



Superintendent's Update

November 13, 2023

PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE



Agenda

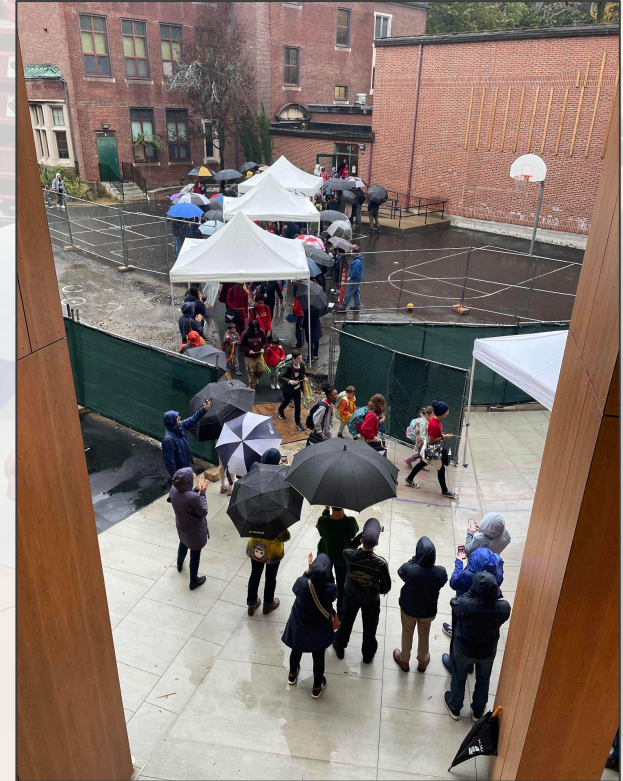
- Community Highlights
- MASS/MASC Joint Conference
- Staffing Updates
- Important Dates
- District Response/Update
- Spotlight on Excellence

First Day at the New Driscoll School

On **Monday, October 30**, the entire Driscoll School population held a parade from their old building into the new one, signifying the school's permanent move to its new address – **725 Washington Street**.

Parents lined up along the hallways of the old Driscoll building and cheered as the students and staff made their way out. Upon entering the new building, the staff were handed jars with pieces of brick from the old building.

Getting to this point has been a team effort. The district building department, construction manager Gilbane Building Company, project manager LeftField LLC, the PTO, the Site Council, and the staff have worked hard to prepare the school for this move. Families have been supportive throughout the process, despite delays in full occupancy of the new building.



MA Middle School Cross Country Championship 2023



Congratulations to all Brookline runners who participated in the Massachusetts State Championship on **Saturday, November 4.**

Over 2,000 athletes from 192 middle schools in the state participated in the event held at the Devens Course. We had a lot of amazing results, including a top 20 finish out of 170 runners for **Reed Glover (Lincoln school)** in the Girls' 7th Grade Race.

A shout out to coaches **Eileen Ford (Lincoln)** and **Daniel Hack (Runkle)** for supporting the athletes out in Devens.



Fall Screening Day

The Brookline Early Education Program will conduct preschool screenings **Tuesday, November 14, 2023**. This is a free and optional service for preschool aged Brookline residents (ages 2.6 to 5 years old) who are not currently attending BEEP.

The fall screening day is meant to help families better understand their child's development, and to determine if a special education evaluation is recommended.



FRR's Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day

The **Florida Ruffin Ridley Equity PAC** is excited to organize the school's first ever Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day on **Tuesday, November 14th**. This is a great opportunity to come together, learn more about the Civil Rights Movement, and walk to school with a purpose.



Lincoln PTO's Thanksgiving Food Drive



W.H. Lincoln PTO

THANKS FOOD DRIVE GIVING

The Brookline Food Pantry provides 650 Thanksgiving meals to local families in need in Brookline. We would greatly appreciate your support in this project to provide **100 bags**.

We Are Collecting The Following Items:

Stuffing Box Cranberries Sauce Canned Green Beans Canned or Jar Gravy Canned Corn Mashed Potatoes Box	Other items needed: Coffee Baking Good Mixes Dish soap Toothpaste/Toothbrush Paper towels
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Items Collected Until
NOVEMBER
15

Drop Off Location
Donation Bin at Lincoln School's Main Door

Bag Packing
Join us on Nov 15 at 6pm in the Multi-Purpose Room to pack. All Lincoln families are encouraged to come, and kids are welcome to color cards!

DONATE CASH OR VIA VENMO
All funds raised will be used to buy the necessary food for Thanksgiving meals.



