

School Renaming Presentation

May & June 2023

Student Renaming Committee: Introductions



Marin - represents Grade 4, Rainbow Club,
Class Council



Elisa - represents Grade 5, Rainbow Club, Student
Council



Bruno - represents Grade 5, Young Scholars

Student Renaming Committee: Introductions



Madison - represents Grade 6, METCO Connections



Francesca- represents Grade 6, Climate Action Group, Student Council, Model UN



Sofi - represents Grade 8, Young Scholars, GSA

Why Are We Changing the School Name?

In the very recent past, we learned that our school had been named after a street, but that the street had been named after a family: the Heath family.

The Heath family took tremendous pride in the school on their street. They also, according to Town records, enslaved five people.

Knowing that our beloved school is named for a family that enslaved other humans has made it increasingly difficult to promote our vision for inclusion and equity.

That is why we are renaming our school.

What is **NOT** Changing?

1. Our mascot! We will still be the Hawks!
2. The school colors! We will still be green and white and black (and sometimes gold)
3. How awesome we are!



BATSON
THE CRAFTS
HAYES
WILSON

WHO WILL WE CHOOSE?

Reminder: Criteria for School Name Nominations

Required, *as recommended by Student Committee in partnership with adult committee members:*

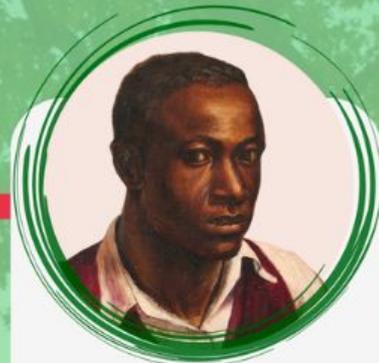
- Connection to Greater Boston and Brookline
- A helper. Someone who contributed to the community and made a positive impact
- A connection to education and/or commitment to educating others
- *** Not an Indigenous Name. As our school has no historical or current connection to Indigenous Peoples, other than sitting on Native land, we do not want to appropriate Indigenous names or culture for our own gains

Nice to Have, *as recommended by Student Committee in partnership with adult committee members:*

- Represented elsewhere? We strive to recognize those who are not honored elsewhere in our community
- Is the candidate a Person of Color? We strive to recognize those who are historically under invited into our community
- Is the person still living? Has the person passed? The preference is someone who has passed as we can examine their entire life, contributions, and impact



Ruth Batson
Founder of METCO



John Woodrow Wilson
Artist

Heath School Renaming

Who Will We Choose?



Ellen and William Craft
Abolitionists



Roland Hayes
Musician

For more information please visit
www.brookline.k12.ma.us/renameheath



Meet the Candidates: John Wilson



John Wilson

John Woodrow Wilson was born in 1922 to parents who came to Roxbury, MA, from Guyana. He loved art and used it to express himself. After college, Wilson traveled around the world. He went to France and Mexico to further develop his talents in painting and sculpture.

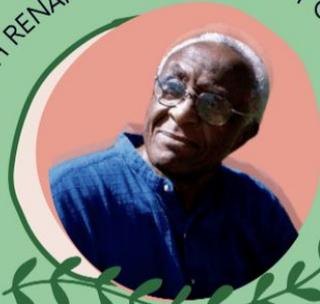
When Wilson returned to the US in the 1950s, he was immediately selected to teach at BU's College for the Arts. He began creating works that showed the hardships he and other Black people faced. These difficulties include lynching, poverty, discrimination, and other social issues.

He also used his art to celebrate the lives of Black people. One of Wilson's most famous artworks is a statue of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Wilson created this sculpture to honor Dr. King and his contributions to American history. Most importantly, he hopes his works inspire others to learn and make people think.

Wilson and his family moved to Brookline in 1964 to raise their children. He would stay in Brookline until his passing in 2015.



