

School Policy Review Subcommittee Meeting
Monday, January 22, 2024
5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Remote via Zoom

Subcommittee members present: David Pearlman (Chair), Andreas Liu, and Valerie Frias.

Subcommittee members absent: Steven Ehrenberg.

Other School Committee members present: Helen Charlupski, Suzanne Federspiel and Mariah Nobrega.

Staff present: Liza O'Connell, Interim Deputy Superintendent of Student Services; Claire Galloway-Jones, Director of Educational Equity; Betsy Fitzpatrick.

Mr. Pearlman called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

1. Review/Approval of the Minutes of the December 14, 2023 Policy Review Subcommittee Meeting

On a motion of Ms. Frias, and seconded by Dr. Liu, the Policy Review Subcommittee voted unanimously, by roll call, with 3 in favor (Mr. Pearlman, Ms. Frias, and Dr. Liu), 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, to approve the Minutes of the December 14, 2023 Policy Review Subcommittee meeting.

2. Discussion and Possible Vote: Inclusion in Life of the School Activities Policy

Ms. Nobrega presented the most recent draft of the “Inclusion in Life of the School Outside of the School Day” policy, attached. This policy was recently discussed at the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Subcommittee meeting. The attached draft reflects feedback and comments from that DEIJ meeting, and feedback from a SEPAC co-director, the Extended Day Directors, and parent leaders (PTO and Site Council leaders). At the recent DEIJ meeting, Ms. O'Connell agreed to prepare answers to the questions posed by the Extended Day Directors (page 3 of the attached draft policy), and to prepare a draft analysis of what it would cost implement the policy (to include items such as transportation). Members asked if requests for these accommodations could be considered as part of the annual IEP meeting, and asked what programs might be covered under such a policy (the draft policy includes programs such as extended day; plays, choir or other performances; sports teams or clubs; enrichment programs; and school newspaper or yearbook committees.) Ms. O'Connell stated that providing these types of accommodations will require a high level of individualization and customization, the number of requests the district receives after enacting such a policy might be very high (1,200 PSB students have IEPs), and some of the paraprofessional support required might be from highly-specialized paras, which will be more expensive. In response to public comments, Ms. Nobrega noted that she will be continuing to check-in with the Extended Day Directors to ensure that this policy addresses their concerns, and doesn't unintentionally create an unfunded mandate for our community partners.

On a motion of Dr. Liu, and seconded by Ms. Frias, the Policy Subcommittee voted unanimously, by roll call, with 3 in favor (Mr. Pearlman, Ms. Frias, Dr. Liu), 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, to advance this draft policy to the full School Committee for a 1st Reading.

3. Discussion and Possible Vote: Wellness Policy

Ms. Federspiel provided an update on the status of the revised Wellness Policy (attached). She noted that the most recent draft includes feedback from school leaders concerning 20 minutes for lunch (total, not after lunch is served) and removing language mandating that recess be unstructured. The policy has already been presented to the School Committee for a 1st Reading; a 2nd Reading/Possible Vote will be scheduled.

4. Discussion of Substance Use Prevention and Education Policy

Mr. Pearlman presented the most recent draft of the Substance Use Prevention and Education Policy (attached). This draft policy has already had a 1st and 2nd Reading before the full School Committee. The most recent feedback was to include some minor edits (reflected on the attached). The draft will be scheduled before the full School Committee for a 3rd Reading/Possible Vote.

5. Discussion and Possible Vote: Proposed Public Art at Brookline Schools Policy

Andy Dean, Chair of the Brookline Commission for the Arts (BCA), joined the meeting. He reported that the BCA has been working to increase public art installations throughout the Town. The BCA conducted a survey of residents, and overwhelmingly the community is in favor of more public art, especially murals. Possible locations for these murals could be public school buildings, so Mr. Dean joined the meeting to share a policy drafted by the BCA that might permit the installation of such public art on the outside of PSB buildings (attached). While the BCA already has one proposal in mind (a Florida Ruffin Ridley mural on the side of the FRR School), the policy has been drafted to offer a structured process for review and approval for this project and any future project. Ms. Charlupski noted that the proposal was discussed at a recent Capital Subcommittee meeting. She is strongly in favor of public art, but attaching a semi-permanent mural on a brand-new school building (which has been carefully designed with specially selected materials as part of a thorough and collaborative community process) is not an easy decision. Ms. Frias asked if the BCA has explored mural installation on the sides of commercial buildings, which would also be highly visible. Mr. Dean noted that it is a lengthy process to secure approval from private property owners for mural installation. Members discussed the draft policy, specifically the proposed Selection Committee. Members were in agreement that the School Committee would retain final approval of any art installation affixed to a public school building. However, there was agreement that the expertise of the BCA would be valuable; it was suggested that an Outdoor Art Advisory Committee be established (on an ad hoc basis for each proposal), to which the School Committee would appoint a liaison. Proposals would be vetted by the advisory committee and the BCA, and then be presented to the School Committee for approval. The draft policy will be revised to reflect the feedback from this meeting and will be scheduled for further discussion at an upcoming Policy Subcommittee meeting.

6. Status Update: PSB Flag Protocol and Pledge of Allegiance Policy

Ms. Nobrega presented a revised draft (attached) of the Flag Protocol and Pledge of Allegiance Policy (I 3 e). The revised draft includes additional language in the Non-Coercive Environment section, so that it is clear that the pledge is an important civic tradition, but acknowledges that it is not required to be recited. It was agreed that Dr. Guillory will be asked to discuss this draft policy with school leaders for their feedback.

7. Status Update: Revised Assignment of Students to Schools Policy and Student Placement Policy

Ms. Nobrega presented a revised draft of J 1 f, Assignment of Students to Schools (attached). The subcommittee has been reviewing this policy in an effort to provide assurances to families who might move within the Town of Brookline, into another school zone, and who want to remain at their current school. The request to remain at their current school will be made to the Superintendent.

Ms. Nobrega also presented revisions to J 2 b, Student Placement, including suggested language for class size guidelines (attached). Dr. Guillory will be asked to gather the feedback of school leaders on this draft policy.

8. Status of Building Access Policy

This proposed policy, previously drafted by Ms. Nobrega, is attached. There was agreement that it would be very helpful to schedule a School Committee Workshop with the principals to discuss issues of school access and security. Mr. Pearlman will consult with Superintendent Guillory on making these arrangements.

9. New Business

There was no new business to report.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.

Inclusion in Life of the School Outside of the School Day Policy

Background

The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) are committed to sustaining inclusive classrooms, schools, and systems that foster a sense of belonging for all students in the Local Education Authority (LEA), including PSB out-of-district students, to participate in the life of their home PSB “home/affiliated” school and district-wide activities made available to students by the districts. The PSB recognizes that participation in school activities outside of the school day enrich our students’ lives, provide stability of care, and increase their sense of belonging in their school community. To this end, the district adheres to all state and federal mandates¹ regarding system-wide access to all school activities, with the provision of reasonable accommodations based on individual student need.

Commented [Im1]: Why do we say this instead of “all students in the LEA of Brookline” - this makes it sound like OOD students are different and normally not included

Some activities and programs that are typically considered to be outside of the school day include (these are examples and not to be considered exhaustive):

- extended day programs
- plays, choir, band, or other performances,
- sports teams or clubs,
- clubs or enrichment programs for cooking, math, photography, and other subjects, and
- school newspapers or yearbook committees.

Accommodations to be Provided Outside of the School Day

PSB is committed to providing the needed accommodations to access these activities and programs to the greatest extent possible as is appropriate to the needs of the student as set forth in 34 CFR 300.107 (see Footnote 1). The level of accommodation to be provided shall be determined by the Office of Student Services, in consultation with parents/caregivers and the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. In the case of programs that are less than full-year, accommodations should consider explicitly the feasibility of staffing.

Commented [NM2]: Does/Can the new IEP process accommodate this process?

