

COOLIDGE CORNER SCHOOL NAMING PROCESS
Applying to be on the Nominations Committee

In May, 2018, Brookline Town Meeting voted 171 to 19 to change the name of the Edward Devotion School. Town Meeting approved the temporary renaming of our school as the Coolidge Corner School and initiated a process to identify a permanent name. While our name has now changed, the school remains the same vibrant and inclusive community where families and educators are deeply committed to the success of every student.

We ask our students to form a deep connection to their school: to root for our sports teams, to wear the school's name on their clothes, and to take pride in representing our school to the larger community. The name of the school is the symbol of this pride and should represent the spirit, virtues, and soul of the community. We no longer ask our students to take pride in the school's name knowing it was named for a person who held another human in bondage. According to Hidden Brookline, one-fourth of Brookline households in the 18th century held enslaved people. Edward Devotion was one of these slaveholders. Other town residents opposed slavery and actively worked to abolish it. They upheld the individual dignity of every human. Clearly, we need to move away from honoring Edward Devotion and, instead, choose a person worthy of having the school named for them.

Our naming process, as well as our final choice, must be thoughtful and inclusive. School administrators, the School Committee, teachers, parents and community members have been meeting over the last few months to construct the most equitable and inclusive process.

Since the school also belongs to students, the process honors their role. The Nominations Committee will be student centered. In our initial call for applications, we received 34 responses. We are looking for even more applicants to ensure that the committee includes a diverse group of voices, perspectives, and experiences. We are reopening the application process and will keep it open until November 27th. During that time, we will be working to ensure that our outreach is broad and deep. We will be hosting two drop-in sessions (Tuesday, November 20 and Monday, November 26) after school from 2:30 - 3:30p to support any students interested in applying. If you have already applied, you do not need to re-submit an application; your application will be considered in the decision process at the end of November.

Coolidge Corner students in grades 3-8 and Brookline High School students who graduated from the Devotion School are invited to apply to be a part of this leadership group - the Nominations Committee - that will help our community narrow our search for a new name and gain a deeper understanding of the names being considered. There will be up to 15 Coolidge Corner School students and three Brookline High School students who are Devotion School alums on the Nominations Committee. On November 30th, a double blind lottery will be held to select the students for the Nominations Committee. All completed applications will be included in this lottery. Principal Buller will notify students and families of their status the evening of November 30th. Students who are not chosen to be a part of the Nominations Committee will be invited to be part of small working groups that will help plan and support our Renaming Night in April, during which the community will have an opportunity to learn more about and vote on candidates being considered.

With adult support, students on the Nominations Committee will review the nominations for the new school name and are responsible for bringing forward 5 names to be considered further by the School Committee. The group will meet on Wednesdays from 1:30 - 3:00pm at the Coolidge Corner School. Students participating in the group during the day will be excused from class and we will work with teachers to address the missing work and assignments. There may be some evening meetings and work sessions that would be optional and supported by adults facilitating the student group.

The first five meetings will be focused on developing students' understanding of the renaming process and the history of slavery in Brookline. These meetings will also focus on strengthening student leadership and teamwork skills through guided sessions with community mentors and facilitators.

Next, there will be six sessions in which the group meets to bring the list of qualified candidates submitted by the public down to 10-15 names. The group will then re-engage students from the CCS community, including those who applied but were not chosen for the committee, to be part of small working groups to develop presentations and media about each of the 10-15 candidates to be shared broadly with the community culminating at a Renaming Night in April. At the Renaming Night, the public will have the opportunity to learn more about each candidate and vote on their preferred name. Students on the Nominations Committee will then use this input to select the top 5 names and share them with the School Committee.

What are the characteristics we are looking for in the students on the Nominations Committee?

The Coolidge Corner Naming Process needs students who:

- Work well with others
- Listen well and encourage others to participate
- Like to learn and are curious
- Represent the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the Coolidge Corner School community
- Recognize when something is wrong and act to make it right
- Demonstrate an interest in social justice issues

Parent/Guardian Permission

- Each student will need a parent or guardian's permission to participate.