HEATH RENAMING SEMI-FINALIST CANDIDATE



John Woodrow Wilson

Artist

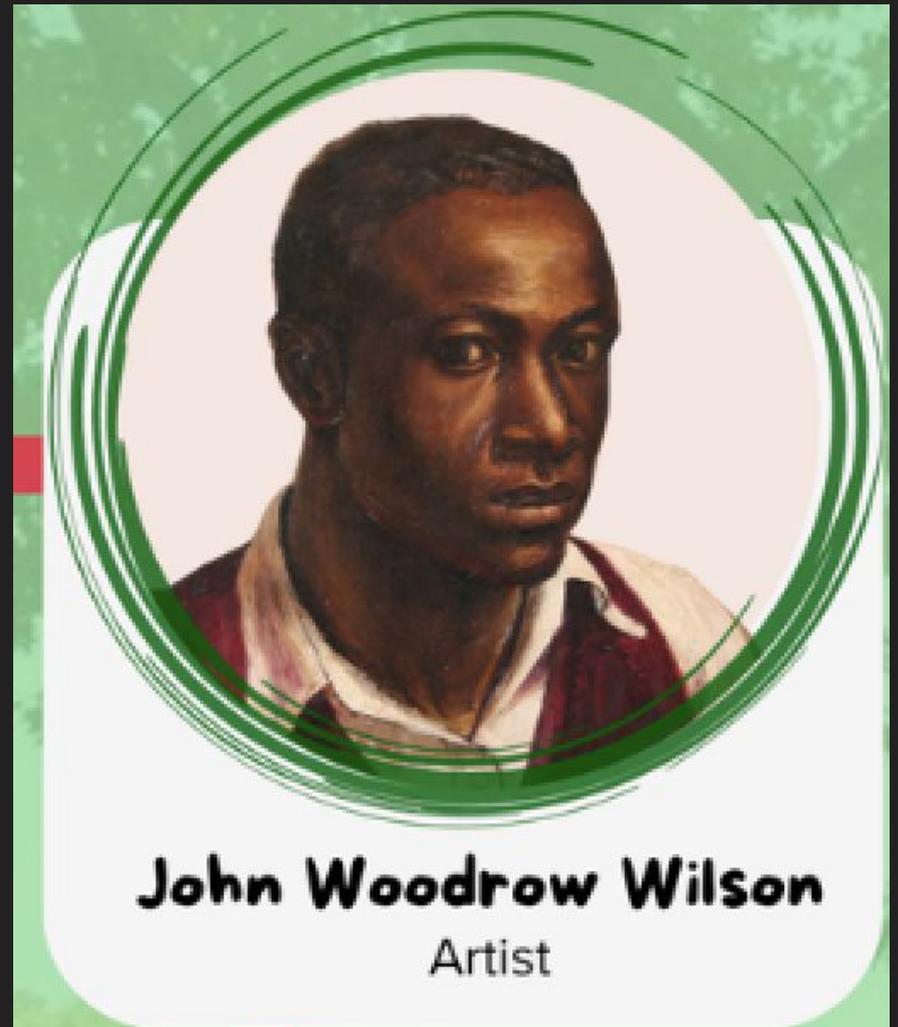
John Woodrow Wilson was born in 1922 to parents who came to Roxbury, MA, from Guyana. He loved art and used it to express himself and celebrate the lives of Black people.

"...[Wilson's] main objective as an artist was to deliver a message to people about Black dignity, about racial justice, about poor people trying to get a better deal in life." - Judith Kowitz Wilson