Commented [NM3R2]: New IEP process “centering student voice” should accommodate this, language works.

In the case of competitive programs such as athletics and some choir and theater productions, participation may be determined through a try-out process, which means a student will need to perform at a certain level to join the program or team. However, even in competitive programs, a student with disabilities has a right to try out with reasonable accommodations as determined by that student’s IEP team. For example, if a hard of hearing student wants to join the track team, it is reasonable for the coach to wave a flag rather than blow a whistle to signal to the runners that the race is starting.

¹ Under Section 300.107 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), available at <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-III/part-300/subpart-B/subject-group-ECFRf27988d69cd5d3a/section-300.107>

“Each public agency must take steps, including the provision of supplementary aids and services determined appropriate and necessary by the child’s IEP team, to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in the manner necessary to afford children with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities.”

In other words, every student has a right to equal access to school-sponsored activities such as clubs, arts programs, music, school spirit events, sports, and dances. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act does not explicitly define extracurricular activities, however lists generalized examples, including “athletics,” “recreational activities,” and “special interest groups or clubs.”

~~In the case of programs that are less than full year, accommodations should consider explicitly the feasibility of staffing.~~

Third-Party Compliance with this policy

Third-Party providers include service providers who operate in one or more PSB buildings, before or after the school day, exclusively or primarily serving PSB students: i.e.e.g., extended days, PTOs, enrichment programs, Brookline Music School, and Brookline Recreation, etc. This definition excludes organizations/individuals that rent space in PSB buildings but do not primarily or exclusively serve PSB students.

Recognizing that the legal requirements for third-party providers may be less rigorous than those for the PSB, depending on the extent of the bidirectional relationship with the third-party provider, the onus shall not be on parents and caregivers to navigate the complexities of legal responsibility. Rather, the PSB shall work with each third-party provider to ensure awareness of and compliance with state and federal regulations, so that no child entitled to accommodations is left out of after school programs on account of disability.

In the case of Extended Days, which are vital for many working families, and without which, many families would face hardship, the Office of Student Services shall work proactively with each program before the start of the school year to identify students whose IEPs require accommodations for participation. Staffing or other requirements resulting from that planning shall be the responsibility of the district to either provide the staff or provide funding to the Extended Day to pay for the accommodations. OSS shall also work with each program to evaluate any needed accommodations for students who transition onto IEPs during the school year. including transportation to the activity for out-of-district students if determined by the IEP team.

For third-party providers other than Extended Days, the Office of Student Services shall work on an as-requested basis (upon the request of parents/guardians and/or the third-party provider) to provide accommodations for participation for students whose IEPs require them. Staffing or other requirements resulting from that planning shall be the responsibility of the district to either provide the staff or provide funding to the third-party provider to pay for the accommodations. OSS shall also work with each program to evaluate any needed accommodations for students, including transportation to the activity for out-of-district students if determined by the IEP team.

In the interest of transparency, the Deputy Superintendent of Student Services, or designee(s), shall submit an annual report to school committee by December 31st of each year confirming that the district has met with each third-party provider for that fiscal year to review the provider's obligations under state and federal law, this policy, and to assess student participation needs. In addition, all future contracts to be negotiated with PSB partners running extracurricular programs shall include a non-discrimination clause that allows the district to terminate a contract based on the failure of the third-party provider to comply with this policy.

As the ability for the PSB to terminate a contract with a non-complying third-party provider in and of itself will not make an adversely impacted individual student whole, the district will work with any adversely impacted student and/or their caregivers to promptly provide that student with the necessary accommodations either in the non-complying program, or in a comparable program within the school or districtone-, and, if determined necessary by the IEP team, provide transportation.

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Commented [NM4]: Make sure that this is the final, final, final list.

Commented [NM5]: We discussed that the discussion of transportation for OOD students only applies to EDs in this paragraph. The next paragraph hopefully addresses process etc for non-EDs

Commented [NM6]: This paragraph is new since the meeting, addresses the issue raised in the discussion of the previous para.

Districtwide/Offsite Programs

The policies laid out above also apply to programs for PSB students outside of their home school, e.g. districtwide chorus, offsite extended days serving multiple schools.

Further, for these districtwide/offsite programs where the PSB are not required to provide accommodations (e.g. for general education students who reside within 1.5 miles of their home school), the PSB shall nevertheless endeavor to voluntarily offer participation supports in the spirit of fostering maximal inclusivity, such as transportation offerings or multiple sites.

Notification

As inclusion in life of the school activities necessitates regular communication, all district notifications regarding event cancellations, public emergencies affecting operation of one or more PSB schools, or changes to contracted transportation services, shall be disseminated to all students ~~(including out-of-district students)~~ potentially participating in impacted activities.

Commented [lm7]: again - easier and less "othering" to say all students in the LEA of Brookline

Questions from the Extended Day directors (provided collectively)

- Who is hiring the teachers or support staff for each particular child?
- How will reimbursement work from the town to our programs?
- Who is responsible for making sure all IEP accommodations are being met in an extended day?
- What is the timeline for the school to inform us of each child's needs? Generally hiring will need to be confirmed before the child begins attending.
- Is the school noting that they will provide support with professional development, materials needed, classroom spaces and other specialized tools that some students require?
- Will there be any training provided to our staff members for those kiddos who are on IEPs? Or will this work be taken on exclusively by the person hired by PSB for this purpose?
- Are parents of students on IEPs going to be made aware of the changing policy?
- Some parents don't even indicate that their children may require accommodations on their enrollment forms (even though we ask!) Will we need to provide a list of our enrolled students to the town for them to determine who is eligible?
- Thinking of this from a budgetary perspective, placing the burden on PSB to provide communication from OSS and finance additional qualified staff will inevitably come back and fall on us in the form of rent, right? What is the hidden cost of the policy?

PROPOSED REVISION: PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE WELLNESS POLICY
FIRST READ: December 14, 2023
POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE REVIEW: January 22, 2024
SECOND READ AND POSSIBLE VOTE: February 1, 2024

SECTION A
FOUNDATIONS AND BASIC COMMITMENTS

9. Wellness Policy (Voted: 9/28/06, #06-88; 12/7/17, #17-102; 6/19/18, #18-60
(Note: policy was moved from PSB Policy Manual Section E: Support Services to Section A: Foundations and Basic Commitments 6/19/18)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment in which children learn about and participate in healthy decision-making. To support this commitment, the following core values guide this policy and its corresponding implementation and procedures:

- Provide a stigma-free meal environment in which all students are provided fresh, nutritious foods that support physical growth and learning.
- Cultivate a school culture that values wellness – the physical and mental health of all its students and their communities – by offering thoughtful, inclusive, and appropriate support and instruction in all schools.
- Provide comprehensive wellness education including but not limited to mental and physical health, nutrition and food literacy, physical activity and physical education, allergy and public health concerns, the impact of social media on mental health, healthy relationships, substance use, peer pressure, body image, and eating disorders. At its very core, comprehensive school health education is about keeping students healthy now and in the future, reinforcing positive healthy behaviors throughout the school day, and making it clear that good health and learning go hand in hand.
- Recognize and accept differences due to mental and physical health or disability, culture, race, religion, language, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status by providing space for public learning, conversation, and discussion.

II. FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM OPERATIONS

A. Financial Management and Student Access

1. Every PSB school will operate a food service program to ensure that all students have affordable access to the varied and nutritious foods they need to stay healthy and achieve their academic potential.
2. The management of food sales on school grounds will be under the management of the school food service program, except for food sold competitively (see Section III).

