
RECORD OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ON **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2024** AT 6:00 PM, IN THE WALSH SCHOOL COMMITTEE ROOM, 5TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL. STATUTORY NOTICE OF THIS MEETING WAS FILED WITH THE TOWN CLERK.

School Committee Members Present: David Pearlman (Chair), Andy Liu (Vice Chair), Helen Charlupski, Steven Ehrenberg, Suzanne Federspiel, Valerie Frias (remote), Natalia Linos, Sarah Moghtader, and Mariah Nobrega (remote). *Student Representative present:* Laura Cleves. *Staff present:* Dr. Linus Guillory, Superintendent; Dr. Jodi Fortuna, Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning; Dr. Susan Givens, Deputy Superintendent for Administration & Finance; Liza O'Connell, Interim Deputy Superintendent for Student Services (remote); Gabe McCormick, Senior Director of Teaching and Learning; Anthony Meyer, BHS Head of School; John Andrews, BHS English Curriculum Coordinator; Talmadge Nardi and Alison Whitebone, Brookline High School 9th Grade English teachers.

Mr. Pearlman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS
a. Consent Agenda

ACTION 24-19:

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski, and seconded by Ms. Federspiel, the School Committee voted, by roll call, with 7 in favor (Mr. Pearlman, Dr. Liu, Ms. Charlupski, Ms. Federspiel, Ms. Frias, Dr. Linos, and Ms. Moghtader; Ms. Nobrega was not present for the vote), 0 opposed, and 1 abstention (Dr. Ehrenberg), to approve the following Consent Agenda items:

- i. Minutes of February 1, 2024 School Committee Meeting
- ii. Minutes of February 12, 2024 School Committee Meeting with Legislators
- iii. Acceptance of Gifts (Attachment A)
- iv. Student Trip: Brookline High School Day Trip to New York City, Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum, May 17, 2024 (Attachment B)

2. STUDENT REPORT

Ms. Cleves presented her report (Attachment C), focusing on student attitudes about the proposal to delevel 9th Grade English courses. She reported the results of a survey that she circulated on Monday to all BHS students, to which she received 362 responses (30.9% of respondents were freshmen, 25.4% of them sophomores, 23.8% of them juniors, and 19.9% were seniors). She acknowledged the limitations of her survey, but stated that the responses do provide valuable insights for the Committee's consideration. Specifically, responses show that an overwhelming majority of students say they would choose a "just right" or challenging assignment over an easier assignment in an unlevelled course. The survey also showed that students found unlevelled course options appealing primarily because they accommodate more diverse learning styles, reduce pressure from parents and peers to take all Honors/AP courses, and allow students to get to know other peers they wouldn't have otherwise had they taken a leveled course. Ms. Cleves recounted her successful experience in the unlevelled 9th grade Social

Studies course. She hoped that her statement would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of deleveling.

3. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT, INCLUDING THE SPOTLIGHT ON EXCELLENCE

Dr. Guillory shared his report (Attachment D), highlighting the Pierce School's Leap Day activity (searching the school for 200 itty, bitty plastic frogs - the unofficial mascot of Leap Day - that were hidden throughout the building; as of the meeting time, 140 had been found!). Dr. Guillory provided an update on the school district's partnership with Facing History and Ourselves. He reported that in the 22-23 school year, Facing History worked with the grade 6-8 team, modeling their pedagogical approach, and then specifically worked with grade 8 teachers to explore curriculum materials related to the teaching of civics. In the 23-24 school year, Facing History is facilitating professional development for social studies teachers in grades 6-12 on Civil Discourse. Finally, for the 24-25 school year, the school district has applied for the Genocide Education Grant to work with Facing History to teach young people a sense of agency to stand up to bigotry and hate, and to make choices for a more just and equitable world. Genocide education provides us with a crucial opportunity to do just that, weaving together historical case studies and ongoing current events. Dr. Guillory noted that Holocaust Education is covered in Grade 10 as part of the Interwar Era or World War II units. This topic was moved from the 8th grade to 10th grade to align with the 2018 Massachusetts State Standards. In teaching the Holocaust, teachers cover the rise of anti-Semitism during the interwar era, the steps that led to the Holocaust, the "Final Solution", the experience of Jewish people and others who were targeted during this time period, and the resistance by Jewish people and others. The Superintendent continued his report, providing an update on the district's Literacy Study, being conducted by Hill for Literacy. Hill for Literacy, an education nonprofit that helps teachers better translate literacy research and assessment data into highly effective instruction that results in long-term success, is conducting classroom walkthroughs over the next couple of weeks to collect trend data specific to literacy. In recognition of Black History Month, Dr. Guillory highlighted some of the classroom assignments, research projects, and art activities that students across the district completed in celebration of important Black artists, scientists, and activists. He also shared news of the exhibit created by the Hayes School Young Scholars Program - on display at the Brookline Public Library - on the life of the school's namesake, Roland Hayes. The Superintendent closed his report highlighting: the BHS TAP Challenge (Together Against Plastics); availability of Brookline Pride Apparel for online purchases; BEEP student artwork created with local artist Erin Palazzolo Lopara; and the Runkle middle school winter dance. Ms. Nobrega asked that Dr. Guillory, in future Superintendent Reports, consider highlighting some of the bigger projects and issues that he is focused on, in addition to the many exciting school-based activities happening across the district.

Dr. Guillory announced the Spotlight on Excellence (Attachment E): 4th and 5th graders at Runkle School sharing their family's Lunar New Year customs and traditions, an initiative begun and led this year by Runkle teacher Haillie Shinohara. Ms. Shinohara, and three Runkle students - Bianca, Timmy, and Inara - joined the meeting to share the meaning of Lunar New Year, and highlight some of the ways their families celebrate this important holiday, including participating in a Lion Dance Club, making and eating special foods, visiting with family and friends, wearing traditional clothes, and giving and receiving special "red envelopes". The students proudly shared their traditions and customs with the School Committee, and members thanked them - and Ms. Shinohara - for their authentic and moving presentations. Dr. Guillory presented Ms. Shinohara

with the Spotlight on Excellence Award in gratitude for her having started this meaningful new tradition at Runkle School.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following members of the Brookline community provided public comment in favor of maintaining the current, leveled 9th Grade English course offerings at Brookline High School: Joshua Paradise, Masha Kogan, Toby Paradise, Elliot Wayne, Jody Calabro, Uri Mariash, Quentin Krueel, Sid Srivastava, Danielle Lenz, Miriam Enos, Tal Kenet, Katherine Dougan, Marco Bitran, and Ruvi Kitov. Their comments included:

- It is important to preserve student choices at Brookline High School, including choices by academic level. Keep the unleveled pilot program, but also keep the honors option for those students who choose it. Student sectioning should not be mandated. Don't rob students of academic choices.
- Students learn in different ways, and at different rates, so it is important to have leveled course choices that reflect their needs and strengths. Students requiring more challenge may become bored, or be held back in their academic achievement, in an unleveled course. If a student has a strong capacity in a particular area, they should be challenged at the highest level to feed that passion.
- In an unleveled course, educators are required to do too much differentiation; differentiation only works well in small group settings.
- If the school district only offers the unleveled option, families with the financial means will seek extra opportunities outside of school, further exacerbating the achievement gaps. Student with the least financial means rely on the rigor of BHS courses to prepare them for success in college.
- To address the disproportionality in Honors courses, the school district should carefully review the high school course placement process, including the hidden bias that might be hindering the advancement of students who are just on the cusp of academic growth (moving from one level up to another level).
- Before considering a change of this magnitude, a rigorous review of the available data must be conducted. It must be clear that the change will bring about the intended outcomes. There is simply not enough available data about the pilot program, which only started six months ago.
- Do not tarnish the wonderful academic reputation that Brookline High School enjoys by removing 9th grade English honors. BHS is the crown jewel in the Brookline school district.
- The level of merit aid awarded to high school students is dependent upon how many honors courses they took in high school; reducing honors options will have a financial impact on college affordability.
- From a student perspective, based on participation in the unleveled 9th grade Social Studies course, in reality there aren't real opportunities to push yourself academically in an unleveled course. For Honors students, the unleveled class felt like a study hall and did not prepare students for advanced upper-level courses, including AP.
- Everyone supports the goal of raising the achievement levels of all students, but many object to the method to reach that goal. More concrete data must be available before making all 9th grade English course unleveled. A similar deleveled initiative at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School was not successful; we should learn from their mistake.

The following members of the Brookline community provided public comment in favor of expanding the 9th grade unlevelled pilot for all students: Barbara Brown, Jen Roberts, and Gary Shiffman. Their comments included:

- When 9th graders were located at Old Lincoln School, during the school construction period, there was noted improvement in student achievement. The 9th graders - all together in one building - developed a deep sense of community that influenced their academic outcomes. The Committee should refer to the successful deleveling work being undertaken at Lexington High School.
- The 9th grade model in the new 22 Tappan Street building on the BHS campus provides a supportive location for this important year of transition. The protective factors of this smaller community, in the areas of social and emotional learning, are important. Allowing students to join together in unlevelled English courses would be another important step in fostering this important sense of community, and provide mental health benefits for students.
- The deleveling of the 9th grade Social Studies course (WHISP) had the benefit of improving behavior: the unlevelled courses looked like the former Honors courses, as students were influenced by the behavior of their peers. The enrollment in each class was more representative of the student body, and less segregated.

5. PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS OF CURRENT ISSUES

a. Presentation, Discussion and Possible Vote:

Brookline High School 9th Grade English Course Changes

Dr. Fortuna opened the presentation, noting that staff have been tasked with disrupting the systems and structures that have resulted in historically marginalized students being underrepresented in honors and advanced level courses at Brookline High School. Staff have taken a multi-layered approach to address this problem, including the Reimagining 9th Grade Initiative. The unlevelled 9th Grade English pilot course, planned over the course of 18 months, is one component of this work. The pilot, unlevelled course was approved by the School Committee in January 2023 as an option for 9th grade student course selection; it has been running since September 2023, with 112 students in 5 sections. In addition to the unlevelled pilot course, BHS offers Honors and College Prep (formerly Standard) level English courses for 9th grade students. Staff presented a proposal (Attachment F) to make the pilot unlevelled course the only option for all 9th grade students at Brookline High School, starting in the 2024-2025 school year. Presenting staff included Anthony Meyer, Head of School; John Andrews, English Curriculum Coordinator at BHS; Gabe McCormick, Senior Director for Teaching and Learning; and Alison Whitebone and Talmadge Nardi, 9th grade English teachers. The overall challenge that staff have been asked to address is the ongoing and persistent disparities in course level enrollment by race and IEP status. Mr. McCormick provided an overview of some of the data that has been presented to the public, during School Committee meetings, since 2017; specifically, he shared data for English course enrollment in the 2016-2017 school year in English courses by race, and by disability status; English course enrollment in 2022-2023, by course enrollment; English course enrollment in the 2023-2024 school year, by course enrollment with the addition of the pilot course; and course enrollment by race. Mr. McCormick shared examples of several public staff presentations on disproportionality, and connected the Reimagining 9th Grade work to the district's Vision and Goals, and described its close alignment with the new District Strategic Plan.

Mr. Meyer provided information about the Reimagining 9th Grade Initiative, the goal of which is to expand access to the most rigorous course content at BHS, while also fostering a sense

of community. Reimagining 9th Grade seeks to ensure access to the full BHS experience by delivering high-quality, engaging courses for all students; develop a healthy and integrated BHS community in a students' first year; diversify the BHS course enrollment demographics in grades 9-12; and guide students toward more appropriate leveling decisions for grades 10-12. BHS English teachers Ms. Nardi and Ms. Whitebone, who are currently teaching the 9th grade unlevleed pilot course, discussed the course concept and design, reporting that the goals for the pilot are to establish a new course – not a midpoint between College Prep and Honors; to set students up for success at BHS; to create a strong entry point for all students; to build a 9th grade community; to extend learning beyond the school walls; and to increase parent/caregiver involvement. The unlevleed pilot course seeks to demonstrate that equity and rigor are not mutually exclusive. Ms. Nardi and Ms. Whitebone provided information about the texts and assignments used in the course, including whole class texts and choice texts, whole class writing assignments, and some writing assignments by choice; grouping in the class is very flexible. Teachers have made a significant effort to connect the course to the local literary community, and field trips outside of the classroom – tied to book themes – have included or will include an American Repertory Theatre performance, a Historical Tour of Chinatown, a visit to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, a trip to the Food Truck festival, and guest authors and poets. They described the instructional approach in the course as follows: each quarter's content is thematically paired with topics explored in the 9th grade social studies WHISP course (power, community, wealth and identity); students have a mix of whole class assignments (required for all students) and options-based assignments (self-selected); students can move fluidly between options (many students start with easier work and increase their challenges as the year progresses); instruction takes a UDL approach (Universal Design for Learning: high rigor combined with high support) that is supported by training and observations by Landmark School Outreach consultants; and each unit has a connection to a community event such as a field trip, student exhibition, or a guest author. Instruction in the pilot course emphasizes rigor: it includes whole-class instruction of canonical texts that are taught in 9th grade Honors (*The Odyssey* and *Much Ado About Nothing*); it adds optional higher challenge texts to go beyond the length and lexile of the Honors classes; all 9th grade classes have identified 12 drafted pieces of writing (scaffolded assignments with multiple drafts and revisions); all 9th grade classes include the same vocabulary and grammar standards; and students in all 9th grade English classes take a common midyear exam. Ms. Whitebone and Ms. Nardi noted that the use of proven protocols for English instruction are effectively utilized in the pilot course, and include accessing and teaching Shakespeare; developing solid discussion skills; tackling complex texts; using peer and self-editing skills; daily journaling and note taking; employing variations on the Socratic Seminar; and using Brown University's The Performance Cycle and the National Writing Project's Peer Review Process.