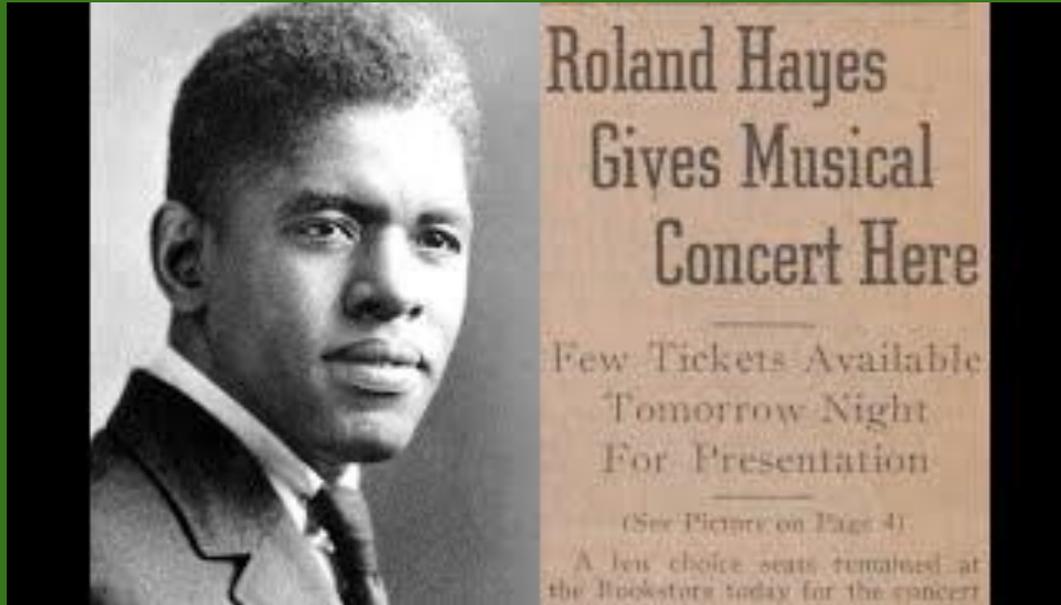


Scan the QR Code
to learn more about John
Woodrow Wilson!

Turn and talk with
your neighbor about
something you just
learned about John
Wilson



Meet the Candidates: Roland Hayes



Roland Hayes

Roland Hayes was born in 1887 to farmers in Curryville, GA. He first learned how to sing by attending church as a child. Hayes' voice impressed many people. With only five years of schooling, he was admitted to Fisk University where he joined the famous Fisk Jubilee Singers.

Hayes believed in himself and his ability. When the Fisk singers performed in Boston, Hayes chose to remain here for further voice training, becoming renowned for his vocal talents. At the beginning some orchestras and concert halls would not let him perform, because he was Black. By the 1920's, he had become one of the best classical tenors in the world. In his sold-out concerts, he sang different kinds of music; audiences were amazed when he sang songs from Italy, Germany, and France. Hayes was proud of being Black, so he always included African-American folk songs and spirituals in his programs.

Hayes believed that music was crucial to understanding and expressing yourself. During his tours, he would also try to find time to visit local schools and meet with musical students.