3. The food service program will aim to be financially self-supporting. However, budget neutrality or profit generation must not take precedence over the nutritional needs of the students. If subsidy of the food service fund is needed, it should not be from the sale of foods that have minimal nutritional value and/or compete nutritionally with program meals. Conversely, when the program runs a profit, those funds will be re-invested in the program in the form of higher quality food options.
4. PSB will meet or exceed best administrative practices for enrollment, participation, and payment of food, including:
 - Developing a coordinated, comprehensive outreach and promotion plan through various methods including social media, etc., directed at both students and families, including a language access component to ensure language-appropriate documents, and highlighting access options for students with disabilities.
 - Continuing to collect Free and Reduced meal applications which allows for additional benefits to qualified students and families, such as Pandemic-Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT), even though Massachusetts has permanently passed the Universal Free Meals program for all schools.
 - On a regular basis, checking and coordinating with county social services and similar public benefit administering agencies to ensure that every eligible child is enrolled in free/reduced price meal programs.
 - Ensuring compliance with the direct certification process for automatically-eligible students.
 - Implementing and maintaining pin numbers or similar payment systems in place that accurately tracks the student's meals for maximum state and federal reimbursement. Free and reduced priced meals will be served and sold in a manner indistinguishable by students or staff from the regularly priced meal.

B. Nutrition and Meal Planning

1. PSB Food Services operates within the frameworks of the USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP), USDA School Breakfast Program (SBP), USDA Summer Food Service Program and other supplemental programs. Every food option served by PSB Food Services meets or exceeds USDA School Breakfast and Lunch guidelines. Further, PSB Food Services operates in accordance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 as amended and applicable laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Schools will offer varied and nutritious food choices that are consistent with the federal government's Dietary Guidelines for Americans. (See "Nutrition" for further information.)
2. The PSB adheres to (meets and when possible, exceeds) state¹ and federal² School Meal Content Guidelines by taking advantage of exemptions for unprocessed fruits and vegetables. The Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and Breakfast

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<https://www.mass.gov/doc/105-cmr-225-nutrition-standards-for-competitive-foods-and-beverages-in-public-schools/download>

² <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-01-26/pdf/2012-1010.pdf>

program (7 CFR Parts 210 and 220) require the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat free and low-fat fluid milk in school meals, and requires that the levels of sodium and saturated fat meet the nutritional needs of school children within their calorie requirements. These improvements to the school meal program, largely based on recommendations made by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, are expected to enhance the diet and health of school children and help mitigate the childhood obesity trend. To the extent that current nutrition science indicates a higher standard is the better practice, the higher standard should be applied.

3. In addition to federal/state nutrition and food services programs, PSB Food Services operates additional available nutrition-related programs and activities including the Farm to School, Breakfast After the Bell, school gardens, etc.
4. PSB Food Services' objectives are to:
 - a. serve fresh, freshly-prepared, real, minimally-processed and/or organic food without additives when budgetarily possible and available, to every student at every meal. Trans fats are not permitted.
 - b. aspire to make 50% of all meals served in each school plant-based
 - c. use locally- or regionally-sourced foods when available.
 - d. make ingredient, nutrition and allergy information for all foods and beverages, except for fresh fruits and vegetables and other whole foods, readily available to stakeholders (students, caregivers, PSB staff) before purchasing meals, and to caregivers online in advance of the school day.
 - e. plan menus with input from students, caregivers, and school personnel considering students' ethnic, cultural and dietary norms and preferences, special dietary needs, and individual choice.
 - f. provide systems that allow food service staff and others to accurately identify food allergies at the point of service.
5. PSB daily schedules will incorporate at least 20 minutes for lunch.
6. Snacks offered or sold to students as part of the food service program will comply with Smart Snacks or Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) snack standards per regulations [7 CFR 210.11 105 CMR 225](#).
7. [PSB Food Services implements and adheres to the district Sustainability Policy \(voted 10/27/22 #22-87\)](#)

C. Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

1. PSB will employ a Director of Food Services who is qualified, certified and/or credentialed, according to the USDA professional standards for School Nutrition professionals.
2. The district will employ food service staff that are trained according to the recommendations of the Director of Food Services, and who meet the USDA Guidelines for staff training.
3. The Director of Food Services is encouraged to inform and collaborate with classroom teachers about the school nutrition-food service environment and nutrition education.
4. All food service managers and cooks/chefs will have a current ServSafe Certification.

5. All staff will complete professional development as outlined by the Food Service Director and follow the USDA guidelines for staff training.

III. Competitive Food and Beverages in School

The following applies to all locations where food and beverages are offered or sold in schools during the school day other than food provided by Food Services, e.g. restaurants, student run culinary programs, cafes, vending machines, fundraisers, stores, and snack or other food carts. The school day is defined as the midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the school day.

A. Nutrition Standards

1. Foods and beverages must comply with the stricter of State³ or Federal⁴ Standards..
2. Snacks offered or sold to students through vending machines shall not compete with meals offered by the school food service program and must comply with Massachusetts standards at all times.
3. Food fundraisers, food sold on behalf of the schools, or foods offered at any school events (including testing days, assemblies, assemblies for parents/caregivers, curricular plans etc.) will also be consistent with the standards and objectives of the Wellness Policy (see Section II.B)
4. To ensure the safety and inclusion of students with food allergies and other special health concerns, PSB will refer and adhere to by following the PSB Management Guidelines for Students who have Life-Threatening Allergies⁵ when planning food related functions during the school day.

B. Additional Considerations

1. Fundraisers should promote physical activity and health enhancing eating habits.
2. Non-food related fundraising alternatives such as walk- or read-a-thons, jump roping, fun runs, or programming competitions, will be promoted.
3. Lunch time meetings will not be used, therefore tutoring, clubs, and meetings may take place during lunch time if students are provided with the opportunity to get lunch.
4. Only Office of Administration and Finance approved brand names, trademarks, or logos from companies that offer only product lines (both in and outside of schools) that are consistent with the Wellness Policy nutrition guidelines will appear in schools, during school activities, or in school materials, including, but not limited to curriculum or educational materials, food and beverage containers, menus, school publications, posters, electronic media, or vending machines.

³

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/105-cmr-225-nutrition-standards-for-competitive-foods-and-beverages-in-public-schools/download>

⁴ <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

⁵ <https://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/cms/lib/MA01907509/Centricity/Domain/67/PSB-LTA-2018-2019.pdf>

5. Brookline High School's Career and Technology Education department offers a Culinary Pathway in food preparation and restaurant management. The courses in this pathway offer students the opportunity to explore and develop careers in the nation's largest industry in the BHS state-of-the-art student-run restaurant, Tappan Green. During the school day, meals served in the Tappan Green restaurant will be served to adult staff. Students enrolled in the program may participate in recipe development or testing.

III. WELLNESS EDUCATION

A. NUTRITION EDUCATION

PSB will aim to provide nutrition, health, and food literacy education to students at every grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based health education curriculum and/or as embedding in multi-disciplinary units that meets state and national standards. [The 2023 MA Comprehensive Health and Physical Education frameworks will serve as a guide.](#)

Curriculum will be selected, developed, and coordinated so that both dedicated health and nutrition units as well as other classroom and non-classroom settings (lunchroom, recess, special events) are used in concert to further this goal.

Appropriately, the district will take steps to ensure trained and dually licensed physical and health educators will be identified and tasked with this coordination with appropriate content area partners. The K-12 Coordinator of Wellness Education will partner with appropriate content coordinators and food service leaders to prepare materials, conduct, or arrange for outreach and training, and provide technical assistance.

Consistent with the values set forth in this policy, the PSB will:

1. Provide a food-positive school food environment, in which real and wholesome food is freshly prepared from whole or minimally processed ingredients to maximize naturally occurring nutrients and good taste while minimizing unnecessary additives and waste, whether in a meal program or any other school setting.
2. Teach students to be critical, astute consumers who know how to navigate both their food environment and their health support system, seek out current science, and modify their behavior to cultivate good health.
3. Teach students about the benefits of eating plant-based foods for human health, disease risk reduction, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare. Students will learn how to structure a healthy plant-based meal, and to identify nutritious plant-based foods that can be important aspects of plant-based eating. Students will learn about the benefits of plant-based eating through positive messaging surrounding plant-based foods.
4. Teach students about the benefits of eating fiber-rich proteins and minimally processed foods. The district will prioritize serving high-fiber proteins as well as minimally processed foods.