Ms. Nardi provided information about the current student population in all 9th grade English courses, by MCAS score. In reviewing this data, and trying to understand how enrollment in the unlevleed pilot might be affecting students who scored "exceeding expectations" on the 8th grade MCAS, they compared the 8th grade ELA MCAS scores to the results of the 9th grade English midyear exam (a common assessment for all 9th graders in all levels), and observed no drop in student performance. She did note that the 8th grade MCAS exam is a reading and writing exam, while the 9th grade midyear exam is only a writing exam – so the comparison is not exact, but it does provide one promising data point to suggest that enrollment in the unlevleed course does not negatively impact those students who scored high on the 8th grade ELA MCAS. Mr. McCormick shared data on 1st semester 9th grade English grades by race and course, midyear

exam results by course and race, and results from the student midyear survey (that included questions such as: How would you rate the pilot's ability to build community among different students in our English class? How easy is it to keep up with the workload/pace in this course? How does 9th grade English compare to 8th grade English? How would you rate the ability of your English class to provide choice points? If you had to do it all over again, which level course would you take?). Ms. Nardi and Ms. Whitebone shared data about recommendations for 10th grade English Honors, by 9th grade class level, and by race. The course recommendation process starts in February, after the release of the Course Catalog; teachers have about one month to enter a course recommendation; after March 13, parents/caregivers can override the teacher recommendation. Mr. Meyer closed the presentation with an outline of the next steps: consideration of full implementation of the pilot course for all students, starting in September 2024; and work toward a common assessment for the second semester in English. He noted that Ms. Nardi and Ms. Whitebone have been meeting weekly with the entire 9th grade English team: they have made incredible progress in preparation for the roll-out of this pilot, and are ready to move it to full implementation, a decision he supports unreservedly.

Member comments and questions:

- Additional data before approval of full implementation of the pilot is a valid request, yet so is the need for data to decide to maintain the status quo. We have already seen the data that shows wide disparities in student achievement based on race and IEP status, and this proposal provides at least one avenue to address that disparity. The mental health and social emotional benefits that might also accrue from this softer 9th grade entry to BHS are also important benefits. That being said, any change should be made cautiously, and with humility, such that the concerns expressed earlier during public comment are addressed. Further, before any proposal to possibly unlevel 9th grade math, an extremely careful review must be undertaken.
- Members expressed their respect and gratitude to the staff for making this presentation, developing the unlevelled pilot course offering, and welcoming them into their classrooms to observe the pilot course. What is missing is a clear, specific hypothesis of what the unlevelled course (as the only 9th grade English option) will achieve in terms of addressing the disparities. Once that is known, clear benchmarks can be set, and the pilot can be evaluated based on results. Making such a major change at this time does not seem prudent, though the pilot should continue as an optional course.
- The success of students enrolled in unlevelled SWS courses over the last 50 years provides a strong data set to support this proposal. SWS students performed well in unlevelled courses, and participation in unlevelled courses did not impact their college options. Looking at the whole child – academically, socially, emotionally – the soft landing that the unlevelled 9th grade English course offers is a good idea and should be supported. The superb BHS English department faculty can be trusted to roll-out the pilot to all students thoughtfully and carefully.
- Lexington High School has implemented an Honors for All 9th grade model. Why hasn't BHS considered this model? *Mr. Andrews noted that the high school believes – very strongly – in an Honors track for grades 10-12. To place a student in a 9th grade Honors for All class, and then have to move that student down to the College Prep level, would cause more harm than good. Mr. Andrews reiterated that Honors options for grades 10-12 is very important, and the proposal to unlevel is only for 9th grade English.*
- There was discussion and general support for consideration of adding an earned Honors credit option to the unlevelled pilot.

- A gap in GPA by race is shown on the midyear data for students in the unleveled pilot. What are the next steps to address the disparity? *Educators are always looking closely at performance data and adjusting their teaching practice accordingly, not just at midyear and end of year, but at all points during the school year.*
- Neighboring districts who are experimenting with deleveling report that it is a struggle to maintain academic rigor. How can we address that concern, and ensure that educators aren't reduced to "teaching to the middle"? Also, scaling from a 5-section pilot to a full 23-section implementation seems like a large amount of work in a short amount of time. *Mr. Andrews described the robust professional development that has already taken place, and the work that Ms. Nardi and Ms. Whitebone have been doing with the 9th grade English team on a weekly basis over the last several months to successfully move to full implementation.*
- The documented disparities in achievement that are observed in the 8th to 9th grade transition are real, but the root of those disparities can be traced to literacy acquisition in early elementary grades. Deficiencies in literacy acquisition compound over time, and lead to poor academic outcomes for our students. The 9th grade English unleveled pilot is innovative and important work, but a more robust inquiry, with more data, is necessary before approving a full implementation of the pilot.
- The 8th to 9th grade recommendation process should be reviewed and strengthened, to remove bias and ensure students are appropriately placed. [It was noted that recent recommendations in this area are currently being implemented.] Members asked the Superintendent to intentionally work with principals in this important area.

Superintendent Guillory commented on the unique opportunity that this proposal presents, and commended the BHS team for thoroughly explaining the rationale for expanding the pilot unleveled course to all 9th grade English sections. However, he noted that there are still bodies of work that need to be undertaken to successfully move from the pilot to full implementation. Dr. Guillory is in favor of more research and data collection before full implementation, and he is committed to working with the BHS team to move this work forward.

ACTION 24-20:

On a motion of Mr. Pearlman, and seconded by Ms. Charlupski, the School Committee VOTED, by roll call, with 7 in favor (Mr. Pearlman, Dr. Liu, Ms. Charlupski, Dr. Ehrenberg, Ms. Frias, Ms. Moghtader, and Ms. Nobrega), 2 opposed (Ms. Federspiel and Dr. Linos), and 0 abstentions, to instruct staff to continue to offer the 9th grade unleveled English pilot course at Brookline High School for a second year (2024-2025), while also maintaining the English Honors and English College prep course options in 2024-2025; and to instruct staff to continue to research, gather and share data on the pilot.

Though not part of the motion, members asked that future presentations about the 9th grade English unleveled pilot also include data from the unleveled Social Studies WHISP course, including longitudinal outcomes; and that future presentations also include data about the academic outcomes of students in the pilot class as they move to upper-level English courses.

b. FY 2025 Budget Update and Discussion

Dr. Givens provided an FY25 Budget Update to the Committee (Attachment G), including an update on the Town/School Partnership, CIP Funding, Enrollment Forecast, Information on Revolving Funds, Budget Changes, and Potential Additions. She shared the Town's "budget

thumbnail”, showing the revenues and expenditures that were shared on December 13, February 6 and February 15. She noted that there is just over \$5.6 million in free cash, a significant portion of which is earmarked for school CIP deferred maintenance items, classroom capacity leases, fixture and furniture replacement (including \$125,000 for new cafeteria tables at the BHS 115 Greenough cafeteria), and funding for school building modifications to meet IEP accommodations. The deferred maintenance items include work at Baker, Lincoln, Hayes, BHS, Lawrence, Runkle, and the Baldwin School. Dr. Givens reported that Cropper GIS presented the district’s Demographic Study Report at the February 28, 2024 Finance Subcommittee meeting. Cropper’s forecast tracks closely with the report previously conducted for the district by New England School Development Council (NESDEC); enrollment is expected to decline slightly over the next 4-5 years, after which it will rise again slowly. It is not expected that the district will reach pre-pandemic enrollment in the next 10 years. Cropper’s demographic report is a forecast that includes in-migration into the district, while the NESDEC report is a projection based on current birth trends; having data from both sources is very valuable, and will be helpful to planning capital projects and space needs. Dr. Givens shared Revolving Funds information (Attachment H) that outlined the Materials Fee program account, Circuit Breaker, Brookline Adult and Community Education, BHS Athletics program, Brookline Early Education Program, Use of Facilities Fees, Food Service fees, and fees for meals at the Tappan Green Restaurant at BHS. She also shared an “FY25 Budget Questions and Answers – February 29, 2024” document (Attachment I), that provides answers to previously asked questions including: the Education/Training/Conferences line, the increase in the OSS claims and settlements category, clarification of tuition paid to private and/or public special education schools and programs, information about the proposed Equity Audit and increased funding for the Office of Educational Equity, answers to demographic questions impacting Baker School enrollment, information about transportation (bus) costs and the upcoming bid process for bus contracts, and a breakdown of the salaries in the Office of Superintendent and School Committee. Dr. Givens continued with information about FY25 budget changes, including shifts (that don’t affect the bottom line, but rather just represent moving costs to appropriate budget lines) and reductions totaling approximately \$205,000 (such as reduced funding for the school cleaning contract, and moving some costs to the Title IIA grant).

Dr. Givens described some of the possible additions to the FY 2025 Budget Request that have previously been suggested, including (1) \$19,157 for ELA curriculum implementation; (2) \$160,396 for the addition of 2.0 FTE at the High School to address class sizes; (3) \$138,680 for additional staffing for the Pierce School when it is split between two campuses during the construction process; (4) \$225,230 to fund an expansion of the Winthrop House program to serve grades 6-8; and (5) a request by the Town Director of Public Buildings for \$187,490 for school maintenance and repair. Bids for special education transportation are due on March 7, so at this time that cost is unknown. The current FY 2025 funding gap (which includes the reductions noted earlier, but does not include any of the possible additions) is \$2,024,571. Members were asked to consider and discuss the proposed additions (1-5) and decide collectively which, if any, should be added to the FY 2025 proposed budget request. Armed with a final budget request number, and gap, staff will be able to develop a proposal with suggested reductions that will address the gap. It was agreed that item (5) won’t be added to the proposed budget request. Items 1-3 will be added to the budget request, and item 4 (with modifications to account for a phased in approach, as well as reductions for likely transportation savings) will be added to the proposed request. The new gap, with the proposed additions, totals approximately \$2.5 million. Staff are instructed to identify approximately \$3 million in budget cuts (which includes items 1-4, plus an

additional \$500,000), and share that presentation with the School Committee at the March 14, 2024 meeting for review and consideration. The School Committee expects to vote on a final FY2025 Budget Request on March 28, 2024.

6. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to report.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pearlman adjourned the meeting at 11:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Betsy Fitzpatrick
Executive Assistant
Brookline School Committee



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02445

LINUS J. GUILLORY JR., PhD
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

SUSAN K. GIVENS, Ed.D.
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT FOR ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Request for Gift Acceptance

February 28, 2024

The School Department requires specific authorization for the acceptance of gifts.

Motion: School Committee Accepts the donation listed below for school department use:

Donor	Amount	Recipient/Purpose	Account Number/Name
Amy Greene	\$1,000.00	Brookline High School Winthrop House/ For school supplies and other necessary items, in memory of Jennifer Polk who worked at Winthrop House as a social worker for many years.	3300SEF9-BHS Gift Account



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE

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LINUS J. GUILLORY JR., PHD
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

JODI L. FORTUNA, ED.D
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

BHS New York City Field Trip
Day Trip, Out-of-State Application
New York City – Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum
May 17th, 2024

For review and consideration by the
Brookline School Committee

Approval Route:	Approved	Denied	*Returned
Copies to:			
TEACHING & LEARNING	<u>JK</u>	_____	_____
SUPERINTENDENT	<u>JS</u>	_____	_____
SCHOOL COMMITTEE	_____	_____	_____
MEETING DATE	_____	_____	_____
*REASON RETURNED:	_____	_____	_____

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE

APPLICATION FOR ALL DAY TRIP, OUT-OF-STATE (not overnight)

1. Name of Field Trip: Elizabeth Brennan
2. Educator Requesting Field Trip Approval: NYC Fieldtrip
3. School: BHS Grade Level: 12
4. Have you reviewed the *School Committee Policy I 3 a. for School Sponsored Field Trips*? yes
5. Have you reviewed the document "*Administrative Procedures for School Sponsored Field Trips*"? yes
6. Have you reviewed the document "*Field Trip Planning Guide*"? yes

These documents can be found in the Staff Portal of the district website (www.brookline.k12.ma.us) in the Office of Teaching and Learning link.

7. What is your destination? NYC-Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Whitney Museum
8. What is the date and time you are leaving school? May 17th 6:30am
9. What is the date and time you are returning to school? May 17th 11:00pm
10. Do the dates of the trip conflict with any religious holidays or observances? no
11. How many days will students miss from school? one
12. How are students being transported (school bus, chartered bus, plane, rail, etc)? Chartered Bus

*If students are traveling via bus, please complete the
Requirements for Field Trip Transportation via Bus form.*

13. How many students will be participating in the field trip? 15
14. What members of the student body are eligible for the trip? Students from the AP Art and Design class

15. How are students selected to participate in this field trip?
Students who have completed and submitted their AP Art and Design portfolio to the College Board are attending the field trip.

16. What are the names and cell phone numbers of the primary staff chaperones on the trip?
Elizabeth Brennan
Sabine Strauch

17. Other than those listed in #16 above, what are the names and roles (teacher, parent, etc) of other adult chaperones who will be on the trip?