HEATH RENAMING SEMI-FINALIST CANDIDATE

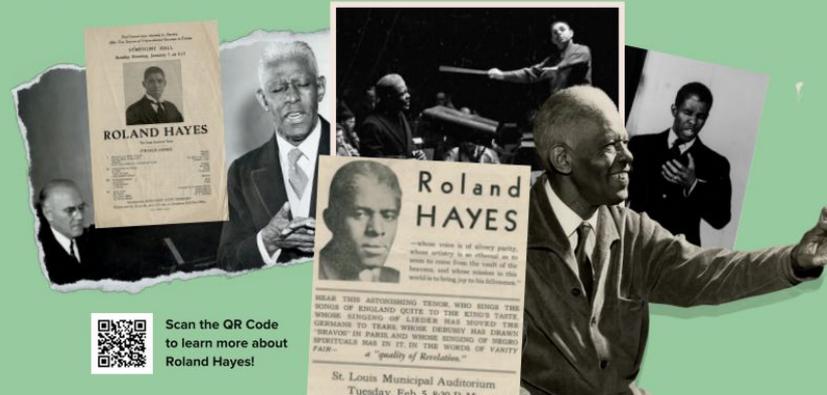


Roland Hayes

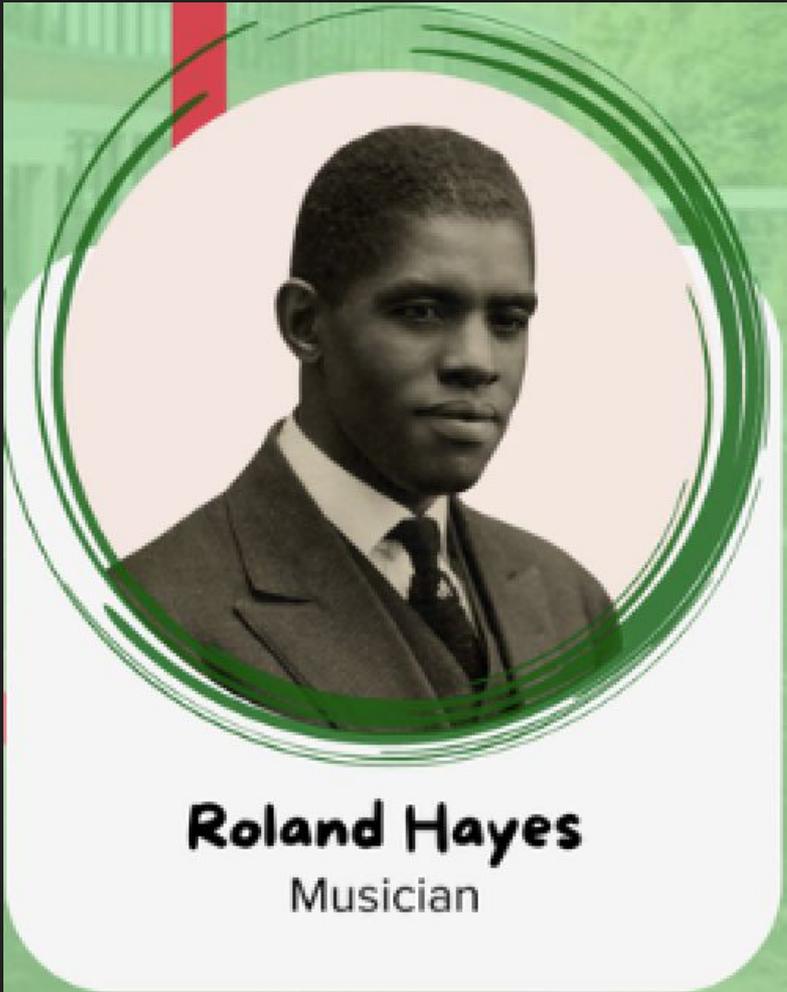
Musician

Roland Hayes was born in 1887 to farmers in Curryville, GA. He believed that music was crucial to understanding and expressing yourself.

"The beauty of what could be done with the voice just overwhelmed me." - Roland Hayes



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Roland Hayes
Musician

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Roland Hayes

Meet the Candidates: Ellen & William Craft



Ellen & William Craft

Ellen and William Craft were born into slavery in the 1820s. At young ages, they were both torn away from their mothers and families as often happened to enslaved families. After meeting in Georgia, they fell in love and decided to escape from their owners. To become free, they needed to travel one thousand miles to Boston where everyone was free. They did what no one had dared to do. Ellen disguised herself as a wealthy *white* man traveling north with "his slave." In 1849, the couple finally arrived in Boston, where they could live more freely. Around this time, they also met other individuals who escaped from slavery. They encouraged the Crafts to share their story, so that whites here would learn how cruel slavery was. This would help end slavery in the South.

They traveled one thousand miles around New England to speak out against slavery. However, their escape also caught the attention of slave hunters who were paid to force people to return to their owners. The couple had to flee Boston. Two Brookline Underground Railroad families hid Ellen for two nights, while plans were made for her and her husband to escape to England.

