

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE | 617-730-2404



BEEP SUMMER ENRICHMENT

First and foremost...

WELCOME. It is with great pleasure that we launch our very first Excellence in Equity Newsletter for students, educators, caretakers and all stakeholders of the Public Schools of Brookline. You can expect the newsletter to be delivered to your inbox once each month — EnE is being curated with you in mind. Topics will touch on Equity in Action around the district, Spotlights, better practices for Living and Learning and Info To Know about events, professional development opportunities and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging resources.

We also want to share inspiring stories of our students. Let us know what you would like to see!



STAR ACADEMY @ LINCOLN SCHOOL

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

- Meet our new Assistant Director!
- Summer Program Spotlights: Extended School Year, Summer Enrichment, Project Discovery and STAR Academy
- PD Day 2022 Debby Irving
 - Paid Workshop Leader Openings
- SEED '22-'23 Seminar opportunities
- What Do We Mean By Affinity?
 - Paid Affinity Leader Openings
- August/ September Diversity Calendars

Equity Priorities 2022-23

This year we will focus on defining and understanding how we have been impacted by White Supremacy Culture, sustaining Healing and Humanizing Spaces in our schools, and harnessing the power of Affinity conversations to help us grow and stay accountable. Looking forward to the journey with you!



Assistant Director of Equity

Haeyoung Koh

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We are thrilled to welcome Ms. Koh to PSB! She will support our work to promote equitable access, process, treatment and outcomes for all students, with a trained focus on AAPI students and families. She brings a wealth of knowledge to the role, including her lived experiences of being a 1.5 generation (Korean American) in America.

Before coming to PSB, Ms. Koh worked as a fourth grade Inclusion Teacher at the Haley School in Boston. She also addresses unconscious bias and systemic racism in her role as an educator consultant at the Museum of Fine Arts.

Ms. Koh is an imaginative and creative problem solver/storyteller/educator/art-ivist who is deeply committed to her community. We are very happy to have her in Brookline!

SCAN TO VISIT OUR PSB [EQUITY WEBSITE](#)

I'M A GOOD PERSON! ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?

A day of professional learning
for all Brookline educators.
8, November, 2022 – Brookline High School



Keynote Address
by Debby Irving
Author of *Waking
Up White*

Socialized on a narrow worldview, Debby explores how she spent decades silently reaffirming harmful, archaic racial patterns instead of questioning the racial disparities and tensions she could see and feel.

The keynote will be followed by a Q&A discussion and small-group breakout discussion facilitated by Brookline educators.

Professional Development Day Tuesday, November 8, 2022

This year, we are excited to have Debby Irving, racial justice educator and author of *Waking Up White*, join us as our district-wide keynote speaker. Similar to our set up for PD Day in 2016 with Dr. Beverly Daniel-Tatum, all PSB educators will come together for a shared experience at Brookline High School on the morning of 11/8/22. The day will include the keynote -- which involves pauses for reflection, dialog, and Q&A -- lunch, and small-group breakout sessions, before building-based work in the afternoon. Busses, a full schedule, and other logistical information will be provided in the coming weeks.

***Debby Irving's message can open eyes
and hearts in a profound way.
—Andover Memorial Hall Library***

Get started preparing now! We have delivered 30-50 free *Waking Up White* **BOOKS** to the main offices of every school building. Books are available on a first come, first-served basis. Also, sign up to attend community book group [discussions](#) Thursday, September 29th and Thursday October 27th at 6:30pm.

PD Day Break out Facilitator Opportunity

We need your help: You can help us make this day powerful by facilitating a post-keynote breakout session!

Following Ms. Irving's address, we plan to hold breakout conversations on her talking points and action we can take at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural levels. Our goal is for each session to have no more than 20 participants. In order to make this work we need roughly 65 facilitators from a variety of schools and grade levels to facilitate these breakout sessions.

To this end, the district is providing workshop time in October – paid at the workshop leader rate – for those who want to be facilitators on November 8th. This will include 2-3 hours of time before November 8th to prepare, followed by a 1 hour debrief session to be scheduled after the PD Day. Preparation topics will include:

- Facilitating adult learning
- Conducting courageous conversations about race
- Role-playing challenging scenarios
- Planning the actual breakout session

There are 8 dates for in-person facilitator training options, including one slightly longer virtual Saturday option. Facilitators only need to attend ONE training. Each training session is 2 hours in length, with a third independent work hour to finalize your facilitation plan or in optional virtual consultation on it. All sessions will run from 3:30-5:30PM after the instructional day. The Saturday training option is 2 hours and 15 minutes, also with a third independent work hour to finalize your facilitation plan or in optional virtual consultation on it.