@WHLincolnPTO

The Lincoln School's PTO is holding a Thanksgiving Food Drive to provide 100 Thanksgiving meals to local families in need in Brookline. Food and other items are being collected until **Wednesday, November 15th.**

Community Resource Fair for English Learner Families

The **Office of English Learner Education** is holding a Community Resource Fair to learn about many resources and programs in the Brookline area available to families of learners whose primary language is not English and who are not yet proficient in English.

The fair will take place **Thursday, November 16th** at the Florida Ruffin Ridley school.



MPDE BIPOC Retention Fellowship Program



The **Massachusetts Partnership of Diversity in Education (MPDE)** has announced the **BIPOC Retention Fellowship Program**, a new initiative and opportunity for its membership network. The program will focus on centering experiences for BIPOC staff and provide the necessary support to impact retention, an effort aligned with OEE and PSB Equity Policy related to recruitment and retention.

The MPDE will accept 30 participants, which will be a first come, first serve process.

Understanding Brookline Event: November 2nd

understanding brookline

Our flagship *Understanding Brookline* reports offer a comprehensive look into our community, our shared challenges, and steps forward we can take together. For real-time data and insights about key issue areas like housing affordability, transportation access, economic inequity, racial justice and more, please visit the [Understanding Brookline Community Indicators Database](#).



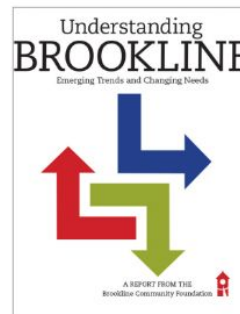
Understanding Brookline:
Economic inequality in
Brookline