5. Teach food literacy in the classroom, in experiential learning settings like school gardens and teaching kitchens, in the cafeteria, and in other food settings; practice what is preached in nutrition education; and ensure that adult's model good choices throughout schools. Promote fruits, vegetables, whole-grain products, lower fat, nutritionally rich products from all food groups, and healthy food preparation.
6. Link with school meals program, cafeteria nutrition promotion activities, school gardens, Farm to School programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services
7. Include enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant and participatory activities, such as cooking demonstrations or lessons, promotions, taste-testing, farm visits and school gardens.

B. HEALTH EDUCATION, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The Public Schools of Brookline will provide a range of physical activity opportunities to all students, including regular physical education, daily recess, and physical activity breaks, before and after school activities, intramural/extramural sports, interscholastic sports, active academics as well as comprehensive health education.

Teachers and other school personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical education or physical activity (*e.g.*, recess) consequently. The denial of recess will not be used as punishment/discipline unless the student's removal from recess has been determined as appropriate by the school principal or designee and communicated with the parents/caregivers.

1. Physical Education

All PSB students grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in in-district alternative educational settings, receive physical education each year. BHS students must earn wellness credits each year to meet graduation requirements. K-8 Physical Education classes will occur twice per week for a minimum of 40 minutes per class.

- Physical education will be taught by highly qualified specialists certified to teach physical education and/or wellness education. All physical education teachers will regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the physical education program.
- Teachers will provide a comfortable and safe learning environment. Physical education equipment will be age and developmentally appropriate. Age, ability, and developmentally appropriate modifications will be made to accommodate the needs of all students. Students will spend at least 70 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Physical education classrooms (whether inside or outside) will receive priority when shared facilities present a conflict.

2. Health Education

PSB is committed to providing a school environment that promotes overall student wellness (physical, emotional, intellectual, and social) The PSB aims to implement a K-12 comprehensive health education program to meet state and national requirements and the nutrition education goals outlined above. Sixth grade has been identified as the next priority for health education.

- The health education program will utilize a skills-based approach designed to provide students with opportunities to develop and maintain the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors necessary to be healthy and physically active for a lifetime.
- The health education curricula will be aligned with the state and National Health Education Standards and the [MA DESE Frameworks](#). The PSB Health education will be taught by a highly qualified specialist certified to teach health and/or wellness education (which includes physical education).

3. Daily Recess

All children in grades kindergarten through five attending public schools shall receive 140 minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each week, preferably outdoors, weather permitting, at the discretion of the school principal. Should the outdoor temperature fall below 20 degrees, recess shall occur indoors.

All children in grades 6 through 8 will receive at least 90 minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each week, preferably outdoors, weather permitting, at the discretion of the school principal. Should the outdoor temperature fall below 20 degrees, recess shall occur indoors.

As used herein, the term “free-play” means an unstructured environment that is supervised by appropriate school personnel or staff.

4. Promoting Additional Movement Opportunities

The PSB will promote practices to understand that short exercise bursts create increased brain activity, resulting in students who are more focused and ready to learn. Classroom educators will be provided with resources for increasing student heart rates periodically throughout the school day.

- Students in grades 5-8 will have access to intramural and extramural sports programs. High school students will have access to intramural physical activity programs as well as interscholastic sports programs.
- All schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of students, inclusive of genders, disabilities, and health status.

IV. SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

PSB is committed to promoting the social and emotional development and wellbeing of all students. PSB will provide a comprehensive, multi-tiered approach to social-emotional health and wellbeing that is designed to promote development of social-emotional skills, support engagement in healthy behavior, and discourage risk-taking behavior. Brookline's commitment to addressing student social-emotional development and wellness has six objectives:

1. **Create a safe, supportive, and affirming classroom and school culture for all students.** This work includes an intentional focus on promoting strong school belonging, supporting the development of healthy and positive relationships for students and staff, using inclusive language that reflects authentic respect for differences, and having ongoing conversations on how to effectively support individuals with mental health diagnoses and substance use issues and related needs, while encouraging a substance free school community.
2. **Provide students with explicit instruction related to social-emotional learning and mental health.** This work includes providing students with ongoing instruction to promote development of skills related to self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, forming healthy relationships, and making responsible decisions.

Additionally, students will be taught strategies to actively promote their wellness and mental health, including skills that promote healthy behaviors in relation to nutrition, exercise, healthy activities, interpersonal relationships, use of social media and technology, stress management, mindfulness, injury prevention, and not using substances (alcohol, marijuana, pills, tobacco) to manage or avoid uncomfortable feelings.

Students will be actively taught health skills that align with the [National Standards](#). (Decision-Making, Analyzing Influences, Accessing Valid and Reliable Information, Interpersonal Communication, Goal Setting, Advocacy and Practicing health enhancing behaviors that promote risk reduction.) This skills-based approach will provide students with the opportunity to apply content knowledge.

3. **Raise awareness among students, caregivers, schools' staff, coaches, and other members of the community about the signs and symptoms of mental health diagnoses, social-emotional challenges, and substance use,** keeping in mind that many behavioral and academic struggles are often manifestations of compromised mental health or personal or family stresses.

In support of this objective, PSB will:

- Provide ongoing training to school professionals on how to reach out to students and their families in an affirming and culturally responsive way and help them access support and treatment services.
- Ensure that all school staff are trained on emergency procedures, including when and how to report concerns to administration and support staff.

- Provide staff training in appropriate safety procedures that include, but are not limited to, contacting parents/caregivers, Staff Crisis Manual, Policies, Crisis Teams, Mandatory Reporting Responsibilities, Harassment and bullying, Life Threatening Allergies, Blood-borne Pathogens.
 - Work with staff, students, and the community agencies to maintain a school environment that is free of vaping, tobacco and cannabis (smoking and edibles), alcohol, and other drugs.
 - Provide literature for students that encourage the goals of these policies.
 - Students perceived to be under influence are innocent until proven guilty or until students admit to being under the influence of illegal substances.
4. **Ensure that in-school support services (including guidance, social workers, adjustment counselors, psychologists, and/or nursing staff) are accessible to all students presenting with social, emotional, mental health, and substance use issues.** These school-based services include screening for mental health and substance use issues, referrals for community-based mental health and substance use supports, school-based individual or group counseling, providing psychoeducation around mental health and substance use, and support substance use cessation. Students, staff, and caregivers will be aware of resources within the school and how to access them.

Trained licensed clinical staff will be available to respond to social service and psychiatric emergencies during school hours. We will endeavor to train all staff and administrators on how to respond to students and families who are perceived to be using illegal substances. Each school will have a written emergency response plan that addresses both medical and behavioral health crises to reduce the incident of life-threatening medical emergencies and behavioral health crises and to promote efficient and appropriate responses to such emergencies.

5. **Provide specialized and targeted support and interventions for all students struggling with social and emotional issues to support their academic engagement and development.**
6. **Promote wellbeing by supporting policies and practices that support a healthy balance between academic expectations/achievement and student mental health, and practices that encourage the development of healthy identities that support healthy decision-making.** PSB will collaborate with community and school-based wellness initiatives.

V. WELLNESS POLICY IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

LEGAL AUTHORITIES: 7 CFR Parts 210 and 210; 105 CMR 225.

A. Evaluation and Measurement of the Implementation of the Wellness Policy.

The PSB Wellness Committee will update and make modifications to the Wellness Policy based on the

results of the annual review and triennial assessments and/or as local priorities change, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health information and/or technology emerges, and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The Wellness Policy will be assessed as indicated at least every three years following the triennial assessment.