Here are the facilitator training dates (locations are TBA and may be at Town Hall, the 5th floor, or school buildings): Monday, 10/3; Wednesday, 10/12; Thursday, 10/13; Wednesday, 10/19; Monday, 10/24; Thursday, 10/27; Monday, 10/31 and Saturday, 10/22 (9-11:15am virtual).

If you are interested in facilitating please fill out this [APPLICATION](#) and we will be in touch with more information.

SEED Seminars

SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) is our most robust professional development offering in Brookline schools. Last year, 12 trained facilitators ran seven year-long seminars for more than one hundred district educators.



THIS year, 19 SEED leaders plan to offer ten seminar options, including our brand new SEED 2.0 course *Identity Exploration Level 2: Taking Action* for educators who have previously participated in SEED in PSB.

We will do more robust building-based recruiting where possible next month, however, here is a [general interest form](#) to collect your information early. Thank you to a number of individuals who have already filled this out. We promise to get back to you. Additionally, for educators who know they are interested in SEED 2.0, here is that [link](#).



A final information point on our SEED seminars is that the program considers the way that personally and socially constructed identities shape our lives and our work. These include our racial, ethnic, national, gender, sexual, socioeconomic, religious, age-based, and ability-based identities. We are committed to developing groups thoughtfully and strategically for our SEED sessions, so please know we ask how you identify yourself based on the identities above as well as any other identities that you might like to share.

In addition to SEED, we will offer some affinity spaces for adults this year, so keep reading on the next page of this newsletter for information about that, as well!



Some of the EED Administrator Team '21-'22

The term "**AFFINITY GROUP**" refers to a gathering of people who all share a similar identity. Examples of student affinity groups in PSB include our Gay/ Straight Alliances (GSAs) or Environmental Action Clubs; even first grade is a type of affinity group structured around age. Adult affinity in Brookline might be the SEED Seminar group for administrators or staff members and families who are a part of the Materials Fee program. To learn more Frequently Asked Questions About Affinity Groups in preK-12 Schools, read this article by E. Denevi and M. Richards. This year, the Office of Equity will further support several adult Affinity groups around race and other areas of marginalization (e.g. gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.).

Below is a short piece describing the "whys" of race-based affinity, in particular. At the end of the article, please find links to a couple of excellent articles about the power of adult affinity spaces and information about how you can become involved in training to lead or participate in a monthly affinity group this school year.

Race-based Affinity Groups — Why do them?
By Zhaleh Almaee & Marc Weinblatt, Co Directors, Mandala Center for Change

While there is good and important work that organizations can do together around race/racial equity, it can also be valuable and even important to do some work separately in Race-based Affinity groups: White people and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.) There can sometimes be resistance to this separation, particularly from White people, who may: want to stay together with the whole group, avoid "segregation", learn from BIPOC experiences, and more.

Below are some of the reasons and benefits of doing work in separate race-based groups:

- While it may seem divisive, the reality is that people are already divided by systemic oppression. Marginalized people, in particular, know this from lived experience. Sometimes naming and working with the divisions can help people come back together with a deeper and more authentic connection.
- White people and BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) often have different work to do. The needs and tasks are sometimes divergent and working with those can be costly to do with the "other" group in the room, especially for BIPOC.
- Affinity groups tend to create a space for deeper authenticity and honesty. People are less afraid to say the "wrong" thing, offend, or hurt the feelings of the "other". Many years of experience have shown us that some things get said in the smaller group that just don't get said in the whole group.
- Usually the target group (BIPOC) is relieved to get some time with others who share the same struggle, have a similar experience of racism, and with less explaining or caretaking needed.
- In mixed groups, BIPOC people are often put in the position of teaching White people and so do much more of the emotional labor. White people may benefit and learn from the discussions but BIPOC folks often leave exhausted. Historical racial trauma can be triggered more easily and with less effective holding in a mixed group, particularly if predominantly White, with White leadership, etc.
- For many of the reasons above, supporting Affinity groups can minimize staff turnover and improve staff retention efforts, particularly among staff marginalized by race.