While in England, both learned to read and write. Ellen was a teacher. She and William also wrote a book "One Thousand Miles to Freedom" about their escape. When slavery had finally ended, the Crafts returned to Georgia to help others who had been enslaved.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE

HEATH RENAMING SEMI-FINALIST CANDIDATE



Ellen and William Craft

Self-Emancipated Educators and Activists

Born into slavery in Georgia, Ellen and William Craft disguised themselves to travel up over 1,000 miles up north to pursue their own emancipation. Throughout their lives, the Crafts fought for education, freedom and justice, not just for themselves, but for others.

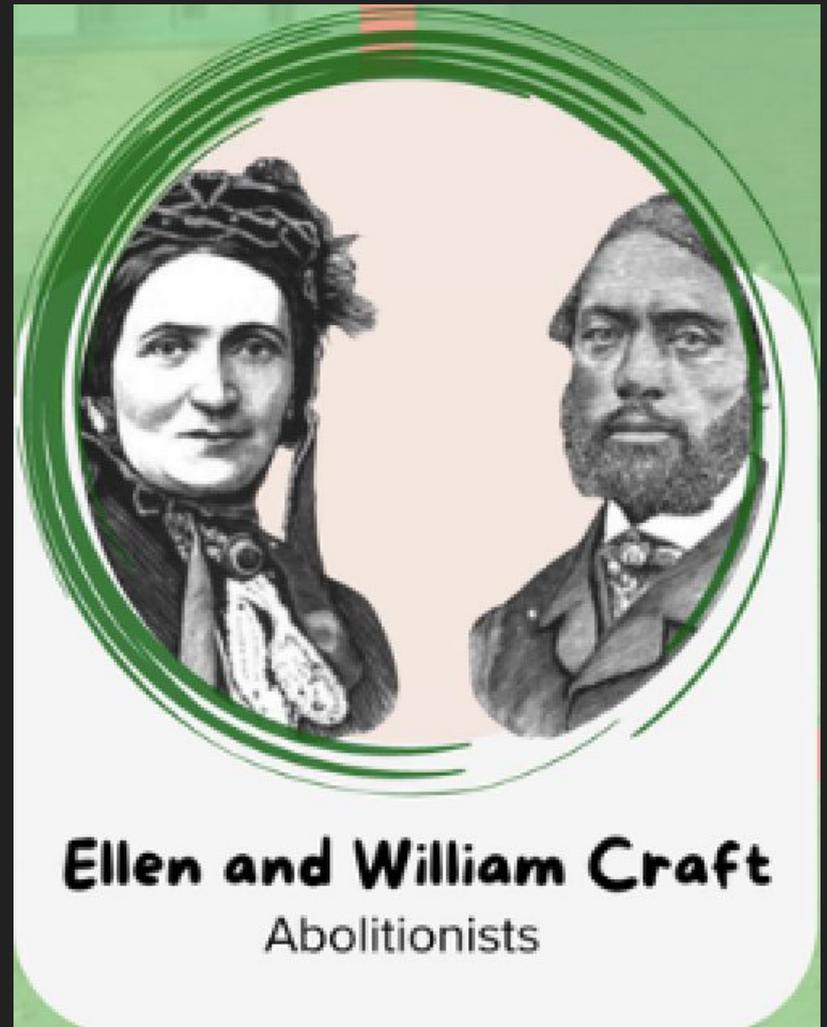
"I fled from them because they would not give me my rights as a human being. I could never learn anything, neither to read nor to write." - Ellen Craft



Scan the QR Code
to learn more about the
Crafts!



Turn and talk with
your neighbor about
something you just
learned about Ellen
& William Craft



Meet the Candidates: Ruth Batson

MOTHER - TEACHER - CIVIC WORKER
Life Long Resident of Boston - Mother of 3 Daughters,
Aged 18, 2 and 7, attending Boston Public Schools.