Understanding Brookline:
Advancing access in the
out-of-school hours

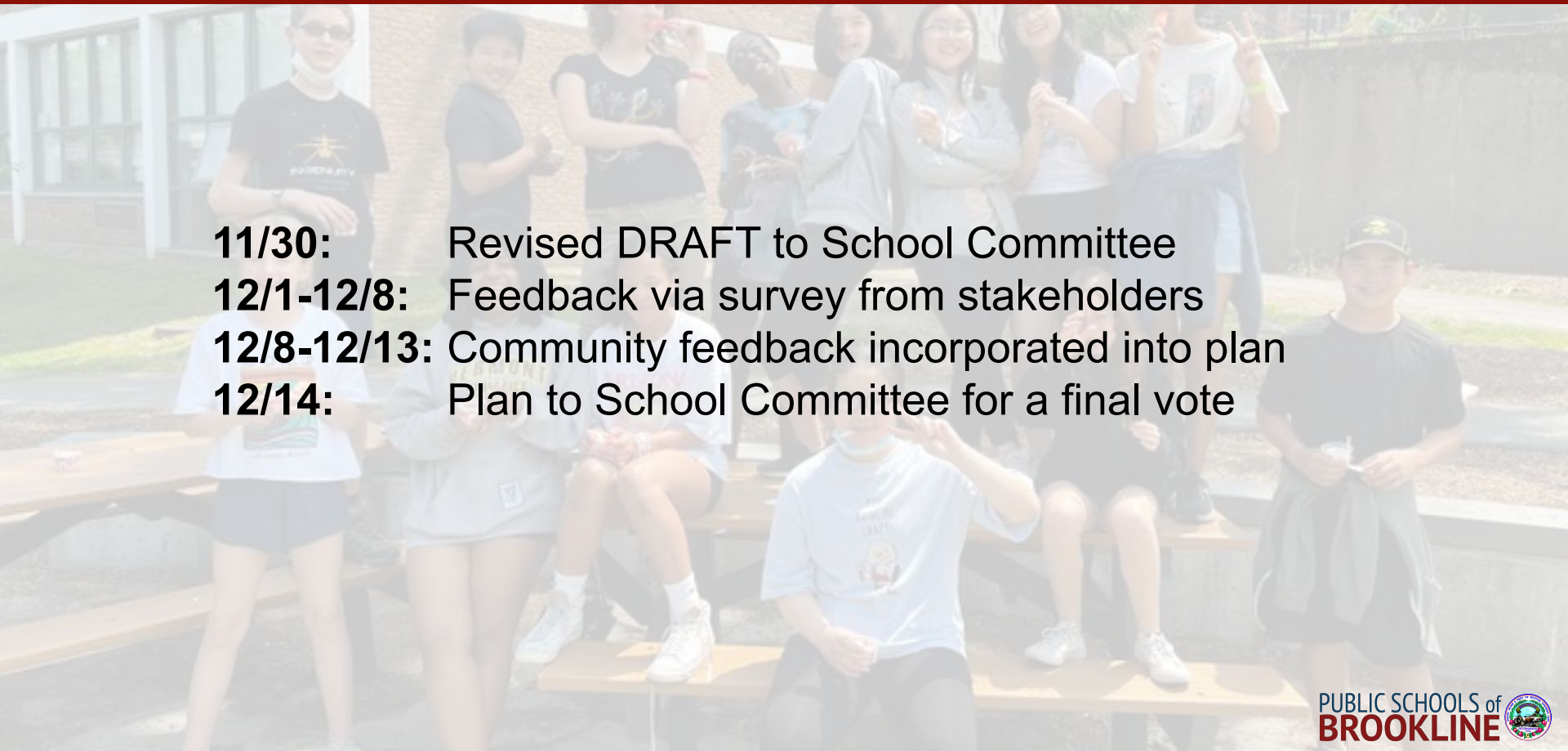


Understanding Brookline: A
Report on Poverty



Understanding Brookline:
Emerging Trends and
Changing Needs


Strategic Plan Timeline and Next Steps

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- 11/30:** Revised DRAFT to School Committee
 - 12/1-12/8:** Feedback via survey from stakeholders
 - 12/8-12/13:** Community feedback incorporated into plan
 - 12/14:** Plan to School Committee for a final vote

MASS/MASC Joint Conference



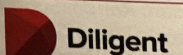
1:15-2:15pm Ice Cream Social
with Exhibitors
Sponsored by: Cape Dairy, LLC



2:30-3:45pm: GENERAL SESSION (Grand Ballroom)
Topic: Dr. Darnisa Amante-Jackson
Transformative Relationships: Best Practices in Long-Term Planning for Equity and Strategic Communications
This presentation will focus on the powerful transformative relationships that must be established and/or continued when driving equity in your school communities. Dr. Amante-Jackson will offer best practices in long-term planning for equity and strategic communication needs for both school committees and superintendents. The presentation will emphasize the key stages and phases of successful partnerships, as well as equity success milestones and strategies to support your district's next steps.

4:00-5:00pm
Follow-up panel to General Session (Grand Ballroom)
Moderated by MA Secretary of Education **Patrick Tutwiler**, a select panel of superintendent/school committee members will react to the General Session presentation from their professional and/or board member experience.
Responders: **Donna Newcomb**, Chelmsford School Committee; **Linus Guillory**, Superintendent, Brookline

5:30-6:30pm: MASC PRESIDENTS' RECEPTION (Main Lobby)
Sponsored by: Diligent



FOOD AND DRINKS PRICE	
Pizza/	6 tickets or
Desserts	2 tickets or
Drinks	2 tickets or

Staffing Update

We are happy to share that **Cristina L. Hernandez** has joined the Public Schools of Brookline as **Assistant Director of Educational Equity**.

Before joining PSB, Cristina worked at Boston Public Schools where she led Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging work at the James W. Hennigan K-8 School. She also taught culturally and linguistically diverse students and worked with their families as Lead Kindergarten Teacher for the Sheltered English Immersion Multilingual Program. Prior to Boston Public Schools, Cristina worked at the KIPP Academy Boston Elementary Charter School as an English as a Second Language Specialist.

Cristina earned her Bachelor's degree in Applied Psychology and Human Development from Boston College, and her Master of Education with a Concentration in Teaching English Speakers of Other Languages from Boston University.

We warmly welcome Cristina to the PSB family.



Staffing Update



We are pleased to announce that **Diane Johnson** has joined the Public Schools of Brookline as the new **Director of Finance**.

Diane comes with rich experience in finance and operations for educational institutions. She began her career in 1996 as a Senior Budget Analyst for the WGBH Educational Foundation. In 2004, she joined Cambridge Public Schools as Coordinator of Financial Operations and Purchasing. She was named the Chief Financial Officer of Arlington Public Schools in 2009, where she spent eight years before returning to Cambridge, this time as Financial Manager for Facilities & Transportation. In 2022, she joined the Shore Educational Collective as Director of Finance & Operations, a position she held until August 2023.

Diane completed her bachelor's degree in Religious Studies from Dartmouth College, and her master's in American Religious History from Harvard University. She attained her DESE license for School Business Administration from Bridgewater State College's Licensure Program School.

We warmly welcome Diane to the PSB community.