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE

18. What is the purpose of the trip and how does it relate to Brookline's Learning Expectations (K-8) or BHS Course Syllabi? see attached

19. To what extent does the field trip group reflect the diversity of the school population? What efforts will be undertaken to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the participants in this field trip reflect the diversity of the school population? see attached

20. What is the total cost per student for the field trip? see attached

21. What accommodations are made for students who cannot afford the expenses of this trip? Are partial and/or full scholarships available?

see attached

22. Will students be swimming? (please note: if swimming is planned, parents must give explicit written permission for their child to swim; students who do not have this express written permission must not be allowed to swim) _____
No

Signatures:

Educator Requesting Field Trip Approval:

Elizabeth Brennan

Date:

2/2/24

Principal:

[Signature]

Date:

2/2/24

18. What is the purpose of the trip, and how does it relate to Brookline Learning Expectations or BHS course syllabi?

The trip serves as a capstone to the students' years-long AP Art and Design class. The AP Art and Design students will have engaged in an incredibly rigorous, year-long artistic journey that the AP board calls their Sustained Investigation. In the Sustained Investigation, students developed their individual "Inquiry Statements" that, through practice, experimentation, and revision, they investigated over the school year. The students' AP "exam" (for which they will have just completed and submitted) involved creating two artwork portfolios: one solely devoted to their Sustained Investigation, one for their Selected Work, and accompanying writing that describes their exploration of ideas, materials, and processes.

Throughout the year, students engaged in this way of working by observing, analyzing, and responding to contemporary artists whose work is based on the inquiry of ideas. Students looked to contemporary artists and ideas to connect with ways of working, thinking, and seeing. The work of these artists served as a model for students to witness how an artist's work can marry concepts and design.

This field trip will allow students to continue engaging in the work in person and experience the true power of the visual arts to make us look, think, question, infer, feel, and reflect. It is launching them on their continued journey as lifelong learners as they pursue their postgraduate studies, employment, and personal interests.

While at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Whitney, students will choose a work or an idea to respond to for their last and closing assignment. The fact that our trip coincides with The Whitney's 2024 Biennelle, which is the longest-running invitational show representing artwork from artists completed within the two preceding years, is a bonus for our students, as the breadth of work and ideas explored by these contemporary artists is vast.

19. To what extent does the field trip group reflect the diversity of the school population? What efforts will be made to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the participants in the field trip reflect the diversity of the school population?

The Visual Arts Department has made a concerted effort to promote our program to students from all programs in our school. Our coordinator and department members have contacted programs such as METCO, Steps to Success, African and Latino Scholars, and Whintrop House to promote our program and express how we value their voices and, as a school, need to hear their voices through their artwork. As a result, we have seen an increase in enrollment in these programs. Currently, the AP class represents students from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities.

In addition, I make it a point to show artists from underrepresented groups, including artists of color, artists from the queer community, and women artists. The museums have policies and an expanded mission to address Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

20. What is the cost per student for the field trip? I received a grant from the PTO for \$2500.00, which will significantly reduce the trip cost
. The cost for each student will be \$100.00.

Cost Breakdown-

\$2756.47	<i>Charter UP Transportation</i>
\$350	<i>Driver Gratuity</i>
\$252.00	<i>The Metropolitan Museum of Art</i>
\$279.00	<i>The Whitney Museum</i>
\$3637.47	<i>Subtotal</i>
Minus \$2500.00	<i>PTO Grant</i>
\$1137.47	<i>Total</i>

Divided by 15 –

76.00 (\$75.88)

\$24 for scholarship

\$100

*Cost per student- Remaining funds will be used for
miscellaneous needs while in NYC*

21. What accommodations are made for students who can not afford the expense of this trip?

Are partial scholarships or full scholarships available?

In the financial planning of the trip, I have included additional costs per student that will allow a full or partial scholarship for students who require assistance.

Thank you, Mr. Pearlman. Good evening everyone. My name is Laura Cleves and I'm your School Committee Student Representative. I hope folks are doing well.

I'd like to get ahead of myself by saying that this report will sadly not feature a video; I'm just as dismayed as you are. Maybe this is too presumptuous for me to say but they've become a mainstay of every second School Committee meeting per month. Unfortunately the topic of my report, student attitudes towards 9th grade deleveling, doesn't lend itself as well to a video format, so we'll be going old school for this one. Apologies.

In any case, I guess I should provide context as to why I picked this particular, very contentious topic. First, it's a controversial one. It's all parents and teachers seem to be talking about these days, for good reason; besides already being a big shift away from traditional course leveling, many assert that the potential impacts of such a move are at worst, detrimental and at best, inconclusive. Second of all, it's fair to say the discourse surrounding 9th grade deleveling is largely dominated by parents. While I have nothing against the role parents play in their children's education, I think that teachers and students should have their viewpoints adequately represented as well; I sought them out for the sake of this presentation.

I'd like to preface the bulk of my findings by commenting on how I gauged student attitudes towards deleveling. This Monday, I sent out a survey to the Canvas pages of all four grades at BHS; at the time of writing this report, I have received 362 responses; of the total number of respondents, 30.9% of them were freshmen, 25.4% of them sophomores, 23.8% of them juniors, and 19.9% seniors.

I'd also like to acknowledge the limitations of my survey. For one, my data set was skewed. I did not ask all respondents what level English they took, just freshmen. Of 9th graders, 74.5% were current honors students. As for the rest of the students surveyed, I do not know what their 9th grade experience was. Based on the open responses, I believe that a significant number of students, roughly a third, also took honors. All this to say that what I gathered from the survey does seem to represent the feelings of students who may have taken or who are currently taking Honors English, which is not a perfect representation of the entire school body. The equity component behind this shift is also important to address, and while I think doing a race breakdown would've provided valuable data, I don't think it's prudent of me to be asking my peers how they identify racially to then draw a conclusion that may or may not be accurate. In any case, I will be addressing the equity aspect behind deleveling further on in the presentation.

Despite the limitations of my survey, I still think there are some valuable insights to be found within my data. A concern I think many have is that in an

unleveled course, where students can opt to complete assignments of varying levels of difficulty, students will be less likely to push themselves to take a harder option. My data says otherwise, with an overwhelming majority of students saying they would choose a “just right” or challenging assignment over an easier assignment. I also learned that many students found unleveled course options appealing primarily because they accommodate more diverse learning styles, reduce pressure from parents and peers to take all Honors/AP courses, and allow students to get to know other peers they wouldn’t have otherwise had they taken a leveled course. This, of course, didn’t mean that students had no issues with potential deleveling; many cited boredom, slow course pacing as a detriment associated with taking an unleveled course, saying that taking away the liberty to choose your own course level is contradictory to one of the school’s core values. Certainly, students surveyed have mixed feelings of their own regarding the Re-Imagining 9th grade initiative.

While this is the case, I also feel the need to highlight the intent behind these courses, as well as how teachers gauge their students’ attitudes towards unleveled courses like WHISP. I talked to Social Studies teachers Stephanie McAllister Poon and Sarah Shuster, who were behind the effort to delevel 9th grade world history in 2019. The idea came about after a series of discussions with elementary school teachers over concerns with the 8th-9th transition process, recommendations, and

racial breakdowns of certain course levels. Shuster and McAllister visited different school districts like Lexington that have unlevleed 9th grade history programs and read scholarship on unleveling; after determining that unleveling is “pedagogically sound,” they wrote a grant to do a summer training with a project-based learning institute to design curriculum, besides getting a time-release to plan and build what would become the WHISP course. Then, after spreading the word to parents at an 8th-9th grade transition parent’s night, they rolled out the course during the 2019-2020 school year. The course utilizes differentiated instruction, is project-based, and core texts are tiered as mild, medium, and spicy and are built in with supports like glossaries. Teachers determine who is recommended for a standard or honor 10th grade history course through conversations with students, who self-report the course they want to take in conjunction with teacher feedback.

Having anticipated criticisms about the course, McAllister and Shuster rejected the insinuation that an unlevleed history course wouldn’t challenge advanced learners, and that students “tread water” for a year doing nothing in WHISP. In years past, Shuster said, 70% of the freshman class was enrolled in honors history, which made for a heterogeneous learning environment; as a result, course content was “watered down.” Now, McAllister asserts, the course is “designed to find all the different places where kids can climb, and so there’s a lot more challenge built in, because it’s designed to reach more different types of

learners.” Shuster adds that, when surveyed, the bulk of her WHISP students report feeling appropriately challenged by the course, satisfaction with the course, and that the course doesn’t feel different compared to other leveled classes.

This may, however, not be enough to assuage parents concerned about the potential impacts of deleveling as it pertains to their children’s futures. To that end, I’ll offer my own anecdotal evidence, having been enrolled in WHISP alongside other 9th graders four years ago. I recall liking that there were students in my class with different academic strengths and different levels of difficulty within the course; I would push myself to complete assignments at a level that challenged me. Halfway through the year, I was recommended for honors World History, a course I would go on to do well in; I was recommended for APUSH, a course I similarly succeeded in for the half-year I was in it, and I currently take AP Human Geography (while I might’ve failed my last test on agriculture, I’ve done a solid job in the course.) To parents who are concerned about deleveling impacted transcripts and college applications, I’m fortunate to say that I’ll be going to a what is considered by many to be a good college in the fall, and that I know many peers and friends of mine who are majoring in the humanities who are also going to really great schools. My personal experience is that WHISP gave me the freedom to pursue and accrue knowledge in a subject area I was passionate about, and that passion translated to success in history courses over the course of my high school

career. It's fair to say that we're all here because we care a lot about our school district, and our students, and their futures, but from where I stand, I think that teachers and department heads do as well, and that this is not some wanton, impulsive effort meant to hurt 9th graders. If anything, it's intended to benefit them. Our educational system is already afflicted by massive inequities, making it harder for students of color, lower-income students, students with disabilities, ELL learners...the data is out there and it asserts that the Public Schools of Brookline are not serving all their students to the fullest extent possible. This effort is years in the making, attempting to remedy this issue, and faculty at BHS have given this move immense thought.

All this to say that having the right information is incredibly important in conversations like these; instead of resorting to mudslinging, we need to consider the perspectives of multiple stakeholders who will be impacted by this decision. I can only hope that my report manages to highlight these a bit better and will contribute to a more nuanced understanding of deleveling. Thank you all, and good night.



PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE 

Superintendent's Update

February 29, 2024



A Leaping Good Year

Students and Staff at Pierce had a “froggy” good time acknowledging leap year today.

Principal Yadoff shared that **200 itty bitty baby frogs** (the unofficial mascot of Leap Day) were hidden around the school buildings.

Classes/students/staff were tasked with collecting the frogs throughout the school day.



Facing History and Ourselves Partnership

SY 22-23

Facing History and Ourselves worked with the grades 6-8 team, modeling Facing History's pedagogical approach, and then specifically with grade 8 teachers to explore curriculum materials related to the teaching of civics

SY 23-24

Facing History is facilitating professional development for social studies teachers in grades 6-12 on Civil Discourse

SY 24-25

We have applied for the Genocide Education Grant to work with Facing History and Ourselves to teach young people a sense of agency to stand up to bigotry and hate and to make choices for a more just and equitable world. Genocide education provides us with a crucial opportunity to do just that, weaving together historical case studies and ongoing current events

Literacy Study

Hill for Literacy is conducting classroom walkthroughs over the next few weeks to collect trend data specific to literacy.

About Hill for Literacy

Hill for Literacy is an education nonprofit that helps teachers better translate literacy research and assessment data into highly effective instruction that results in long-term success.

Tuesday, February 27	Lincoln
Thursday, February 29	Driscoll
Tuesday, March 5	Ruffin Ridley
Wednesday, March 6	Pierce
Thursday, March 7	Baker
Monday, March 11	BHS
Tuesday, March 12	Lawrence
Wednesday, March 13	Runkle
Thursday, March 14	Hayes

Holocaust Education

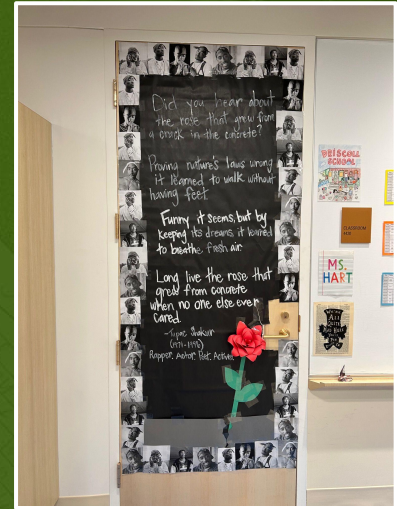
Holocaust Education is taught in Grade 10 as part of the Interwar Era or World War II Units. This topic was moved from the 8th grade when the 2018 standards were adopted. 8th grade now focuses on civics education.

In Teaching the Holocaust, teachers cover:

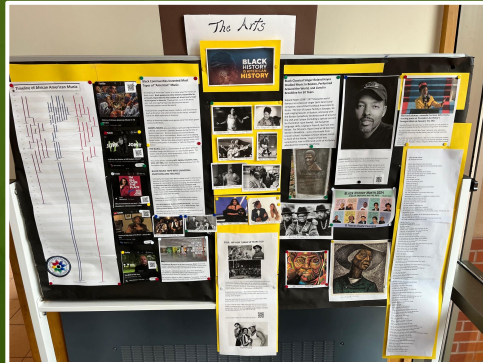
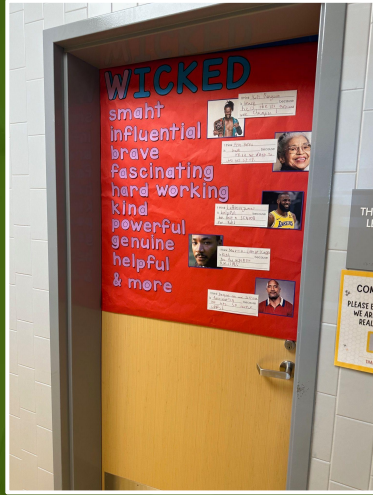
- The rise of anti-semitism during the interwar era, the steps that led to the Holocaust and the "Final Solution,"
- The experiences of Jewish people and others who were targeted during this time period and resistance by Jewish people and others.