Elect **MRS. RUTH M. BATSON**
to Boston School Committee

Ruth Batson

Ruth Batson was born in 1921 to parents who moved to Roxbury, MA, from Jamaica. As a teacher and a mother, she believed that everyone deserves a great education.

Batson saw that at the time the Boston schools didn't treat Black students equally. Black students in Boston didn't get the same opportunities as other students. So, in 1965, she helped start a program called METCO. This program lets students go to schools in different towns where they can get a better education. Brookline was one of the first towns to join METCO. Now over 30 towns have joined METCO.

For her whole life, Batson worked to see that everyone would be treated equally. She was an equal rights leader in Boston and all over Massachusetts. She worked with groups like the NAACP and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination to fight for equal rights.

HEATH RENAMING SEMI-FINALIST CANDIDATE



Ruth Batson

Founder of METCO

Ruth Batson was born in 1921 to parents who moved to Roxbury, MA, from Jamaica. As a teacher and a mother, she believed that everyone deserves a great education.

“When we fight about education, we’re fighting for our lives.” - Ruth Batson



Scan the QR Code
to learn more about Ruth
Batson!



MOYER - TEACHER - CIVIC WORKER
LIFE LONG RESIDENT of Boston - Mother of 2 Sons,
Ages 16, 8 and 7, attending Boston Public Schools.



Elected **MRS. RUTH M. BATSON**
to Boston School Committee



Turn and talk with
your neighbor about
something you just
learned about Ruth
Batson



Voting

In June we will hold TWO votes using ranked choice voting:

- the first will be a PRACTICE vote, to make sure our voting system is working. We will be voting on our favorite type of ice cream flavor. **The practice vote will happen June 1 and 2.**
- The second vote will be to decide our new school name! **The school name vote will take place June 8 and 9.**

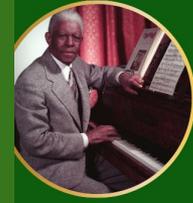
Who can vote? Students, staff, and families. Students will vote at school during the school day. We sincerely hope that you will have these conversations at home and talk about the merits of each candidate before casting your votes!



Batson



The Crafts



Hayes



Wilson



WHO WILL
WE
CHOOSE?

Ranked Choice Voting



Practice Vote Ballots



Practice Vote: Favorite Ice Cream

As you know, we will be holding our vote to decide our next school name on June 8th.
BUT, before we make that final and most important decision, let's practice!

	Cotton Candy	Strawberry	Peppermint Stick	Cookie Dough
1st Choice				
2nd Choice				
3rd Choice				
4th Choice				

Please rank your favorite ice cream from 1st choice to 4th choice. Please make a decision in * each column.

	Cotton Candy	Strawberry	Peppermint Stick	Cookie Dough
1st Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2nd Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3rd Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4th Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Students, staff, and families will have the option to vote electronically or on paper. Classroom teachers will decide which style works best for your classroom.

Most people will vote electronically.

Final Ballot

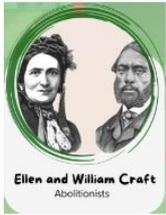
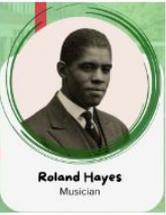
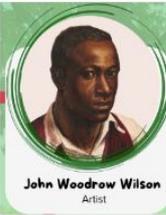
Students, staff, and families will have the option to vote electronically or on paper. Classroom teachers will decide which style works best for your classroom.

Most people will vote electronically.

Voting Ballot (Paper): Four Finalists

It is time to vote for our new school name!

Remember to select a candidate in each column and row, voting for your first choice to your last choice - four choices total.