As we work to increase our senses of belonging and trust as professionals within this system, *and* our co-conspirator and anti-bias learning, we will offer year-long Zoom adult affinity spaces based on educator feedback. Possible groups include AAPI Educators, Paraprofessionals of Color, Antiracist White Educators (ARWE), LGBT in PSB, Educator Health Affinity, etc. Similar to SEED facilitators and PD Day workshop leaders, Affinity Group Leaders (AGLs) will be trained and compensated to lead our various spaces. If you are interested in the opportunity to co-lead a group, please reach out to Jenee Uttaro via this [FORM](#). Similarly, if you are interested in learning more about possible participation in an affinity group, please indicate that [HERE](#). Thank you!



Congratulations Summer Programs!

Summer Enrichment ~ This July, BEEP Summer Enrichment offered STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math) learning adventures, water and outside games, music, dramatic play, construction & fine motor activities as well as special events to our youngest learners. Many thanks to Margaret Eberhardt and the amazing educator team at Clark Road this summer. Also, special thanks to the Brookline Community Foundation for their added support which allowed the program to offer 12 funded slots for the summer.

Project Discovery ~ Staffed by PSB teachers, Project Discovery supports students currently in Grades K-5 with continued instruction in reading, writing, and word study over the summer months. The program helps ensure students maintain current levels of proficiency in these key areas. Many thanks to Kristin Gray and so many powerful educators at our PD site, this year, the Florida Ruffin Ridley School.

ESY ~ Extended School Year ~ PSB Students in special education who require extended school year services participated in the ESY program at Runkle and FRR this July where they were able to maintain skills and target their learning goals and objectives. Amazing job to our inspiring educator teams and students. And thank you to Program Leader, Liza Casal, for the staff picture at the bottom right!

Summer School @ BHS ~ The BHS Summer School Program is an enriching educational experience that affords numerous opportunities for academic growth and creative expression. Students can make up or review work that was not successfully completed or that proved difficult during the regular school year. Elective courses allow students to explore their interests and earn credit toward graduation. Enrichment courses are also offered for students to continue their educational journey through the summer. Many thanks to Jen Martin and the talented Summer School team for a successful summer!

SMART Summers ~ Brookline SmartSummers are enrichment programs for children ages 5-14. Students can choose from a wide variety of half-and full-day fun and educational adventures that meet from one week to eight weeks in July and August 2020. Programs include Theater Arts, CyberSummer, Basketball, Spanish Immersion, Bringing Books to Life, The Crafty Artiste, Minecraft, Lego Engineering, and more. So much fun for our students this year -- congratulations, Team!

STAR Academy ~ STAR Academy is a summer program for Brookline's English learners and METCO students. STAR provides opportunities for students to increase reading, writing, communication, and comprehension skills across curriculum areas. This program is a wonderful opportunity for students entering grades K-8 this September to enhance their social and academic knowledge. It was abuzz with activity this August at the Lincoln School! Thank you to Mindy Paulo, Brookline METCO and the diverse educator team that worked with our students this year!





- August 4: Barack Obama's Birthday ~ On this day, we celebrate the birthday of the U.S.' first Black president.
- August 9: International Day of the World's Indigenous People ~ This day was created by the UN to celebrate the culture of indigenous people around the world.
- August 15: Feast of the Assumption
- August 18: Birth of Lord Krishna
- August 24: Marlee Matlin's Birthday ~ Marlee Matlin is the only hearing-impaired actor to win the Oscar for Best Actor or Best Actress. This is a big win for people with disabilities, and demonstrates the power of representation.
- August 26: Women's Equality Day
- August 29: Al-Hijri ~ Al-Hijri marks the start of the New Year in the Muslim faith.
- August 31: Ganesh Chaturthi



- September 15 to October 15: National Hispanic Heritage Month ~ This month aims to recognize and celebrate the many contributions, diverse cultures, and extensive histories of the American Latino community. We also celebrate the independence days of several Latin American countries. These include Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Chile.
- National Recovery Month ~ This is a national observance held each September to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices for substance use disorder.
- September 20: HeForShe ~ HeForShe is a social movement campaign created by the UN to promote gender equality. It's targeted at men to become the agents of change for women's rights.
- September 22: Autumnal Equinox
- September 25 to September 27: Rosh Hashanah ~ the Jewish New Year festival.