Black History Month Recognition

For Black History month, students completed various research projects and readings, and in some schools, shared important information on the morning announcements. Students and staff also decorated classroom doors and walls to honor and celebrate important Black artists, scientists and activists. In addition, students completed various research projects and readings.



Black History Month Recognition



TASTES OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Menu designed by Jesse Thompson & Tappan Green in honor of Black History Month.

Hayes' Young Scholars Celebration

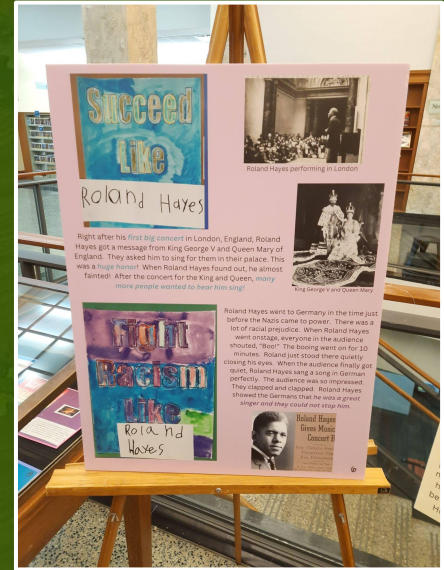
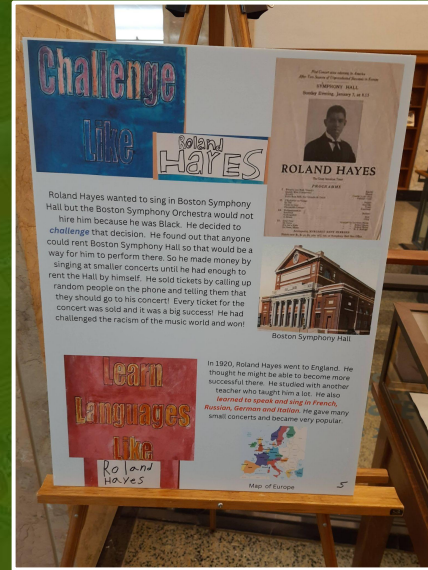
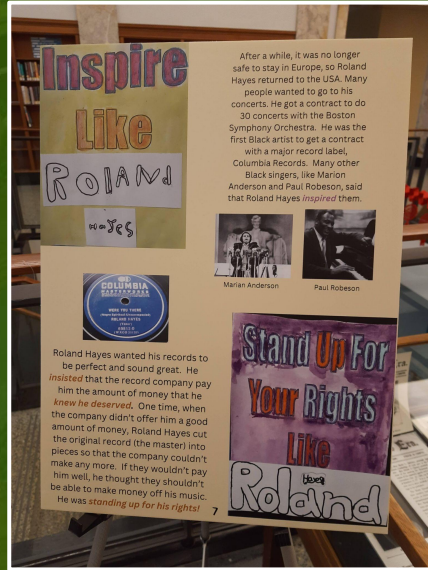
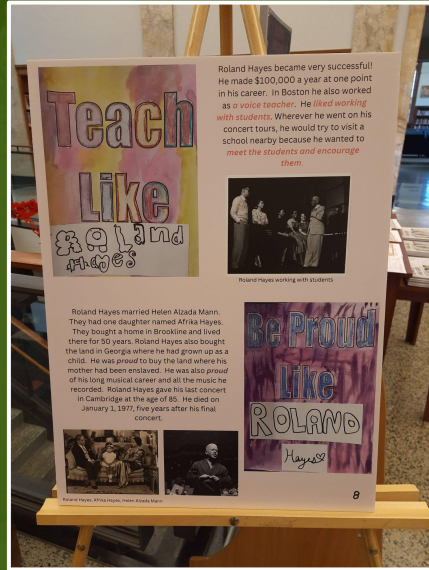


The Roland Hayes School's Young Scholars Program held a students' celebration at the Brookline Public Library Tuesday, February 27th.

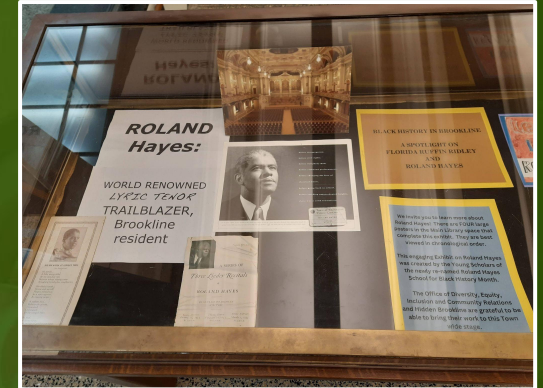
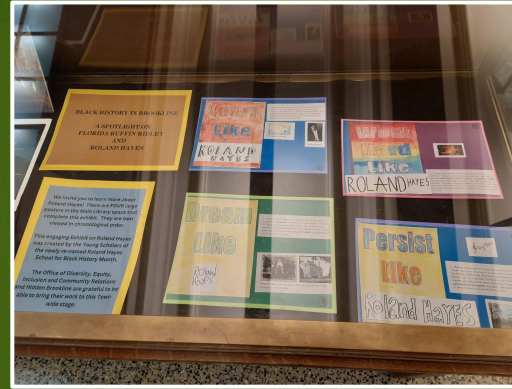
The event included an exhibit put together by the students, on the life of the school's namesake, **Roland Hayes**.

Thank you to 4th grade teacher Tatiana Beckwith for her work with the Scholars. Special recognition to 2nd grade teacher **Karen Shashoua**, who organized a game of Bingo based on Hayes' life. Thank you to Barbara Brown for coordinating the event.

Hayes' Young Scholars Celebration



Hayes' Young Scholars Celebration



BHS TAP Challenge



The **BHS Climate and Food Justice Club** and **Global Leadership Class** is organizing its annual TAP (Together Against Plastics) Challenge, which aims to reduce unnecessary single-use plastic bottles where tap water is secure, and improve access to tap water where it is needed.

The idea is to sign up for a two-week challenge and pledge to refrain from purchasing single-use plastic water bottles between March 20-31, and contribute the money saved towards improving water infrastructure in Quezalguaque, Nicaragua, via the **Brookline-Quezalguaque Sister City Project**.

Participants can also boost support by purchasing a TAP reusable metal water bottle.

Brookline Pride Apparel

Brookline Pride apparel is now available for purchase online. Apparel includes t-shirts and hoodies. Proceeds from sales will go towards queer student programming throughout the district.

A shout out to middle schooler **Lara Spitz Sousa** for coming up with the design, along with **Marney, Kate, Julia, Sabine, and Leah** who helped throughout the process.

BROOKLINE PRIDE
HOODIE AND T-SHIRT SALES



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO ORDER
YOUR BROOKLINE PRIDE APPAREL**

T-SHIRTS \$20
HOODIES \$40

BROOKLINE PRIDE
HOODIE AND T-SHIRT SALES



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO ORDER
YOUR BROOKLINE PRIDE APPAREL**

T-SHIRTS \$20
HOODIES \$40

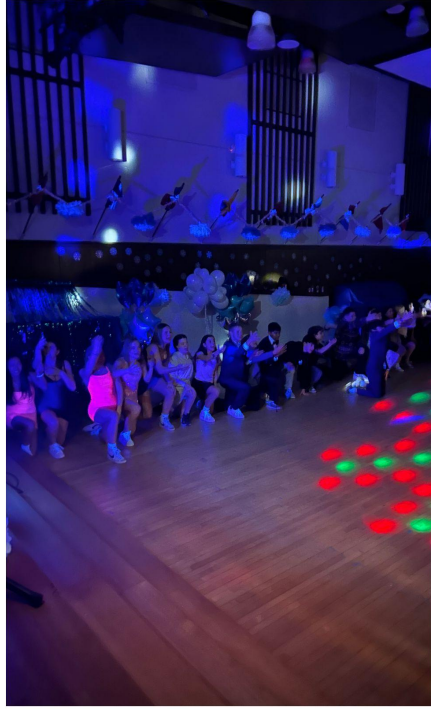
Flowers in Focus at BEEP

After reading the book, *Have You Ever Seen a Flower?* by Shawn Harris, BEEP Pre-K students viewed and discussed Georgia O'Keeffe's close-up flower paintings with artist & art therapist, Erin Palazzolo Loparo.

This mindful process and collaborative artwork began with students using magnifying glasses to observe and draw the center of living flowers' parts, lines, colors and shapes using markers. Using pastels and artist blending sticks, they then experimented with blending warm and cool colors to create petals. Finally, these young artists brought their seed circles and petals together, finding joy in forming large flower murals with their class.



Runkle's Middle School Winter Dance



The Runkle PTO sponsored the school's second annual Middle School Winter Dance (for grades 6-8) on Wednesday, February 14.

The students had a great time dancing to the music of DJ Mike Price.

Runkle Field Trip to Wheelock Theatre

On Thursday, February 15, Runkle's first and second graders caught a show *Mr. Popper's Penguins* at the Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University, after having read the book and learned all about penguins.

The students rode the T to the theatre, accompanied by parent chaperones.



Superintendent's School Visits

Recently Completed

Pierce	Monday, February 26
Runkle	Tuesday, February 27
FRR	Wednesday, February 28
Baker	Thursday, February 29

Upcoming

BHS	Friday, March 1
Lincoln	Friday, March 1
Driscoll	Monday, March 4
Hayes	Friday, March 15
Lawrence	Friday, March 15



PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE 

Spotlight on Excellence





Lunar New Year for Kids

www.weareteachers.com



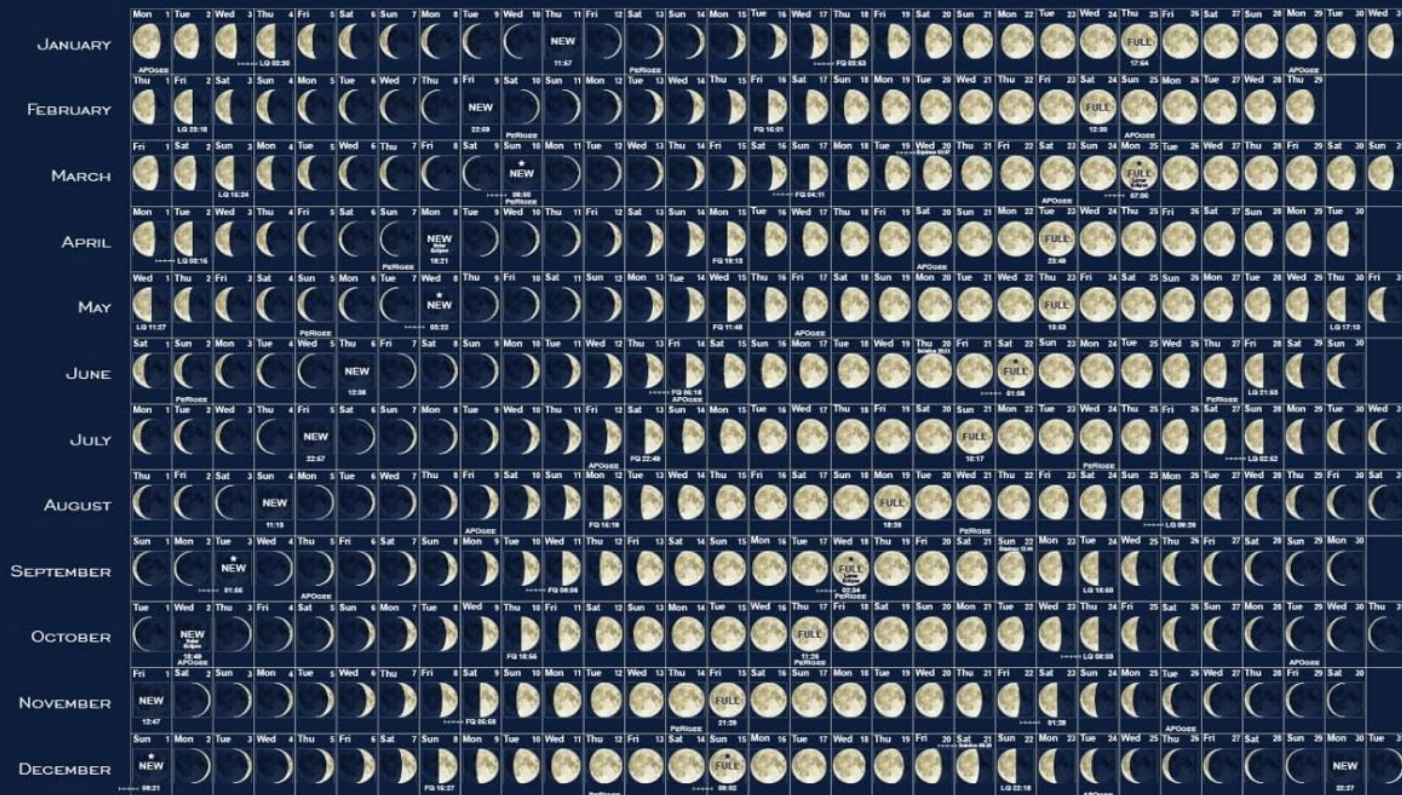
What is Lunar New Year?

Lunar New Year is a holiday celebrated by countries and cultures that traditionally followed a calendar governed by the moon as well as the sun (lunisolar). It takes place during the first 15 days of the first month of the lunisolar calendar, which lead up to the first full moon of the year. [Learn about the Chinese lunisolar calendar here.](#)



Lunar New Year Traditions

2024



"MoonFollower™ 2024" - Universal Time Edition • UPC 616271006330 • ----- * Event may span/begin previous date in U.S. time zone.