Mark your Calendars

Important Dates

November 16

**K-8 Early Dismissal (12.40pm) –
Parent Conferences**

December 6

**K-8 Early Dismissal (12.40pm) –
Parent Conferences**

November 23-24

**Thanksgiving Break
(schools closed)**

**December 25 -
January 1**

Winter Break (schools closed)

November 30

**K-8 Early Dismissal (12.40pm) –
Parent Conferences**



District Response

One-to-one conversations: Staff are available for one-on-one conversations with students who may wish to discuss their thoughts, feelings, or concerns in a private setting.

Safe Spaces: Schools have identified safe spaces where students can take time to process their emotions and find solace.

Classroom Check-Ins: Classroom teachers, as part of our morning meeting for elementary/advisory for middle and high school portions of our day, have had check-ins with their students to provide an opportunity for open dialogue and to ensure that everyone feels heard and supported.

Small Group Check-Ins: Where appropriate and if needed, we have offered small group check-ins where students can share their thoughts and experiences with their peers in a safe and supportive environment.

We have shared social emotional strategies as well as tips/strategies for processing with young children with our educators.

District Response: Teaching and Learning

Middle and High School Students

- [Processing Attacks in Israel and the Outbreak of War in the Region](#): This activity from Facing History and Ourselves is designed to help students process violence, terror, and the loss of life in the wake of attacks in Israel and Israel's declaration of war against Hamas. The materials also include some straightforward background and ways to support students' media consumption.
- [Resilience in a time of war: Tips for parents and teachers of middle school children](#): This piece from the American Psychological Association provides some tips that can help you teach your students resilience. As you use these tips, keep in mind that each child's journey along the road to resilience will be different and that your own knowledge of your students will guide you.

Elementary Students

- [How to Talk to Your Children About Conflict and War](#): This piece from UNICEF provides some tips on how to approach the conversation with your students and to provide them with support and comfort. The information here is general in nature and could be used in future situations as well.
- [Resilience in a time of war: Tips for parents and teachers of elementary school children](#): This piece from the American Psychological Association provides some tips that can help you teach your students resilience. As you use these tips, keep in mind that each child's journey along the road to resilience will be different and that your own knowledge of your students will guide you.

District Response: Educational Equity

- The Office of Educational Equity (OEE) firmly believes the Public Schools of Brookline is a place for **no hate**. We understand that Hate speech denies the values of tolerance, inclusion, diversity, and the essence of human rights norms and principles.
- The Office of Educational Equity is reimagining and refining the current web page to ground that Equity is in the foundation and throughline of our work in the Public Schools of Brookline. We are reviewing policies and refining our incident reporting documents to ensure community members have a transparent reporting process that will be shared this week.

Bullying Prevention and Incident Reporting Form

The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) is committed to providing a workplace and educational environment, as well as other benefits, programs, and activities, that are free from discrimination and harassment based on a protected category, and retaliation for engaging in a protected activity.

This form may be used to report any incident(s) of harassment, discrimination, bullying and/or retaliation involving members of the Public Schools of Brookline community. All staff members who witness or become aware of harassment, discrimination, bullying or retaliation by any student or staff member *must* inform the Principal/Head of School/Superintendent or their designee immediately.

You can choose to file this report anonymously. However, please be advised that reporting anonymously limits our ability to take disciplinary action in response to an incident(s).

This form will be received by the school administration(s) of the school(s) associated with the incident AND the PSB Office of Educational Equity.

District Response: Student Services

- Embed well-being and social emotional learning into all aspects of our educational programming in order to promote healthy students, schools, and communities. By integrating mental health education into the core curricula and proactively addressing mental health every day, we strive to identify and address challenges as early as possible.
- Students' needs are supported through established safe, caring spaces where they can express vulnerable feelings and receive validation and support. Normalizing conversations around mental health within such spaces creates a powerful, supportive environment for listening, sharing, and problem solving.
- Our clinical staff across all schools are trained to provide proactive emotional support to students and families. In the past several weeks, clinical teams have provided additional support to students who are experiencing increased worry, fear, and stress. We are also in the middle of our now routinized universal screening process, which provides students the opportunity to "Raise their Hands" for additional support (e.g., ask if they want an adult to follow up with them).
- During this immensely challenging time, we recognize and appreciate that students will reach out to a trusted staff person during the school day - a building administrator, teacher, clinician, special educator, paraprofessional, nurse, related service provider, food service worker, custodian – to name a few. We thank our staff for being a huge reason why students have felt safe coming to school. We will continue to highlight the ways that we are supporting children at school and the supports that are available to students whenever they need them. We continue to encourage you, our parents and guardians, to reach out to school staff whenever you have a concern as well. We recognize that our interconnectedness – school, home, community – is the key to facilitating information, building relationships, and ensuring a safe environment for learning.



Spotlight on Excellence

November 13, 2023

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