The PSB School Wellness Committee aims to have representation from:

- School Administration
- School Guidance and Clinical Services
- School Health Services (including school physician consultant)
- Nutritional and Food Services
- School Wellness and Health Education Services
- Community Agencies (Brookline Department of Public Health and Human Services; Brookline Substance Use and Violence Prevention Program, B-PEN/B-CASA and Town Meeting Members)
- Parents/Caregivers
- School Committee
- Students

B. Triennial Progress Assessments

The Wellness Committee will assess the PSB Wellness Policy to measure its compliance at least once every three years. This assessment will measure the implementation of our local school Wellness Policy, and include:

- The extent to which the PSB is in compliance with the local school Wellness Policy.
- The extent to which the PSB Wellness Policy compares to model local schools' wellness policies
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness.

C. Policy

PSB will ensure that the Wellness Policy and most recent triennial assessment are available to the public. PSB will also actively notify the school community annually about any updates made to the Wellness Policy and the availability of the triennial assessment results.

D. Goals

- PSB will ensure the most updated version of the Wellness Policy and triennial assessments are available on the school website for the public to view.
- PSB will present Wellness Policy updates, as applicable, during meetings with the Parent Teacher Organization, school committee, district superintendent, health and wellness committee and other interested groups or stakeholders.
- Wellness updates will be provided to students, parents/caregivers, and staff (through the PSB website and announcements in school newsletters, for example) to ensure that the community is informed and that public input is engaged.

- Each school will provide parents/caregivers with a complete copy of the PSB Wellness Policy at the beginning of the school year.
- Principals or vice-principals will ensure that each school complies with the Wellness Policy at their individual schools.
- PSB is committed to being responsive to community involvement and input, which begins with awareness of the Wellness Policy. PSB will actively communicate ways in which parents/caregivers, students, physical education teachers, school health professionals, the school committee, school administrators, food and nutrition professionals, and the public can participate in the development, implementation, and annual review of the PSB Wellness Policy.
- PSB will consider student needs in planning for a healthy nutrition environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback using surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- A team of district and community representatives will be established to support the food service director and teachers in implementing local purchasing and other farm to school activities on an ongoing basis. Stakeholders and community members will be offered the opportunity to provide feedback.
- The activities of the Wellness Policy will align with Goal 6 of the Strategic Plan, which reads as follows:
 - **Ethic of Wellness** For our students and the world around them to thrive, our schools must contribute to an ethic of wellness. PSB will attend to the social and emotional development of its students, so that they may flourish personally, build positive relationships, and contribute to a more caring and just world. PSB will also teach and adopt sustainable practices, inspiring and empowering students to be good stewards of the Earth.

E. Resources

The following resources were used in the development of the PSB Wellness Policy:

- Massachusetts Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Frameworks, 2023
- Massachusetts Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools
- United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service: Team Nutrition
- DESE *Massachusetts School Wellness Coaching Program: Perfecting Policy*
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Massachusetts Coordinated School Health Program
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Smart Snacks <https://www.cdc.gov>

**PROPOSED REVISION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE
SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION POLICY
JANUARY 18, 2024
3RD READING AND POSSIBLE VOTE**

I 3 e. Substance Use Prevention and Education (Voted 12/1/16, #16-76) (Replaced Teaching about Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Voted 3/16/70, #70-92)

Purpose:

Mass. Gen Laws c. 71, s.96 requires each public school:

- to have policies regarding substance abuse prevention and the education of its students about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco;
- to notify students' parents or guardians about the related policies and procedures, professional development support of staff; and
- to post the policies on the school district website. And requires schools to file these policies with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

In accordance with state and federal law, and this policy the PSB shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, [cannabis, e-cigarette/vaping devices](#), tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades 5-12.

The alcohol, [cannabis, e-cigarette/vaping devices](#), tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of ~~alcohol, tobacco, and drug~~[their](#) use, with emphasis on non-use by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, [cannabis, e-cigarettes/vaping devices](#), tobacco, ~~or~~ [other](#) drugs.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce [use of](#) alcohol, [cannabis, e-cigarettes/vaping devices](#), tobacco, and ~~drug~~[use other drugs](#) among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of [using](#) alcohol, [cannabis, e-cigarettes/vaping devices](#), tobacco, and ~~drug~~[use other drugs](#).
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid [use of](#) alcohol, [cannabis, e-cigarettes/vaping devices](#), tobacco, and ~~drug~~[use other drugs](#).
- [To teach students to respect all members of their school community by refraining to use alcohol, cannabis, e-cigarettes/vaping devices, tobacco, and other drugs in a manner that could expose and thus adversely impact the health of others who abstain from such use. Specifically, students shall be instructed not to smoke anywhere on school grounds, including bathrooms.](#)

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program ~~shall~~ shall be recommended by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

In addition to providing the foregoing education on substance use, the district shall remind students that no person shall use a tobacco product or controlled substance within any school building or facility, or on a school bus.

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Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance as defined in G.L. c. 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal. Pursuant to G.L. c. 94C, s. 32J and 21 U.S.C. s. 860, the possession of drugs, including marijuana, with the intent to distribute or sell said drugs will result, if convicted, in a mandatory sentence of not less than two years if the possession occurs within 300 feet of a school within the hours of 5 AM and midnight, regardless of whether the possessor is aware of the school's proximity. Pursuant to G.L. 272, s. 40A, anyone who gives, sells, or has in their possession any alcoholic beverage in any public school building can be punished by imprisonment up to thirty days or a fine of not more than one hundred dollars.

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This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

Public Art Policy and Guidelines for the Installation of Public Art on the Outside of Brookline Public Schools

Overview

The Brookline Public School Department (BPS), values the role of art in enhancing the quality of life in the community, strengthening civic identity and cultural heritage, creating an attractive environment, and bringing enjoyment to residents of all ages. They also recognize the interest of students, residents and community groups in displaying art, objects of historical significance, and other items in or on Brookline public school buildings and welcomes such forms of civic participation. Public art can spark conversations, unite and energize us, and empower and inspire our community.

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the standards and procedures for reviewing, selection, installation and care of public art and temporary art exhibit proposals for installation on Brookline Public School buildings. These guidelines are necessary to ensure that art installations complement and respect the character of the town, and the school buildings, and are appropriate to their settings, history, and traditions, and do not impose unexpected or insupportable burdens on the School Department, or Town, such as a frequent need for maintenance and repair, or high, ongoing security costs.

This policy does not address the acquisition by the BPS department, through gift or purchase, of works of art or of other objects, or the inclusion of art to be installed inside school buildings.

Scope

For purposes of these guidelines, “art” means works or objects owned by the BPS department, or works or objects owned by others but displayed on school properties on a temporary or permanent basis, including, but not limited to, two and three dimensional works of art such as paintings, murals, drawings, photographs, graphics, fabric art, collages, ceramics and sculptures, and objects of historic significance. For the purposes of these guidelines, “curatorial responsibility” means tasks related to the selection and exhibition of art, and other matters relating to the display of art, including responsibility for designating outdoor spaces for the display of art, and ensuring the art is visible to the public.

Selection Criteria and Procedures

A selection committee for each school public art project will consist of the following:

1. Two Brookline Commission for the Arts members.
2. Two School Committee members.
3. One student.
4. The school principal.
5. One business or community member to be selected by the principal.

The selection committee will make decisions on whether or not to approve a display or exhibit based on appropriate quality, scale, and content to be shown on a public school building open to patrons of any age, race, religion, and ethnicity, and shall not discriminate on the basis of message or viewpoint but

may discriminate on the basis of perceived aesthetic or historical value, or other criteria unrelated to any viewpoint. To be eligible for selections, items must be in stable condition and suitable for hanging or for display otherwise, shall not require extraordinary procedures or equipment for maintenance or display, and shall not have the potential to create unsafe conditions as determined by the Building Commissioner and/or Commissioner of Public Works, as appropriate.