How does a student apply to be on the Nominations Committee?

- Students can apply or they can be nominated by a Coolidge Corner or Brookline High School staff member to join the Nominations Committee
- Students complete the application form and answer three questions in writing or by creating a video
- Students provide the name of one adult who knows them well and can act as a reference. This adult could be a teacher from any school, a coach, religious leader from your community, music instructor, community organization leader, etc.)
- Applications are due on Tuesday, November 27 by 5:00pm

Questions to be answered by students on the Nominations Committee Application

1. Why do you want to participate on the Coolidge Corner School Naming Nominations Committee?
2. Pick two characteristics and provide examples/demonstrate how you show these
3. Pick two characteristics you want to develop and explain why/how
4. What adult would you like us to talk to in order to learn more about you (teacher from CCS, teacher from a previous school, coach, religious leader from your community, music instructor, community organization leader, etc.)? Please provide their name and a phone number, email address, or the name of their organization.
5. Please have a parent or guardian sign the attached form that explains that you are applying to be on the Nominations Committee and the commitment necessary if you are selected.

Applications can be completed [online](#), are available in the Main Office of CCS, or can be downloaded [here](#).

Coolidge Corner School Naming Process

Application for the Nominations Committee

Directions: Please complete the contact information and then answer Questions 1-4. You can answer the questions in writing, using a computer, or by creating a video. Submit your completed form to the main office of Coolidge Corner School or BHS.

Name: _____

Grade: _____ School: _____

Homeroom or Advisory Teacher: _____

1. Why do you want to participate on the Coolidge Corner School Naming Nominations Committee?

These are the characteristics we're looking for in Nominations Committee members:

- Collaborative - Works well with others
- Listens well and encourage others to participate
- Curious and likes to learn and are curious
- An upstander - someone who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right
- Demonstrate an interest in social justice issues
- Represents the diverse perspectives and backgrounds of the Coolidge Corner School community

2. Please pick **two** of the characteristics listed above and provide examples of how you demonstrate them.

3. Please pick **two** different characteristics from those listed above that you would like get better at. Please explain why or how you could improve in these areas.

4. What adult would you like us to talk to learn more about you? This person could be a teacher or adult who worked in a school, a coach, religious leader from your community, music instructor, community organization leader, etc.).

Adult's Name _____

Phone number or email address _____

Organization where this person works _____

5. Please have a parent or guardian sign the attached Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form that explains that you are applying to be on the Nominations Committee and the commitment necessary if you are selected.

Coolidge Corner Naming Process

Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form

Name of Student applying to be on the Nominations Committee _____

I, _____ (name of parent/guardian) support my child's application for and interest in becoming a member of the Coolidge Corner School Nominations Committee. I understand that the Nominations Committee will be responsible for selecting up to 10 names from the submitted nominations and that these names will be recommended to the School Committee.

I understand that there will be meetings that require my child to miss class time no more than once per week and that some meetings of the committee may happen after school. These meetings will typically happen on Wednesdays between December 5th and March 27th at the Coolidge Corner School.

I also understand that there will be a limited number of night meetings that will be optional for my child to attend. If I can't provide transportation to these meetings, then the school will work with me to arrange transportation that is appropriate and acceptable to me.

I understand that there will be adult supervision and guidance during all meeting times and that the students on the Nominations Committee will be supported by Coolidge Corner School Principal Jennifer Buller and Vice Principal Saeed Ola.

I understand that if my student becomes a member of the Nominations Committee they will learn about how and why Brookline is changing the school name including how Town Meeting works and history related to slavery and the anti-slavery movement in Brookline.

If you have any questions, please contact the appropriate person.

Coolidge Corner Students - please contact Principal Jen Buller at jennifer_buller@psbma.org or Vice Principal Saeed Ola at saeed_ola@psbma.org or by calling them at (617) 879-4400

BHS students - please contact Head of School Anthony Meyer at anthony_meyer@psbma.org or Malcolm Cawthorne at malcolm_cawthorne@psbma.org or by calling them at (617) 713-5000

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Parent/Guardian email and phone number _____