides on one name to recommend to the Town's Naming Committee



**BCF Contact:** Jenny Amory  
Executive Director  
**Phone:** 617.566.4442  
**Email:** jamory@brooklinecommunity.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
June 19, 2018

**BHS Contact:** Scott Butchart  
BHS Scholarship Committee Chair & Dean of Students  
**Email:** Scott\_Butchart@psbma.org  
**Phone:** 617.713.5207

### **28<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL BROOKLINE SCHOLARSHIP BREAKFAST AWARDS \$298,200 TO BHS GRADUATING SENIORS**



BROOKLINE, MA – On June 3rd, the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Brookline High School (BHS) Scholarship Breakfast celebrated the achievements of 142 graduating seniors who received a total of \$298,200 in scholarships to use towards their college or post-secondary training programs. Each year, scholarships are awarded to BHS students with financial need, specifically for crucial tuition payments.

This year's breakfast also celebrated Dean Scott Butchart and his commitment to young people. Scott is retiring after 34 years at BHS, 25 of which he spent chairing the BHS Scholarship Committee. Scott has devoted an enormous amount of time and effort to helping students pursue their dreams of attending post-secondary education.

About four years ago, Scott helped to create the Brookline Community Foundation (BCF) Scholarship Fund for BHS. The fund makes college accessible for BHS students with financial need whether four-year colleges, two-year community colleges, vocational education schools and other educational programs. As Scott describes it, "The Fund's goal is to ensure that kids who deserve a higher education can find a way to accomplish it while not accumulating debt that will burden them for years, even decades."

BCF, in partnership with the Town of Brookline and BHS, manages the endowed BCF Scholarship Fund for BHS with the goal of raising \$3.7 million over the next ten years. This will double the amount of scholarship awards with the town each year, totaling \$300,000. Special recognition goes to Brookline Bank, The Country Club and Bo Winiker and the Rotary Club of Brookline, who have all raised or pledged \$100,000 or more since the fund was established. To date, we have raised over \$690,000 towards our goal.



“Through the BCF Scholarship Fund for BSH, we are working one step at a time towards ensuring access and equity for students to attend post-secondary education through the BCF Scholarship Fund for Brookline High School,” said BCF Executive Director Jenny Amory. To donate to the BCF Scholarship Fund for Brookline High School, visit [give.brooklinecommunity.org/bcfschbhs](http://give.brooklinecommunity.org/bcfschbhs)

Photos by F. Vanessa Pierre-Louis

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*The Brookline Community Foundation shines a spotlight on community needs, inspires philanthropy and awards strategic grants to build a more vibrant, engaged and equitable Brookline.*