



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE
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BEN LUMMIS
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

September 5, 2019

Dear PSB Families,

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year in Brookline. What a great day we had today!

9th grade students participated in the annual Brookline High School rite of passage of processing from Cypress Field into the Quad led by their junior class mentors and cheered on by the BHS staff. I saw kindergarten teachers at Heath. Coolidge Corner, and Pierce helping their young students learn about their new classrooms. First graders learned about the materials in their classrooms by practicing with pencils, crayons, and erasers, not knowing that their teachers were also doing the important work of noticing their students' fine motor skills.

The 3rd and 4th graders at Coolidge Corner School learned the basics of taking care of their cafeteria before heading out to recess. Pierce 8th graders played a name game as one of their first steps in building their classroom community. At Heath, an art teacher put the final preparations on bouquets of sunflowers before welcoming her class in to get started with still life drawings. At our new BEEP classrooms at Clark Road, I saw BEEP teachers meeting with parents and making final preparations for their students who start on Monday.

And I saw smiles. Lots and lots of smiles. We are off to a great start.

As you may know, I was appointed Interim Superintendent just two weeks ago, replacing Superintendent Bott who resigned this summer. Since then, I have been humbled by the outpouring of support and the confidence that teachers, parents, school and central office staff have expressed in me.

Earlier this week, as our teachers, staff, custodians, school secretaries, school leaders, nurses, librarians, and so many others made final preparations for the new school year, I had the pleasure of visiting every school with the Brookline Educators Union President Dr. Jessica Wender-Shubow. We each gave a welcome message for all school-based staff to help open the year.

In my opening message, I pledged to be a positive and civil leader who listens closely, seeks understanding, and works with others to find solutions to the challenges we will face this year.

For me, civility happens in many small ways. It's saying hello to each other and greeting every student as they enter our classrooms. It's a smile and a thank you. Being civil means asking someone how they are doing and taking a moment to really listen. To me, civility means that I genuinely care how I treat others.

Yet civility is about more than just politeness. It is about disagreeing without disrespecting, seeking common ground, listening past one's preconceptions, and teaching others to do the same. I want you to know that I will work every day to make sure we lift up more voices, create space for those who are quieter or have different views, and make sure not just the loudest are speaking. I will lead in this way. I invite you to join me.

As I said to our staff this week, we are the Public Schools of Brookline. Every child, every family member, every educator, every person who works in our schools and those who work in our central office. It takes all of us. Every single one of us. Together we will make it a great year of learning for every one of our students.

Sincerely,

Ben Lummis
Interim Superintendent