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Universal Time (UT) • Convert to local time by subtracting time zones west (adding zones east) of Greenwich, England.

Moon at "perigee" represents the close approach to earth and "apogee" represents the far point in its elliptical orbit.

Lunar New Year!

Name: Mrs. Shinohara

We celebrate Lunar New Year to celebrate our Korean, Taiwanese, and Chinese heritage and culture. Here are some reasons & our traditions:

- ★ Preparations (cleaning, habits, customs)
- ★ Respect for elders/ancestors
- ★ pass down traditions
- ★ embrace the beauty of our culture
- ★ what we do (food, pay our respects/message, family time)





On LNY, my family eats asian foods and make dumplings. Tradition of making dumplings tie us to our roots.



Name: Bianca





Name: Bianca



Name: Timmy Soohoo

My family and I celebrate Lunar New Year by...

- Cleaning the house to wipe out the bad luck and get new luck
- My brother and my cousins lion dance and parade around Chinatown
- We have friends over to make Chinese food like dumplings, bok choy, and sticky rice
- Going to Dim Sum with my dad's side of the family



Timmy will help out wherever he is needed. Sometimes that means being the videographer .



Timmy playing the cymbals with his cousin Alex, while Chris plays the drums.

Name: Timmy Soohoo

In honor of Lunar New Year, many Chinese clubs will unite together on this day to parade around the city in colorful lions dancing to the beat of the drums and cymbals. Each club will visit all of the storefronts in Chinatown to wish them a prosperous year. Firecrackers will be lit to scare away any bad energy and the courageous lion will dance in the fire.

I enjoy eating delicious pastries from the bakery. I have too many favorites to choose just one thing to eat! I am also a really good helper when my grandfather is feeling tired and achy from walking all day.



Lunar New Year

Name: Inara 우인 Muller

My family and I
celebrate Korean Lunar
New Year by:

- Doing Se-Bae 세배
- Making Tteokguk 떡국
- Playing Yuet-Nori 윷놀이

Se Bae



dduck soup





Update on 9th Grade English Pilot Course

School Committee
February 29, 2024



Overview

Defining the Challenge

Why reimagine 9th grade?

Why a new English Course?

Understanding the Course

Next Steps



THE CHALLENGE

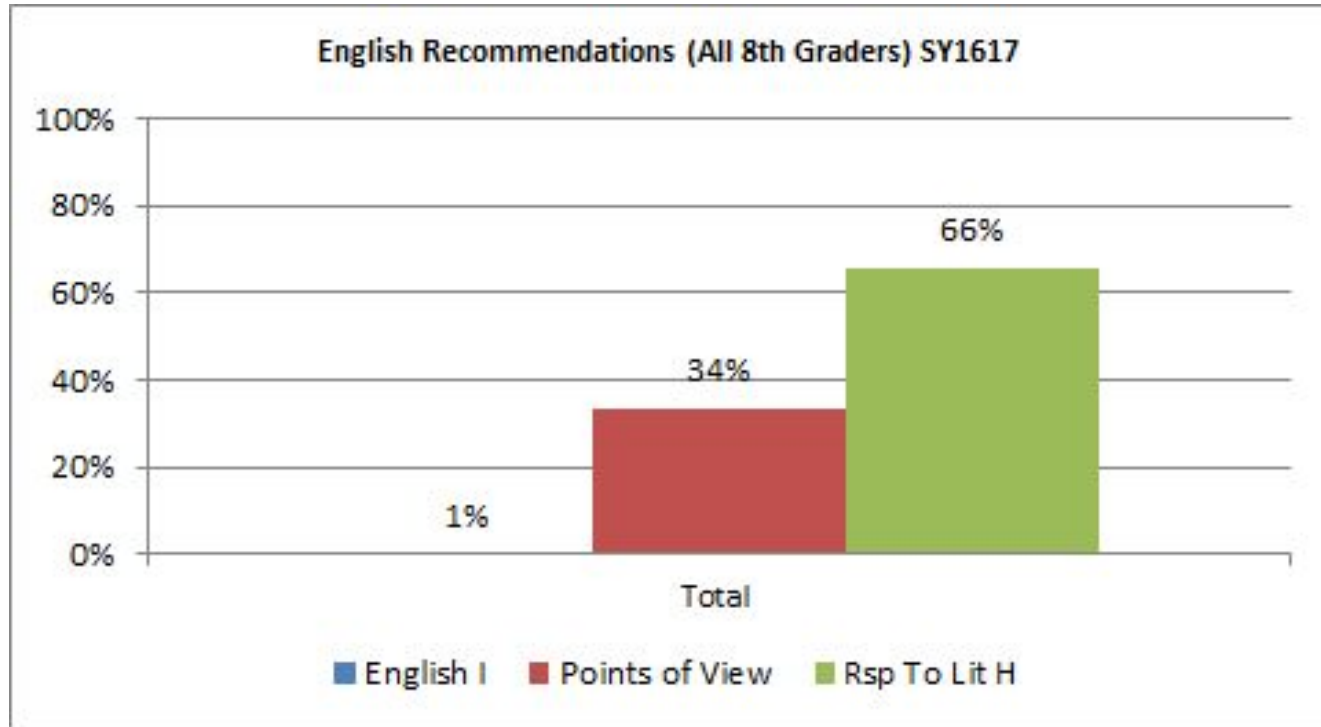
Ongoing and persistent disparities in course level enrollment by race and IEP status.



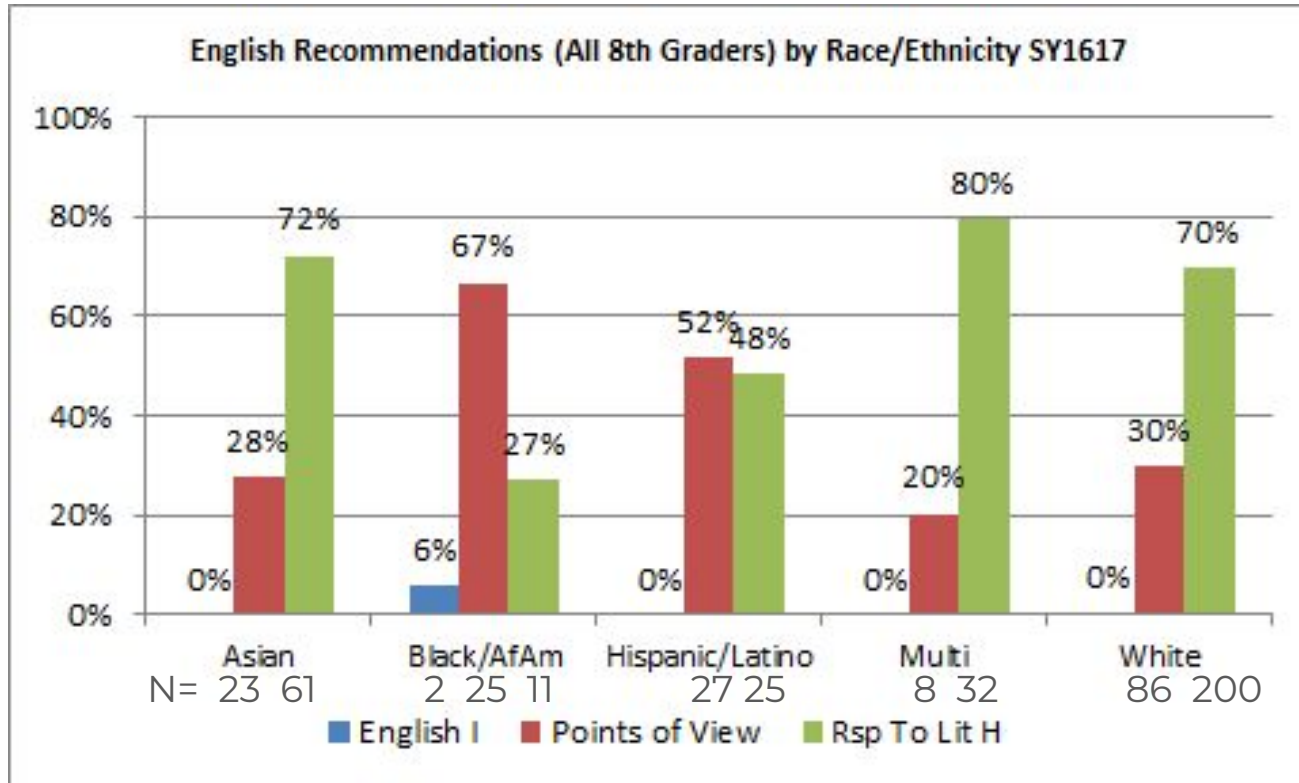
Historical Data

Originally presented to School Committee June 2017

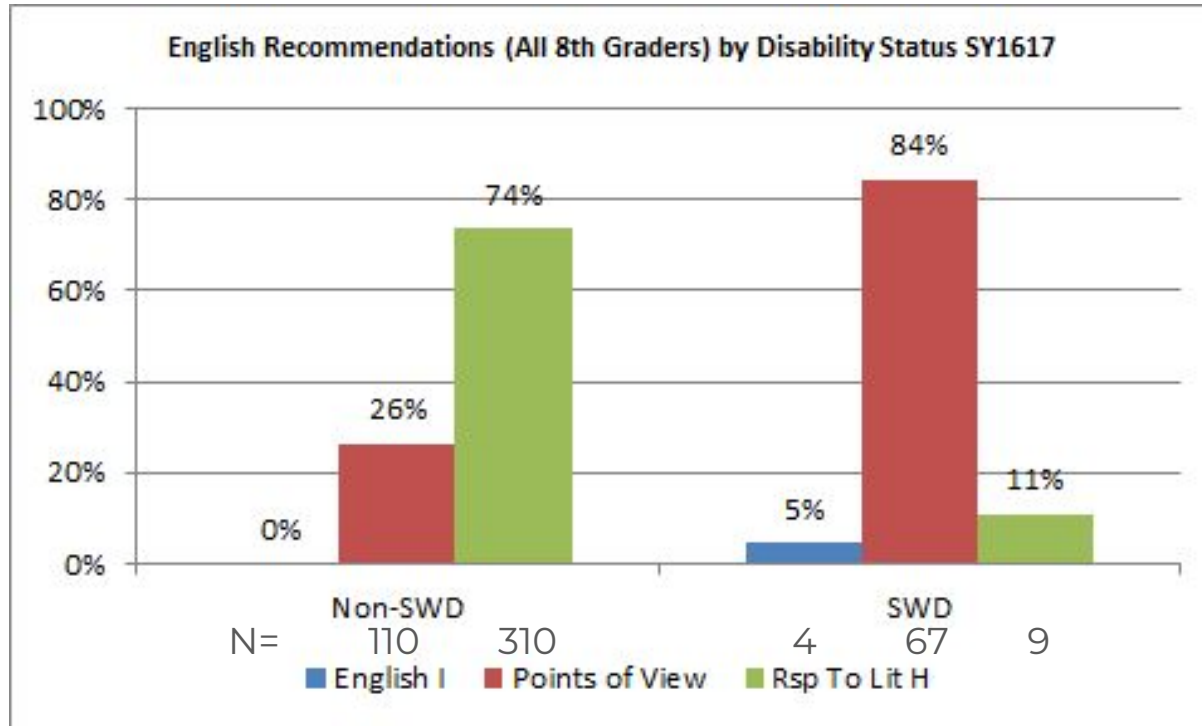
Grade 8: English Recommendations All Students



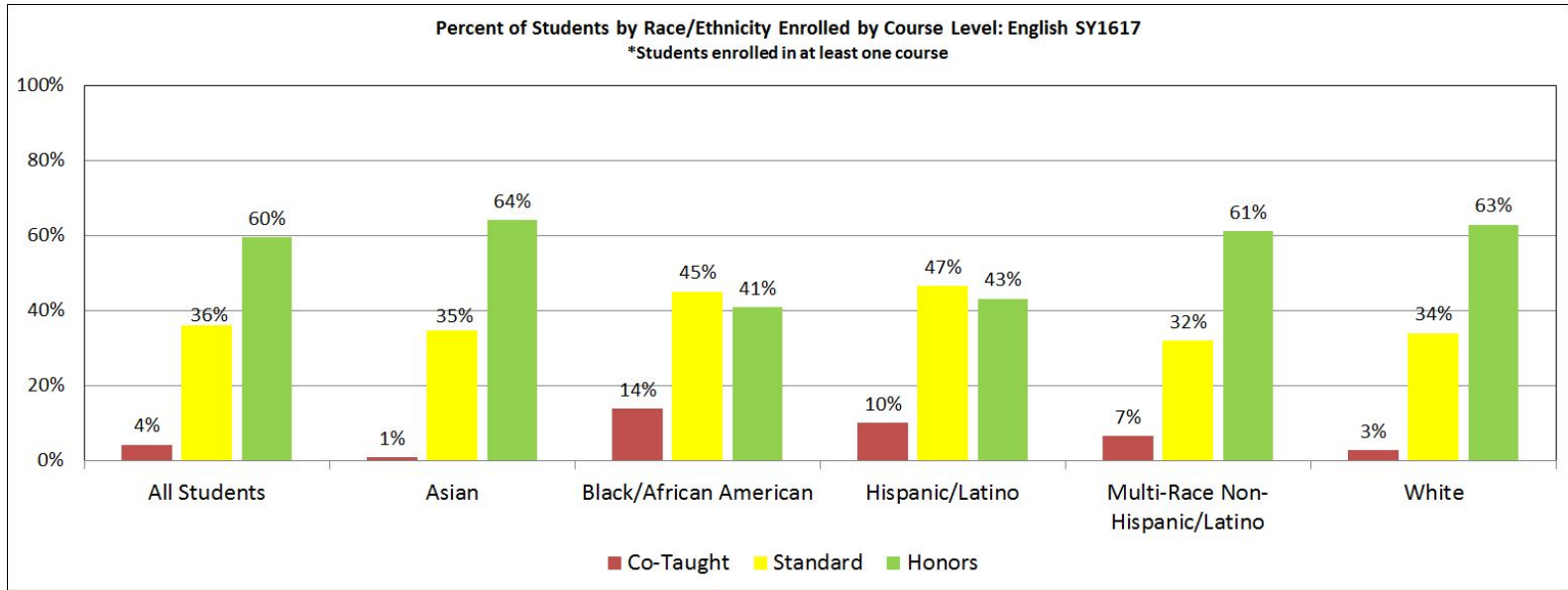
Grade 8: English Recommendations Race/Ethnicity



Grade 8: English Recommendations Disability Status



BHS English Course Enrollment - Race/Ethnicity (SY16-17)



	All Students	Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Race Non-Hispanic/Latino	White
Co-Taught	77	*	17	18	*	30
Standard	637	107	55	83	43	349
Honors	1,051	197	50	77	82	645

A photograph of a modern building with a large glass facade and a curved roof. The building is surrounded by trees and a sidewalk. The text "Current Course Enrollment" is overlaid on the image in a large, bold, black font.