	Ruth Batson	Ellen & William Craft	Roland Hayes	John Wilson
	 Ruth Batson Founder of METCO	 Ellen and William Craft Abolitionists	 Roland Hayes Musician	 John Woodrow Wilson Artist
1st Choice				
2nd Choice				
3rd Choice				
4th Choice				

⋮

Please rank your favorite ice cream from 1st choice to 4th choice. Please make a decision in each column. *

	Ruth Batson	Ellen & William Craft	Roland Hayes	John Wilson
1st Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2nd Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3rd Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4th Choice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Voting

&

A Decision is Made

Practice Vote, June 2 and 3: Our Favorite Ice Cream

Beside learning about our favorite ice cream flavors and least favorite (sorry, Peppermint Stick.), we discovered A LOT during the voting process, like:

- the technical switches we need to make in order to ensure we have no tech errors next week
- ways to efficiently input the paper ballots into the spreadsheet so that we see all of the data in one place
- how to think about the data once all of the votes are in and then communicate what the data says to the community

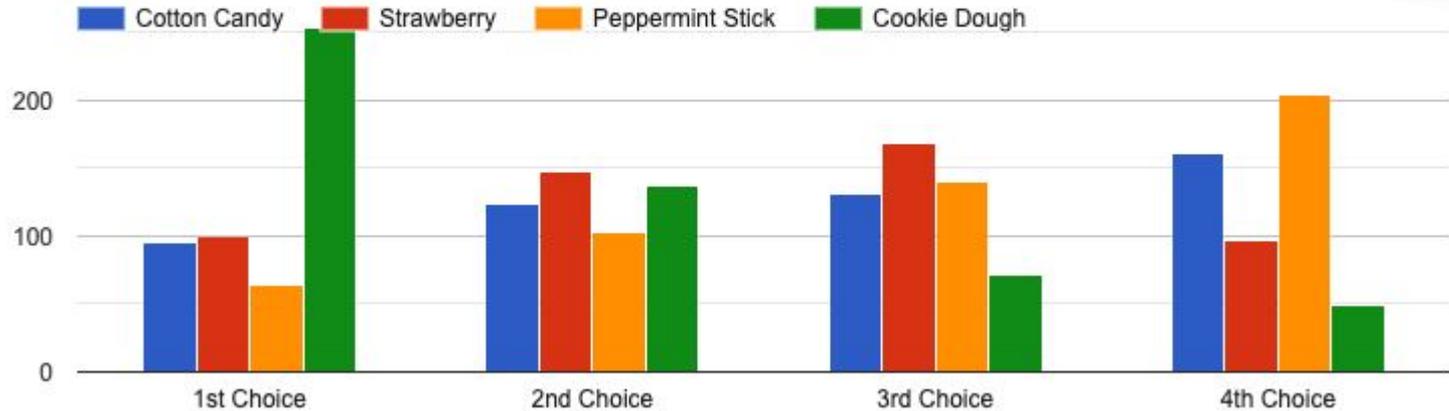
These were the **REAL** reasons for the practice vote we held.

We are thankful to the parents behind the scenes giving feedback on tech glitches and fixes!

Our Favorite Ice Cream Flavor



Please rank your favorite ice cream from 1st choice to 4th choice. Please make a decision in each column.



On June 8th and 9th, We Held Our “Real” Vote ...

Current staff, current students, and current families could vote in-person *on paper ballots* or electronically *via google form*

- Staff and Family members could **ONLY** vote between 7am on Thursday, June 8 and 12pm on Friday, June 9
- Everyone received a reminder email in the morning announcing that the vote is open!
- Folks also received a reminder email on Friday at 11am reminding them that the vote would soon close
- Students voted in school on Friday morning
 - K-2 voted on paper
 - Grades 3-8 voted electronically

On both days we had students and staff in the front of the school to answer questions, promote participation, and get the excitement going! We had **paper ballots** available in the front of the school at arrival Thursday and Friday and in the afternoon on the 8th.



Our polling station

Some Statistics

How many people voted?