These guidelines require that the selection committee consider all criteria set forth in this policy in its review of proposed public art for the installation on the outside of Brookline public schools, and specifically:

- a. Artistic excellence/quality of artwork and craftsmanship,
- b. Relationship of artwork to site,
- c. Maintenance provisions,
- d. Durability, public safety and the degree of public contact and,

In light of laws applicable to public buildings, the following types of items shall not be selected or approved for display: (i) items that (a) promote political fundraising within the meaning of Mass. Gen. Laws. Ch. 55, or that (b) promote or oppose a matter placed, or to be placed, before voters at the polls or that otherwise promote a political campaign purpose within the meaning of Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 55; and (ii) items that endorse religion or any particular religion, or opposition to religion or to any particular religion.

In addition, items selected or approved for display shall be appropriate for a general audience of all ages. Accordingly, the delegated entity shall not select for display art that a reasonably prudent person applying contemporary community standards would find offensive, including the following: (i) items that contain material that, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interests or depicts or describes nudity or sexual conduct in an offensive or prurient manner; (ii) items that contain material depicting graphic violence, including, but not limited to, (a) the depiction of human or animal bodies or body parts in states of mutilation, dismemberment, decomposition, or disfigurement, and (b) the depiction of weapons or other implements of devices being used in an act or acts of violence or harm on a person or animal.

Appearance, Aesthetics and other Selection Criteria

The BPS department has an interest in ensuring the best possible appearance and aesthetic quality of their school buildings and selection decisions will be made accordingly. Public art installations will be of high quality related to style, appearance, durability and ease of maintenance. In addition public art selected for display on school buildings, should reflect the character of the Town and the buildings and shall be appropriate for a general audience of all ages. No public art element nor its manner of installation, shall substantially change the character of the school building or its intended use.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss tentative proposals and art ideas with the selection committee prior to the formal review process. Once the application is submitted the applicant should be prepared to present the following upon request:

- (a) Any technical issues related to materials, maintenance and care, repairs, and installation needs such as hanging arrangements, bases, pedestals, or footings needed or environmental

conditions (excessive shade, sunlight, or moisture) that might affect the art on its site location.

- (b) Photographs of the art or, if it is a proposed piece not yet fabricated, a design. If the piece is a sculpture meant to be viewed in the round, photographs of the design from more than one perspective are desirable.

Repair

The BPS department has an interest in ensuring that all public art elements remain in good repair and in ensuring that the short and long term repair costs are reasonable. Art elements must be of high quality using appropriate materials, to ensure a long life and resistance to the elements, wear and tear, or acts of vandalism.

Ownership

Unless a special condition is agreed to the contrary, all art installations are the property of the BPS department.

Upon selection of an artist, or artists, the selection committee will work with the town of Brookline legal department to create a contract between the town and the artist(s), for the installation of the public art.

Public Schools of Brookline Policy Manual

I 3 c. Flag Protocol and Pledge of Allegiance (Voted 4/28/11, #11-30; Note: this policy was moved from Section K School/Community Relations to Section I Instruction, 6/5/14, #14-43)

Definitions

Flag: The Flag of the United States of America.

Pledge of Allegiance: “I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” (*Public Law 829, Chapter 806, Section 7, as amended June 14, 1954*).

Recitation: Aloud, verbatim repetition of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opportunity: A regular, planned time when all members of a school community present in school have equal chance to participate in saying the Pledge.

Active acknowledgment: Co-recitation, standing, and/or use of hand gestures (e.g., a salute or placement of hand over heart) that accompanies recitation of the Pledge.

Flag Protocol¹

Display of the Flag of the United States

The Flag must be displayed, weather permitting, on school buildings or grounds on every school day and on every legal holiday or day proclaimed by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or the President of the United States for special observance.

Display Inside the Building

A Flag must be displayed in the assembly hall or other room where opening exercises/announcements on each school day are held as well as in every classroom.

Flag Code for Buildings

The Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) shall observe the flag protocols for raising and lowering the flag, including designation of full mast or half mast, pursuant to MGL Chapter 71, Section 69 and/or as followed by other public buildings in the Town of Brookline.

Amendment Passed by the [Select Board](#) ~~of Selectmen~~ on May 18, 1970

“Flags are to be flown on such other occasions of local, state or national significance as may from time to time be determined by the Executive Secretary to the [Select Board](#) ~~of Selectmen~~ upon receipt of a specific request and recommendation from a Board, Committee or Commission, or from its duly authorized representative(s).”

¹ Flag protocol based on 1966 Manual of Administration.

I 3 c.1. Lowering the Flag: (Voted 6/4/73, #73-174; amended 4/28/11, #11-30)

It is the policy of the Brookline School Committee (BSC) that the American Flag at all PSB buildings shall be lowered to half-mast in the event of a death of a presently enrolled student.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

While Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, s. 69 requires teachers to lead their classes in a daily recital of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the Courts have determined that it is unconstitutional for any student or staff to be compelled to participate in the Pledge. Therefore, we believe that no member of the school community can be compelled by policy to recite or lead a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

The BSC is committed, however, to honoring longstanding civic tradition and practice, which is for Brookline students to learn and have an opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance in school. The following, therefore, will guide all PSB schools regarding recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Learning/Recitation of the Pledge in Schools

A PSB Principal/Head of School (or his/her designee) shall allow a member of the school community an opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance once a week as a part of school-wide morning announcements.

The Pledge of Allegiance will be preceded with the following statement: “

Non-Coercive Environment

PSB Goal 4 - Celebration of Respect for Human Differences, a Core Value of the PSB, informs our practice will be observed. The Pledge of Allegiance will be preceded with the following or a substantially similar statement by the Principal/Head of School or their designee: “We will next recite the Pledge of Allegiance. In our community of many nationalities and beliefs, we recognize that the United States Pledge of Allegiance is less meaningful for some community members. Reciting the Pledge is not required; a respectful silence is expected from everyone who chooses not to participate.” Public recitation of the Pledge will be received with respectful silence, as would be the norm for all school-wide announcements. Any individual in the school may choose to recite the Pledge along with the public recitation.

No staff member or student shall cause or encourage any other individual in a school to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or establish in any way a norm of active acknowledgment.

No staff member or student may prevent, prohibit, or demean active acknowledgment (or absence of acknowledgment) of the Pledge by another student or staff member.

Pedagogical Context and Learning

The BSC believes the most important lessons to be drawn from the Pledge of Allegiance are best learned in the context of the regular curriculum and therefore supports Brookline Learning Expectations that promote age- and grade-appropriate discussion of the Pledge, its historical practice and significance, and the debates around compulsory recitation in schools.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as requiring recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance in the Public Schools of Brookline.

J 1 f. Assignment of Students to Schools:

Voted 10/6/81, #81-461; 5/7/84, #84-171; 5/11/93, #93-148; 6/7/01, #01-65, #01-66, #01-67; 6/14/01, #01-77; 2/7/02, #02-14; 3/25/04, #04-23 and #04-25; 3/15/12, #12-18; 2/14/13, #13-13; 3/12/15, #15-16)

31. ~~Buffer~~School Zones

a. Establishment of School and Buffer Zones

Each elementary school will have a school zone associated with it, i.e. addresses or groups of addresses near that school. Students residing in that school zone are assigned to that respective school.

In order to help mitigate overcrowding in a grade or school and/or help maintain balanced class sizes across our elementary schools, the School Committee may establish school attendance-“buffer zones,” i.e. addresses or groups of addresses on or near elementary school district boundaries, from which new students may be assigned by the Superintendent or his/her designee to any of the immediate multiple designated school districts.