Current Course Enrollment

9th Grade Student Population by Course Level

	College Prep	Honors
2022-2023	107 (24%)	335 (75%)

9th Grade Student Population by Course Level

	College Prep	Honors	Pilot
2022-2023	107 (24%)	335 (75%)	N/A
2023-2024	89 (16%)	330 (62%)	112 (21%)

Enrollment by Course and Race

Racial Group Distribution Across Courses

	College Prep 4 sections	Honors 13 sections	Pilot 5 sections
Asian 104	16 (15%)	69 (66%)	19 (18%)
Black 41	17 (41%)	8 (20%)	16 (39%)
Latinx 49	16 (33%)	24 (49%)	9 (18%)
Multiracial* 48	5 (10%)	33 (69%)	10 (21%)
White 298	42 (14%)	198 (66%)	58 (19%)
Totals 540	96	333	117

Enrollment by Course and Race

Racial Distribution in Courses

Total 9th Grade	College Prep 4 sections	Honors 13 sections	Pilot 5 sections
Asian 104 (19%)	16 (17%)	69 (21%)	19 (16%)
Black 41 (8%)	17 (18%)	8 (2%)	16 (14%)
Latine 49 (9%)	16 (17%)	24 (7%)	9 (8%)
Multiracial* 48 (9%)	5 (5%)	33 (10%)	10 (9%)
White 298 (55%)	42 (44%)	198 (60%)	58 (50%)
Totals 540 (100%)	96	333	117

23-24 9th Grade Course Level & IEP Status

Active IEP	
College Prep	41.5%
Honors	1.5%
Unleveled	18.75%

Hattie on Tracking (p. 186-187)

“Tracking has minimal effects on learning outcomes; no one profits.”

“The effects on equity outcomes are more profound and negative.”

Hattie, John *Visible Learning, the Sequel* (2023)



REIMAGINING 9th GRADE

Expanding access to our most rigorous course content.

Fostering a Sense of Community.

The Whys

- ❑ Ensuring access to the full BHS experience by delivering high quality, engaging courses for all students.
- ❑ Developing a healthy and integrated BHS community in students' first year.
- ❑ Diversifying our course enrollment demographics in grades 9, 10, 11, 12. BHS classrooms should reflect our student population.
- ❑ Guiding students toward more appropriate leveling decisions at BHS.

Prior Discussions of Course Levels and Racial Disparities

- ❑ **Students in MSAN to School Committee**
 - ❑ Jan 2017 - remediation and low expectations
 - ❑ Dec 2017 - visibility of racial disparities in classes
- ❑ **Course Level Enrollment**
 - ❑ Mar 2017 Superintendent Bott tasks principals with reviewing their processes to reduce disparities
 - ❑ June 2017 Superintendent Bott presents data to SC
- ❑ **Creation of WHISP 2019-2020 School Year**
- ❑ **SC Discussion of WHISP & Global Studies Jan 2022**
- ❑ **BHS SIP presentation** discussing reimagining 9th grade to full Committee and Curriculum Subcommittee Jan 2023
- ❑ **SC Vote for Pilot Course Jan 2023**
- ❑ **MacGarvie-Thompson Student Rep Presentation**
 - ❑ Jun 2023 identified continued disparities in recommendations and enrollment

**WE ASKED A FEW MSAN
STUDENTS:**

HOW DO YOU FEEL WHEN
YOU SEE THIS DATA?



Originally presented to School Committee December 2017



ALIGNMENT TO DISTRICT VISION AND GOALS

District Vision

Brookline provides every student with an extraordinary education, through enriching learning experiences and a supportive community, so that they may develop to their fullest potential.

District Goal 1: Joy in Learning

Our schools are dedicated to teaching students to be involved, active learners who work hard, think critically and creatively, and communicate effectively. **We emphasize high expectations for all students** and seek to **instill a lifelong joy in learning through a rich curriculum that will allow students to find and succeed at what they love**, and flourish in their lives.

District Goal 2: Excellence in Teaching

Passionate, knowledgeable, skillful teachers are the core strength of our schools. Our educators provide a dynamic and rewarding learning experience for students. We are committed to supporting a professional community that creates and sustains an atmosphere of intellectual excitement, **innovative instruction**, personal growth, and strong relationships between faculty and students.

District Goal 3: Culture of Collaboration

An extraordinary education requires the coordinated effort of many. Towards this end, we strive to solicit and foster collaboration between and among educators, administrators, community organizations, government institutions, private sector, and other interested parties, with the best interest of students serving as our guiding principle.

District Goal 4: Celebration of Difference

Brookline is presently and historically diverse. **We celebrate this diversity, and we commit to providing an education that authentically and deeply reflects the different perspectives, cultures, and experiences of our community.** We strive to include the full range of Brookline voices, not just in our academic curriculum but in all school-based activities.

District Goal 5: Commitment to Equity

We are committed to eliminating barriers to educational achievement in our schools. To this end, **we create policies and practices so that every student**, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status, experiences a safe and welcoming environment in our schools, and **receives the resources and support they need to take fullest advantage of the opportunities a Brookline education offers.** We recognize the existence of great disparities in private means among PSB students, and **will do everything possible to ensure that private resources do not determine student outcomes.**

District Goal 6: 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.

STRATEGIC PLAN

GOAL 1

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Increase achievement for all students by establishing, implementing, and regularly assessing a consistent, high quality, and challenging curriculum delivered using evidence based practices



Rui 2009 Meta Analysis

Creating a learning environment in which all students feel valued and treated as capable learners is the first step in institutionalizing a commitment to both high academic standards and equal educational opportunities. (pg. 181)

Ning Rui, 2009

Data scientist in Center for Research and Evaluation in Social Policy,
University of Pennsylvania

Source: Four decades of research on the effects of detracking reform: Where do we stand? (Rui, 2009)

Ning Rui 2009 Meta Analysis

Objective: To review and synthesize evidence about academic and non-academic effects of detracking reform.

Results:

- Students in detracked groups performed slightly better academically than their equivalent-ability peers in tracked groups (fixed effects model)
- **Average or high ability students** in detracked groups performed no differently than their equivalent-ability peers in tracked groups (random effects model)
- **Low-achieving students** both fixed effects and random effects revealed positive effects of detracking on student achievement

Conclusion:

Findings suggest that detracking had appreciable effects on low-ability student achievement and no effects on average and high-ability student achievement.



THE NEW COURSE

Core Concept & Design

Instructional Approach

Texts & Assignments

Results So Far

Unexpected Benefits



Course Concept & Design

Instruction, Assignments, Texts, Rigor

Goals for the Pilot

- Establish a new course, not a midpoint between College Prep and Honors
- Set students up for BHS success
- Create a strong entry point for all students
- Build 9th grade community
- Extend learning beyond the school walls
- Increase parent/caretaker involvement

Texts & Assignments

- Whole Class Texts
- Choice Texts
- Whole Class Writing Assignments

(Range of genres: personal narrative, analytical essays, poetry, creative writing, reflective writing)

- Some Writing Assignments that Offer Choice
(e.g. Storycorps Interview or Graphic Novel)

Texts

	Mild	Medium	Spicy
Quarter 1	31	61	19
Quarter 2	40	55	24

Sample Texts:

Mild: *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian, Messy Roots, A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*

Medium: *In the Time of the Butterflies, Crazy Rich Asians, When the Emperor Was Divine, The Other Americans*

Spicy: *The House of the Spirits, Pachinko, Crime and Punishment*

Hattie on Tracking (p. 186-187)

“Castejón and Zancajo (2015) noted a negative relationship between student motivation levels and the degree to which systems sort and group students into ability groups.”

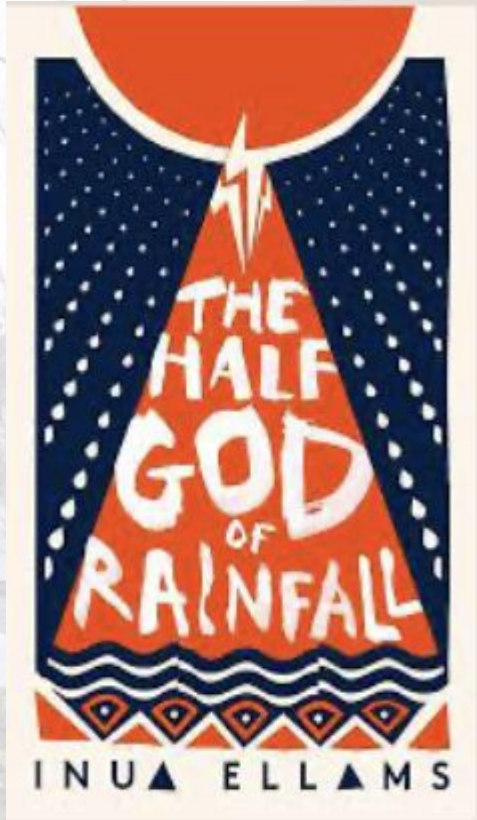
Hattie, John *Visible Learning, the Sequel* (2023)

Community Connections (linked to themes)

- American Repertory Theater performance
- Chinatown Historical Tour and Community Luncheon (Chinatown)
- Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum Tour
- Food Truck Festival and Food Memoir Presentations
- Guest Authors/Poets (Spoken Word Poet “Lyrical Faith”)



Community Connections (linked to themes)



Parent/Caregiver Involvement

- Intro survey about their kid/goals
- Sign-off on book selection
- Sign-off on course selection
- Invitations to join trips (Chaperones!)
- Invitations to 10 minute meetings
- Invitations to community celebration
- Quarterly newsletter
- Midyear Survey
- End of year survey

Instructional Approach

- Each quarter's content is thematically paired with topics explored in WHISP (Power, Community, Wealth, Identity).
- Students have a mix of whole class assignments (required for all students) and options-based assignments (self-selected). These options may include texts, writing assignments, and homework.
- Students can move fluidly between options. Many students start with easier work and increase their challenge as the year goes on.
- Instruction takes a UDL approach, and is supported by training and observations by Landmark School Outreach consultants.
- Each unit has a connection to a community event: field trips, student exhibitions, and guest authors/poets.

Maintaining Rigor

- The Pilot includes whole-class instruction of canonical texts that are taught in 9th Grade Honors (*The Odyssey & Much Ado About Nothing*)
- The Pilot adds optional higher challenge texts that *go beyond* the length and lexile of our Honors classes.
(*The House of the Spirits, Pachinko, Crime and Punishment*)
- All 9th Grade classes have 12 drafted pieces of writing (scaffolded assignments with multiple drafts and revisions).
- All 9th grade classes include the same vocabulary and grammar standards.
- Students in all 9th grade English classes take a common midyear.
The 9th Grade team has been discussing a common final (June 2024).