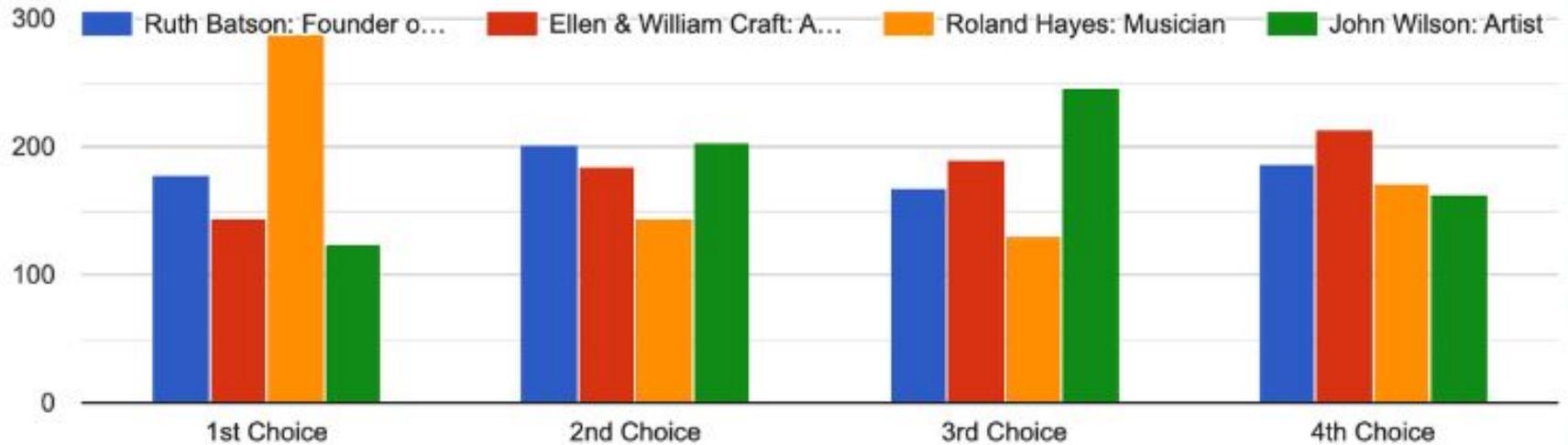
In total, 733 people cast a vote for our new school name. That is extraordinary!

How did the percentages break down of who participated?

- 57.4% (421 people) of voters were students
- 29.3% (215 people) of voters are family members
- 13.2% (97 people) of voters are current staff

The Breakdown of the Vote

Please rank your preferred candidate from 1st choice to 4th choice. Please make a decision in each column.

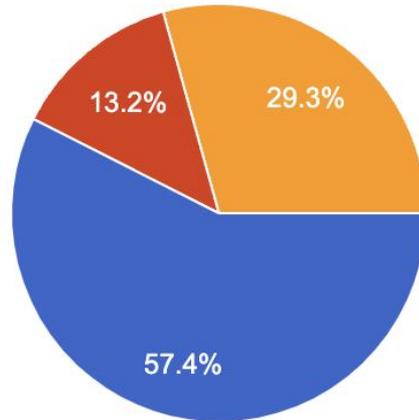


The Breakdown (Again) of Participants

Your Connection to Heath School (only current students, current staff, and current families are eligible to participate)



733 responses



- Current Student
- Current Staff
- Current Family Member

Announcing the Winner

...to the Student Renaming Committee



"The beauty of what could be done with the voice just overwhelmed me."

Roland Hayes was the first African American singer to achieve success on the classical concert stage. For more than 40 years he performed in major cities throughout the United States and Europe.

Roland Hayes

... to the the student body

Next Steps

- Connecting with family of Roland Hayes
- Meeting with Town Names Committee this summer
- Preparing the Warrant Article
- Continuing educational opportunities
- Town Meeting in the fall
- Planning a celebration!
- Crafting a Land Acknowledgement

Questions?
Answers!