While committed to neighborhood elementary schools, the School Committee believes buffer zones are a necessary component of any strategy to manage the impacts of enrollment growth because they provide the Superintendent greater flexibility to assign students to schools equitably with regards to where space and resources, affording the best possible education for those all students.

b. ~~Family Preference~~School Assignment for Students Residing in Buffer Zones & Sibling Assignment

With respect to the assignment of new families students residing in buffer zones:

1. The preference of the family/caregiver(s) will be considered in making the initial assignment.
2. Unless the family/caregiver(s) requests a different assignment, which will be considered according to the policy on out-of-district zone transfers below, subsequent assignments of siblings in a given family will be made to the same school.

c. Periodic Review, Modification, Expansion, or Reassessment of Buffer Zone Need

In order to underscore the School Committee’s objective of maintaining strong neighborhood schools and reducing the uncertainty felt by some families who move into buffer zones, the School Committee shall periodically review the PSB’s need for buffer zones based on enrollments as well as the experience of the community with the buffer zones. Based on any such review, the School Committee may modify or expand buffer zones to include additional schools for potential student assignment provided, however, that such review does not guarantee repeal of any given buffer zone.

d. Public Access to Buffer Zone Information

A current map and full list and description of school attendance districts and buffer zones shall be available from the Town’s GIS Department online through the Town’s website, or in print form upon request.

42. ~~Open Enrollment~~Requesting assignment to a school outside the student school/buffer zone

Open enrollment is defined as a condition whereby a resident of the Town whose child student or their family/caregiver(s) may request assignment to a does not reside in a specific elementary school even if they do not reside in a school or buffer district zone associated with that school. The decision to grant the request is; may request admission to a school in that district.

While students have a right to attend the elementary school in the school district where they reside, the Brookline School Committee endorses a policy of open enrollment, subject to certain provisions set forth

~~below~~With respect to out-of-district transfer requests, the following will be considered~~considerations~~:

- ~~1. The class size in the school district of the applicant, and that in the school being requested;~~
- ~~2. The overall crowding conditions and staff/pupil loads in the school district of the applicant and that in the school being requested;~~
- ~~3. The parents' reason for the request;~~
- ~~4. The educational well-being of the student, including the opinions of the Principals of both schools and other staff members.~~

~~These considerations -which-~~are designed to support the class size policies of the Public Schools of Brookline, to ensure even utilization of individual building resources and staff throughout the system, and to protect the educational well-being of the students. If ~~an assignment -transfer-~~is approved ~~for~~^{to} one ~~student~~~~child in a family~~, there ~~can be~~^{is} no guarantee that a sibling will be granted similar approval.

~~Children of a resident~~Students whose residence within the Town ~~change moves from one school district to another within the Town~~such that they are no longer within the associated school zone or an associated ~~buffer zone~~ may be granted permission to remain ~~at~~ⁱⁿ the former school ~~district~~ upon request to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. ~~[~~^{ALTERNATIVE TO PRIOR SENTENCE: Students whose residence changes from one school zone to another within the Town may remain at the former school through the conclusion of the school year, and will be assumed to remain at that school unless they request reassignment by the August 15th before the following school year, or unless notified of reassignment by the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee by the August 15th before the following school year.]}~~If permission to remain at the former school is granted, T~~he transportation of students to ~~out of district~~ schools shall be the responsibility of the student's family ~~caregiver(s)~~[.] -

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~~32. Out of District Transfer Requests~~Assignment Authority

~~With respect to out of district transfer requests, the following will be considered:~~

- ~~1. The class size in the school district of the applicant, and that in the school being requested;~~
- ~~2. The overall crowding conditions and staff/pupil loads in the school district of the applicant and that in the school being requested;~~
- ~~3. The parents' reason for the request;~~
- ~~4. The educational well-being of the student, including the opinions of the Principals of both schools and other staff members.~~

The Superintendent of Schools, based on a recommendation from the ~~Office of Student Affairs~~Department of ~~Data and Information Systems in the Office of Administration and Finance, which manages student enrollment~~, shall have the sole responsibility of deciding ~~out of district transfer requests and the assignment of new families residing in buffer zones (see below), school assignments in accordance with School Committee policy.~~

~~3. Buffer Zones~~

~~a. Establishment of Buffer Zones~~

~~In order to help mitigate overcrowding in a grade or school and/or help maintain balanced class sizes across our elementary schools, the School Committee may establish school attendance "buffer zones," i.e. addresses or groups of addresses on or near elementary school district boundaries from which new students may be assigned by the Superintendent or his/her designee to any of the immediate school districts.~~

~~While committed to neighborhood elementary schools, the School Committee believes buffer zones are a necessary component of any strategy to manage the impacts of enrollment growth because they provide the Superintendent greater flexibility to assign students to schools where space and resources afford the best possible education for those students.~~

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~~b. Family Preference & Sibling Assignment~~

~~With respect to the assignment of new families residing in buffer zones:~~

- ~~1. The preference of the family will be considered in making the initial assignment.~~
- ~~2. Unless the family requests a different assignment, which will be considered according to the policy on out of district transfers, subsequent assignments of siblings in a given family will be made to the same school.~~

~~c. Periodic Review, Modification, Expansion, or Reassessment of Buffer Zone Need~~

~~In order to underscore the School Committee's objective of maintaining strong neighborhood schools and reducing the uncertainty felt by some families who move into buffer zones, the School Committee shall periodically review the PSD's need for buffer zones based on enrollments as well as the experience of the community with the buffer zones. Based on any such review, the School Committee may modify or expand buffer zones to include additional schools for potential student assignment provided, however, that such review does not guarantee repeal of any given buffer zone.~~

~~d. Public Access to Buffer Zone Information~~

~~A current map and full list and description of school attendance districts and buffer zones shall be available from the Town's GIS Department online through the Town's website, or in print form upon request.~~

4. Temporary Relocation of Students and/or Classrooms: (Voted 2/14/13, #13-13)

In response to extraordinary circumstances, including, but not limited to, space constraints from high enrollment or capital renovation/construction, the Superintendent of Schools may, at his or her discretion, in consultation with the School Committee, ~~and in accordance with the goals outlined in the School Committee's policy J 1 e. Assignment of Students to Schools/Buffer Zones,~~ temporarily relocate a classroom or classrooms of students in grades K-12 to spaces outside of the school to which they are assigned. Such temporary relocation may be sited in rental space or other buildings within the PSD or Town, including other elementary schools. Any such relocation shall be temporary, shall terminate when the need for such relocation ends, and shall not exceed 2 years without a vote of the School Committee on or before March 15th of the second year of implementation. Students relocated under this provision shall retain their original school assignment status for all other purposes including, but not limited to, matriculation and calculations of school enrollment.

SECTION J STUDENTS

2. Placement

a. Kindergarten Entrance Age:

(Voted 5/11/93, #93-150; 5/18/93, #93-154; 3/1/94, #94-14; 3/14/96, #96-24; 2/7/02, #02-18; 3/21/02, #02-32; 4/25/02, #02-45; 11/15/10, #10-86)

In order for a child to be eligible to enter kindergarten, he/she must have reached the age of five (5) years on or before August 31 of the year in which he/she enters kindergarten. No exceptions shall be made.

J 2 b. Assignment of Students to Classes: (Voted 11/24/87, #87-576)

The grade level or class placement of students shall be determined by ~~school department~~Public Schools of Brookline (PSB) staff in accordance with the following guidelines established by the staff and approved by the School Committee:

J 2 b. 1. Class Placement/Grade Level: Transferees: (Voted 11/24/87, #87-576)

1. Decisions regarding the placement of students transferring into ~~the Public Schools of Brookline~~PSB from other systems shall be made by the Principal in the Elementary Schools after consultation with appropriate specialists and by the House Heads after consultation with the Guidance Counselors and Department Coordinators at the High School.
2. The following factors shall be considered:
 - a. The child's age, ability, achievement, social development, and previous grade.
 - b. Scores and evaluations on such tests as are utilized by ~~the Public Schools of Brookline~~PSB.
 - c. Parent/~~caregiver at~~ input.
 - d. Input from the child's previous teacher, where possible.
3. Appeals
 - a. Elementary school parents/~~caregiver(s)~~ may appeal the decision of the ~~Principal~~ to the ~~Assistant Deputy~~ Superintendent for ~~Curriculum and Instruction~~Teaching and Learning and to the Superintendent of Schools. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.
 - b. High School parents may appeal the decision of the ~~House Head to the~~Head of School to the ~~Deputy Assistant~~ Superintendent for ~~Teaching and Learning~~Curriculum and Instruction, and to the Superintendent. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.
4. ~~The Brookline Public Schools~~PSB will not engage in or pay for additional testing or other diagnostic procedures as part of the placement process.