Curriculum Matters

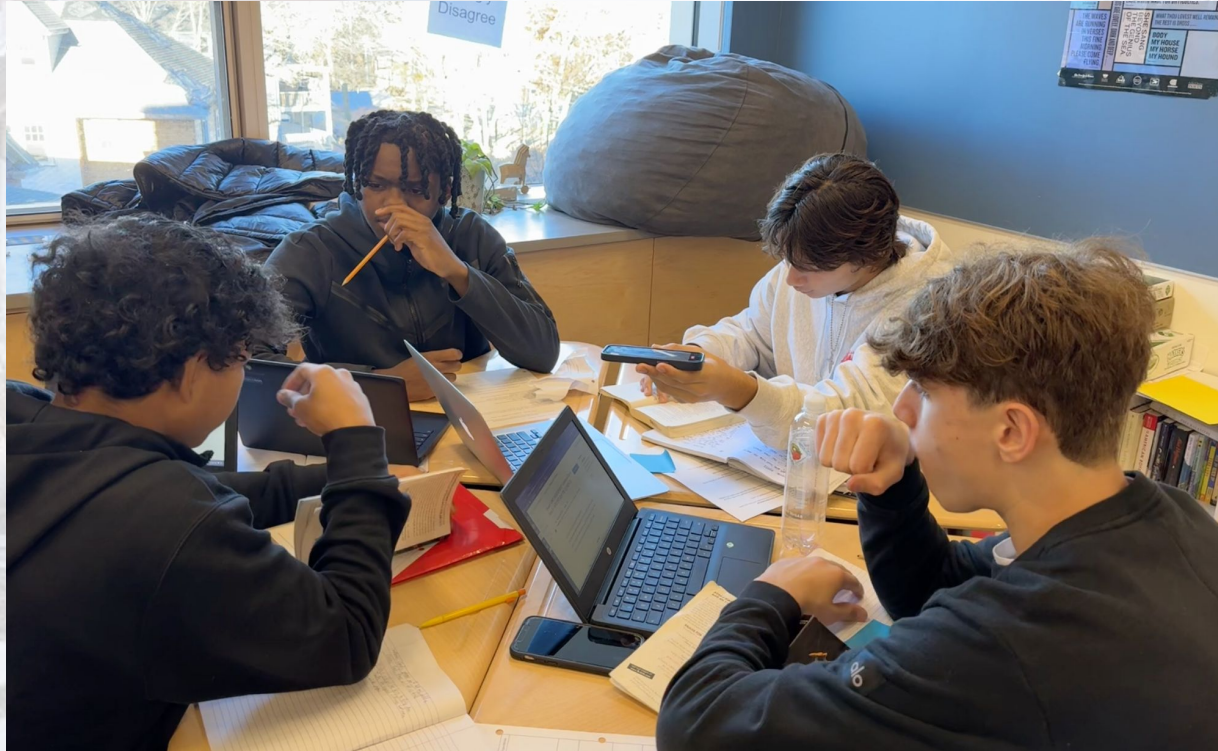
High school curriculum reflects 41 percent of the academic resources students bring to higher education; test scores, 30 percent; and class rank/academic GPA, 29 percent. **No matter how one divides the universe of students, the curriculum measure produces a higher percent earning bachelor's degrees than either of the other measures.**

The impact of a high school curriculum of high academic intensity and quality on degree completion is far more pronounced and positively-for African-American and Latino students than any other pre-college indicator of academic resources. The impact for African-American and Latino students is also much greater than it is for white students.

Source: Answers in the Toolbox Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns and Bachelor's Degree Attainment.

By Clifford Adelman
Office of Educational Research and Improvement U.S. Department of Education(1999)

Proven Protocols Work



Proven Protocols for English Instruction

Accessing & Teaching Shakespeare	Folger Library Shakespeare Model
Developing Solid Discussion Skills	Variations on Socratic Seminar
Tackling Complex Texts	Brown University's The Performance Cycle
Peer & Self Editing Skills	National Writing Project (NWP) Peer Review Process
Daily Journaling & Note taking 200+ handwritten pages/year	Mueller (Princeton) & Oppenheimer (UCLA) Notetaking Handwriting vs. Laptop Study

High Rigor, *High Support*

UDL Practices (Landmark-endorsed)

- Class agenda & objectives visible at all times
- Use of notebooks to organize and binders to organize class notes and handouts
- Schema activation activities for new texts
- Graphic organizers (optional to all students)
- Sentence frames and sentence starters (optional to all students)
- Use of planners and dedicated time to write down homework
- Models or student exemplars of all major assessments
- Use of rubrics on all assignments
- Opportunity for revision on major assignments
- Cuing the midpoint of in-class work
- Use of two-column note structure
- “Write to paper” to give students time to gather their thoughts



Understanding the Populations of the Levels

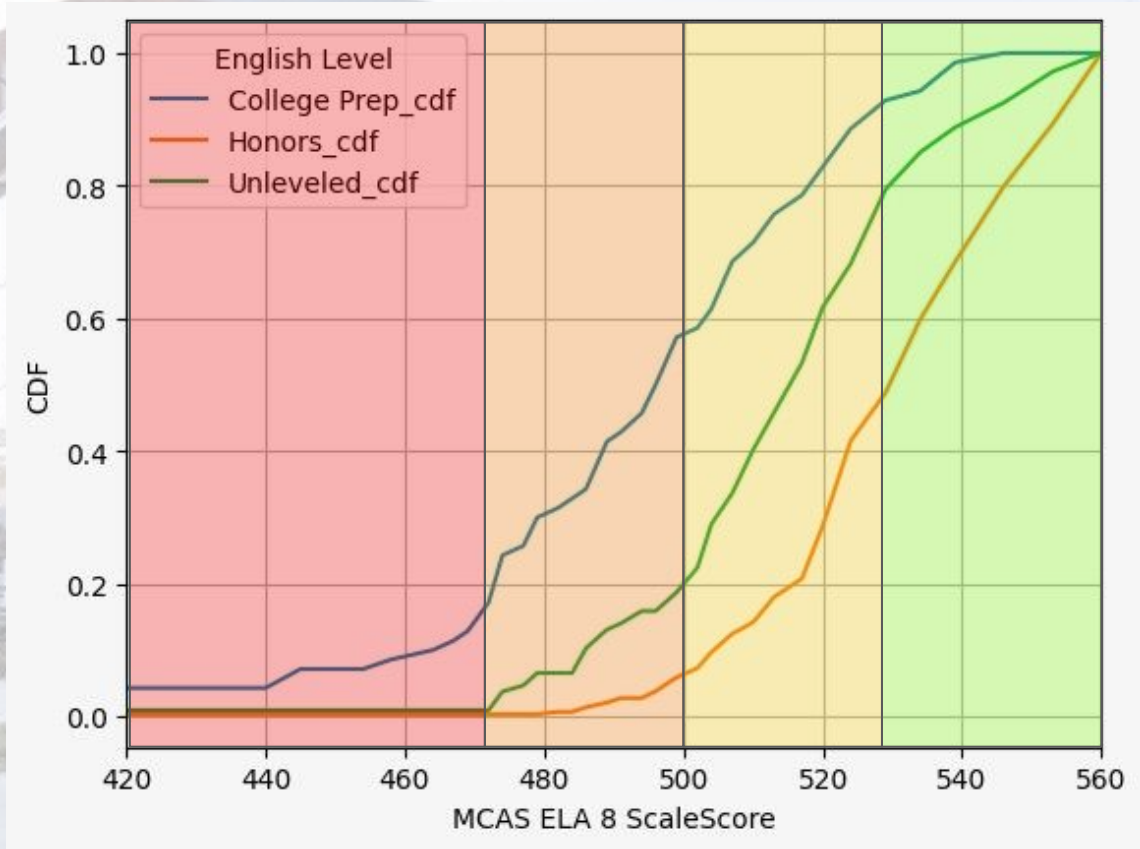
9th Grade Student Population by Course Level

	College Prep	Honors	Pilot
2022-2023	107 (24%)	335 (75%)	N/A
2023-2024	89 (16%)	330 (62%)	112 (21%)

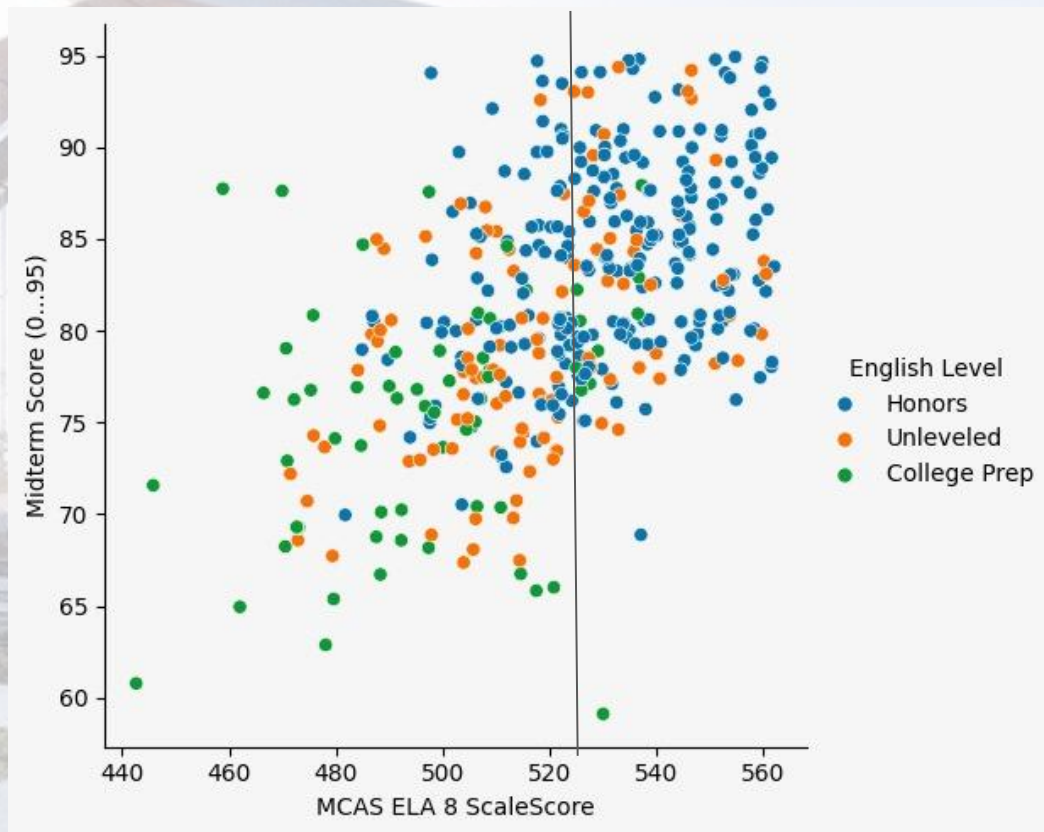
Current Student Population by Course and MCAS Score

MCAS ELA Performance Level 8th Grade	College Prep	Honors	Pilot
Exceeds Expectations	7.14%	51.21%	20.56%
Meeting Expectations	35.71%	42.91%	60.75%
Partially Meeting Expectations	44.29%	5.54%	17.76%
Not Meeting Expectations	8.59%	0%	0%

Student Population by Course and MCAS Score



Midyear Exam Results by Course and MCAS Score





Outcomes so Far

Grades, Midterms,
Student Survey, Recommendations

1st Semester Grades by Race and Course

	College Prep	Honors	Pilot
Asian (104)	3.1 (n=16)	3.7 (n=69)	3.2 (n=19)
Black (41)	2.5 (n=17)	3.5 (n=8)	2.8 (n=16)
Latinx (49)	2.3 (n=16)	3.4 (n=24)	3.1 (n=9)
Multiracial* (48)	3.7 (n=5)	3.6 (N=33)	3.6 (n=10)
White (298)	3.1 (n=42)	3.6 (n=198)	3.4 (n=58)
Totals (540)	2.8 (n=96)	3.6 (n=333)	3.1 (n=117)

Mid Year Exam: Common 9th Grade Experience

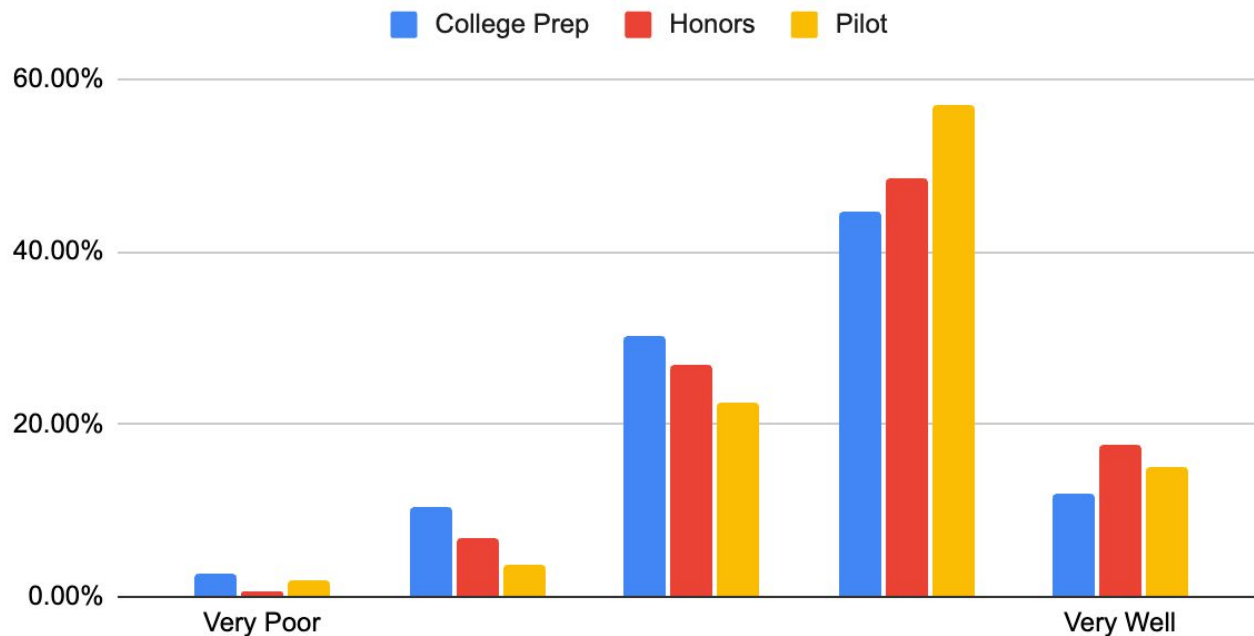
- Two portions: A writing assessment and a vocabulary assessment (This presentation only discusses the writing.)
- A 90-minute writing assessment. Students write an essay that forms a thesis statement about the author's message in a complex poem. They must use 5-6 pieces of evidence with analysis to support their thesis.
- All 9th grade courses take the same exam.
- Exams are scored blind by one of nine 9th grade English teachers.
- The exam grade (writing and vocabulary together) make of 20% of a student's Quarter 2 grade.