Commented [NM1]: I don't know what the current practice is but I know this is outdated. Does it all happen in central?

Commented [NM2]: Is it still principal?

Commented [NM3]: Is it still head of school?

J 2 b. 2. Promotion and Retention of Students (Voted 11/24/87, #87-576; 2/12/09, #09-13)

1. Regular promotions of all pupils who have attained a satisfactory proficiency shall be made at the close of the school year with the approval of the elementary school Principal and the Head of School at the High School.
2. Student grade retention shall be determined as appropriate by the elementary school Principal or the High School Head of School.

a. Factors to be considered in these actions shall include:

1. The child's age, social development and previous grade and achievement levels.
2. Scores and evaluations on such tests as are utilized by ~~PSB~~the Brookline Public Schools.
3. The recommendations of the relevant Dean (BHS), the teacher(s), guidance counselor and social worker, as appropriate.
4. Parent/~~caregiver~~ at-input.

b. Pupils who for two consecutive years have been in the same class and who have been constant in attendance, who produce a certificate from their teacher that they have worked faithfully during that time may be promoted if deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools.

3. Appeal of a decision of the elementary school Principal or High School Head of School may be made to the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and to the Superintendent of Schools. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

J 2 b. 3. Grade Acceleration

(Voted 2/12/09, #09-13)

1. ~~The Public Schools of Brookline~~PSB recognizes that children develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically at different rates. While the vast majority of children are well served by progressing through the preK-8 elementary system, there may be a few exceptional children who have mastered concepts and skills far beyond their grade level peers, have exhausted all available resources, and are in need of a different academic experience. In these situations, careful consideration must be taken to determine the best course of action for meeting the needs of these children.

Grade Acceleration, defined as students being placed in a grade ahead of their usual placement by age, may be one viable alternative. It should, however, be viewed as an exception in educational protocol, requiring careful consideration and support.

Grade Acceleration decisions will be based on a comprehensive evaluation of the child, using multiple measures including, but not limited to: ability tests, aptitude tests, achievement tests, measures of developmental areas and social skills, and samples of student work. In addition, students being considered for Grade Acceleration must demonstrate proficiency, or demonstrate the ability to become proficient independently, of the ~~Brookline-PSB~~ Learning Expectations within the four core subjects of the grade(s) being skipped. Based on these outcomes and in collaboration with the parents and the school personnel involved (principal, classroom teacher, ~~ECS resource teacher,~~ guidance counselor, school psychologist, ~~ECS program coordinator~~and other educators/staff as applicable), ~~the School Department~~PSB will determine the best grade placement for the student.

J 2 b. 4. Student Grouping, Inclusion and Placement Practices: Originally approved: 1/9/97; 1/23/97, #97-4; Revised Policy Adopted by School Committee 3/11/10, #10-19.

~~The Public Schools of Brookline~~ (PSB) is committed to identifying and eliminating barriers to educational achievement and to providing educational opportunities that ensure every student meets our standards for achievement and is challenged in meaningful ways. To this end, we consciously and explicitly hold all students to high expectations and engage in grouping, inclusion and placement practices that create the necessary classroom conditions for all students to achieve at high levels.

Consistent with Massachusetts General Laws and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) with respect to student grouping, inclusion and placement practices, it is the policy of the Brookline School Committee that:

- All students are expected to meet high learning standards as defined by High School Course Syllabi and Expectations and pK-8 Learning Expectations in all grades, courses and levels. With thorough knowledge of their students' strengths and needs, and with resources and support available to them, classroom teachers will have primary responsibility for identifying, coordinating, and providing learning opportunities that promote high achievement for all their students.
- All classes and sections are open to all students, including elementary school enrichment programs, high school courses and, in the case of students with disabilities, general education classrooms. Parents/caregivers, school personnel and students (where appropriate) shall collaborate in the decision-making process to determine the placement that is in the best interest of the student consistent with state and federal law. The goal is for the student to be in the most challenging and least restrictive class/section available.
- Elementary classroom teachers will use a variety of grouping strategies to challenge and engage students in meaningful ways. Groups created in an elementary classroom or grade shall be flexible and dynamic so that the composition of these groups can change over the course of a year.
- When determining class placement of students at any grade level in elementary school and in the creation of middle school class lists, consideration shall be given to various student learning needs. In order to create effective learning environments and maintain valued diversity within each classroom, efforts will be made to place students with some peers who share similar profiles so that teachers can more effectively address the strengths and needs of all students.

Furthermore, the Superintendent is charged with developing and implementing the following programs and procedures:

- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop guidelines outlining the classroom practices and school procedures aligned with this policy.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee, in collaboration with school principals, will create and implement programs and practices to support and develop teachers' understanding of content, instruction and classroom conditions that meet the needs of diverse learners consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 38Q and in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 38Q½.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee will provide additional or alternative opportunities for students who demonstrate mastery of the learning expectations in a particular subject area. Mastery will be determined by various and multiple PSB assessments and by school personnel. These opportunities are intended to provide students with curricular challenge in a setting appropriate to the student's social and emotional development, and will include the possibility of elementary student enrollment in BHS courses, as well as high school student participation at local colleges or universities.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop programs and processes that enable all high school students who wish to progress into a higher level class to attend courses, including, but not limited to, summer school classes that may be necessary for such progression.

- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop programs and practices that encourage and enable teachers to provide instructional differentiation at all academic levels (including, but not limited to, enrichment and challenge support) so that all students are appropriately challenged academically and experiencing progress at the elementary level.
- The Superintendent or his/her designee will develop practices, aligned with the IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B, s. 3, to ensure that students are educated in a general education setting (with appropriate support) to the maximum extent possible. Determination of educational setting will be made through the special education team process, informed by a child study team at each building.

J 2 b. 4. Class Size and Sectioning

The decision of class size and number of class sections per grade is ultimately a decision between the Principal and the Superintendent. Traditionally the district has had guidelines of less than 22 students in K-2 and 25 students in 3-8. This is not a firm cap but rather a best practice. However, class size and number of sections are determined by several factors in addition to the guidelines, including but not limited to:

- Classroom size and features
- Number of students with disabilities
- Teacher experience
- Whether there are additional educators assigned to support the classroom
- Feasibility of assigning new students to other elementary schools

When class size exceeds guidelines, the School Committee supports the district/building leadership in identifying ways to ensure student learning is maximized, including multi-grade classrooms, additional classroom supports, and other means as deemed appropriate.

Draft building access policy

The Public Schools of Brookline are committed to operating safe and well-functioning schools that are also welcoming of the public and the school community. Accordingly, building leaders are expected to work with central building operations and administration to develop a plan for school access that achieves the following objectives:

- **Supports the educational and teaching needs of students and caregivers.** This includes allowing for access by caregivers before, during and after dropoff and pickup that does not interfere with the safety or operation of the building. Educators will be given discretion to step away from any caregiver interactions as needed to begin and end the school day. Schools will continue to maintain their established security protocols during and after the school day. The intent is to increase educator-caregiver and caregiver-caregiver interaction, and return a sense of community to the building itself.
- **Supports community access to building spaces.** This includes allowing for alternative building uses to broaden community access and support - for example, partnerships with the Brookline Senior Center for after hours/weekend use of school spaces. The physical infrastructure of the Brookline Public Schools represents a significant investment by the community and should be accessible to the community and a benefit to the community.