Midyear Exam Results by Course & Race

	College Prep	Honors	Pilot
Asian	73.68	85.67	80.16
Black	76.94	84.16	75.16
Latinx	74.57	85.04	82.92
Multiracial*	70.71	85.43	82.45
White	76.93	85.10	81.63
Combined Average	76.03	85.23	80.93

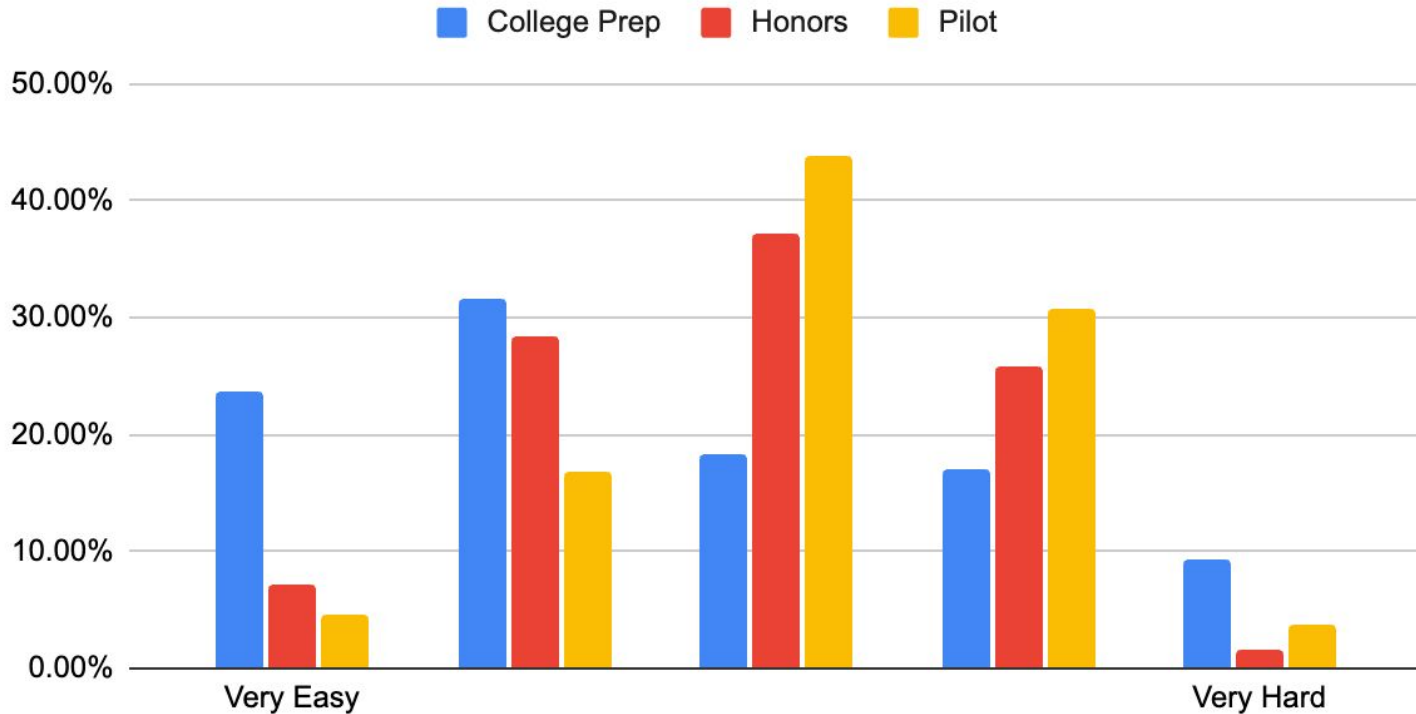
Student Mid Year Survey

How would you rate the pilot's ability to build community among different students in your English class?



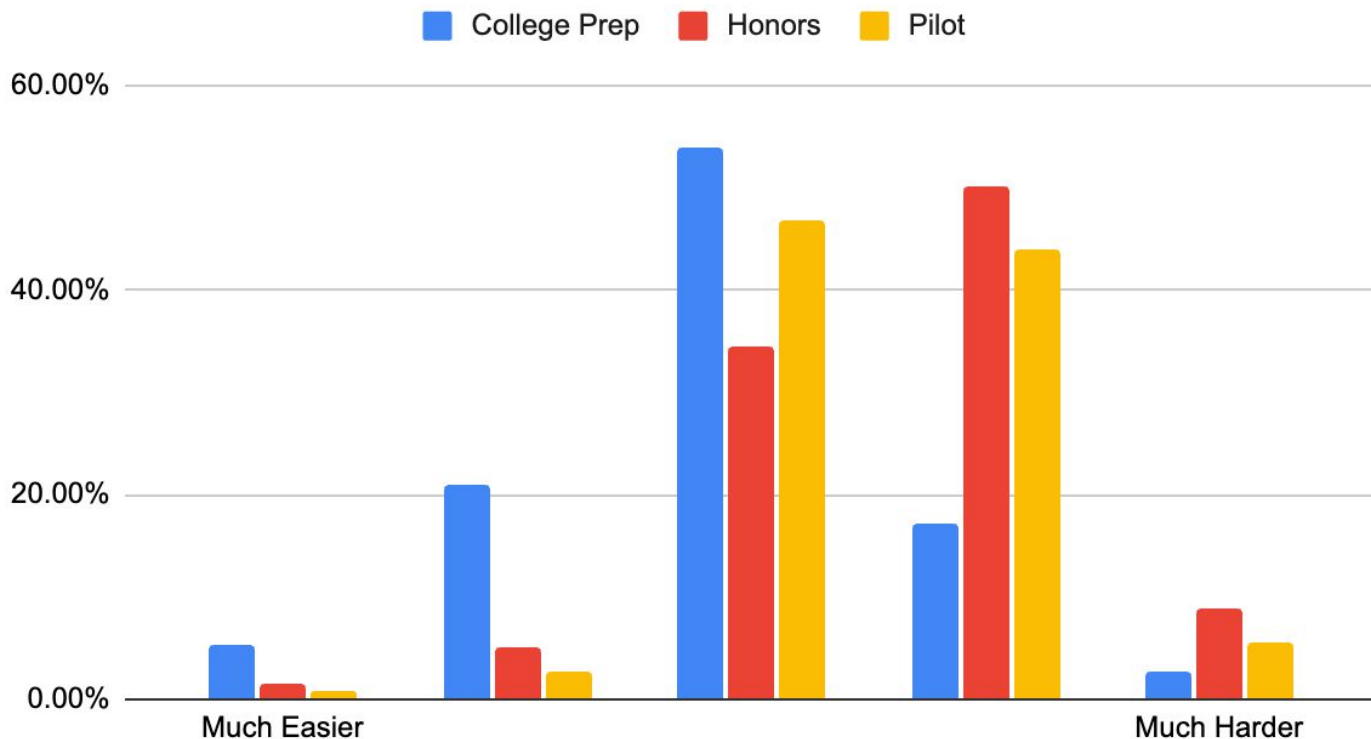
Student Mid Year Survey

How easy is it to keep up with the workload/pace in this course?



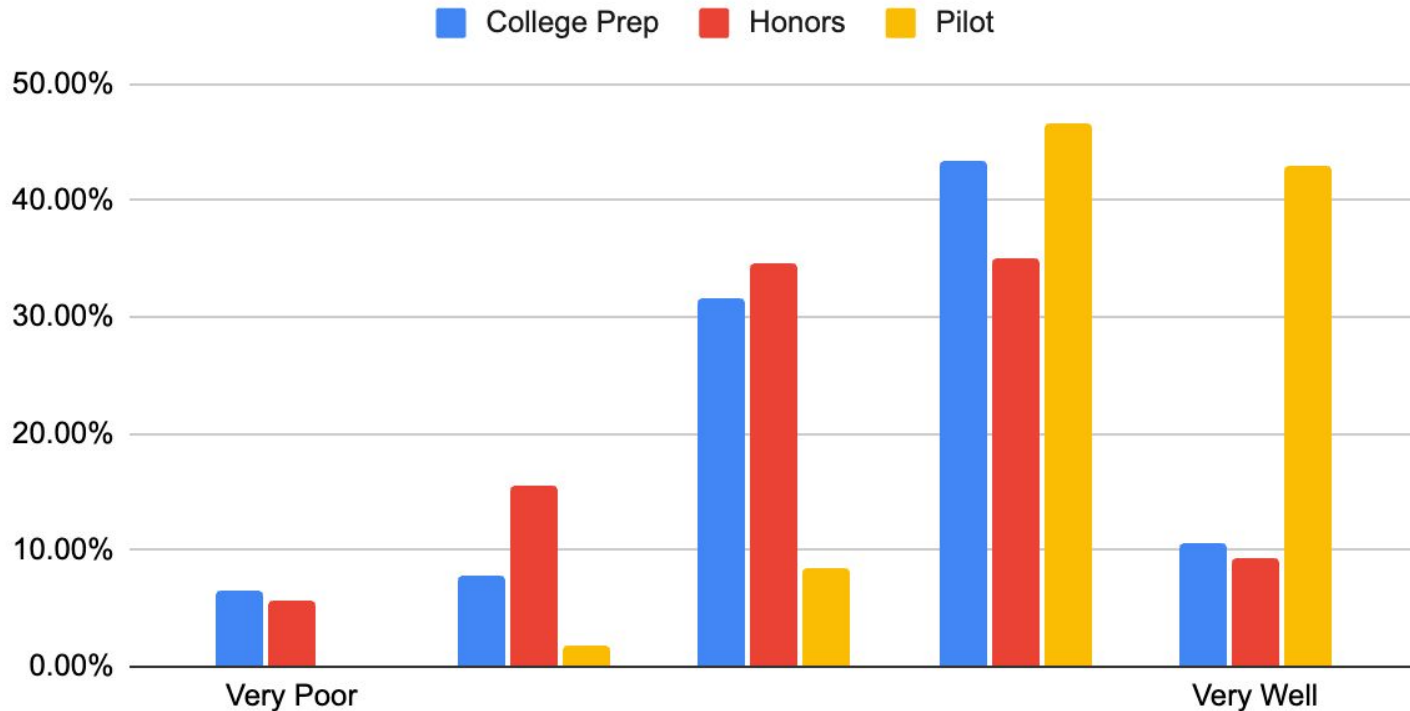
Student Mid Year Survey

How does 9th grade English compare to 8th grade English?



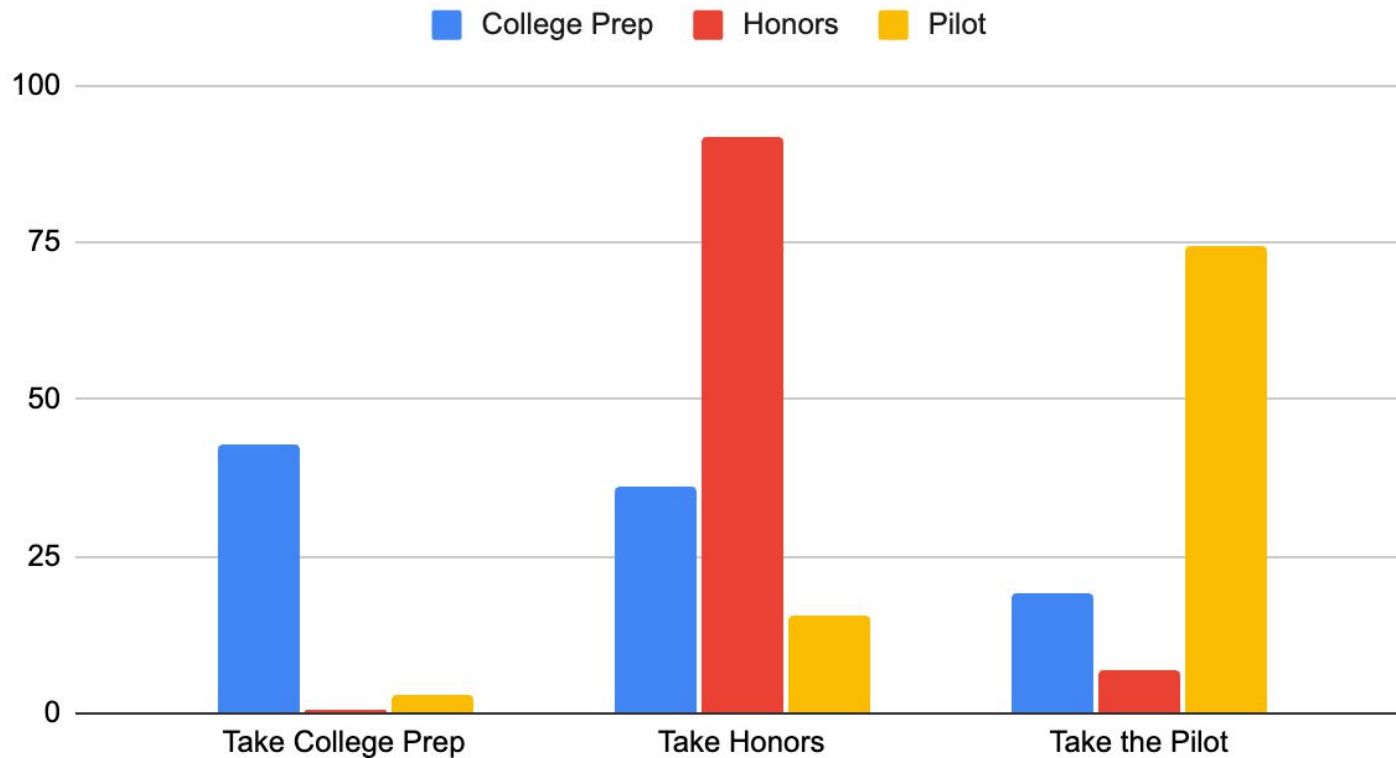
Student Mid Year Survey

How would you rate the ability of your English class to provide choice points (different books, different assessments that you...



Student Mid Year Survey

If you had to do it all over again, would you...



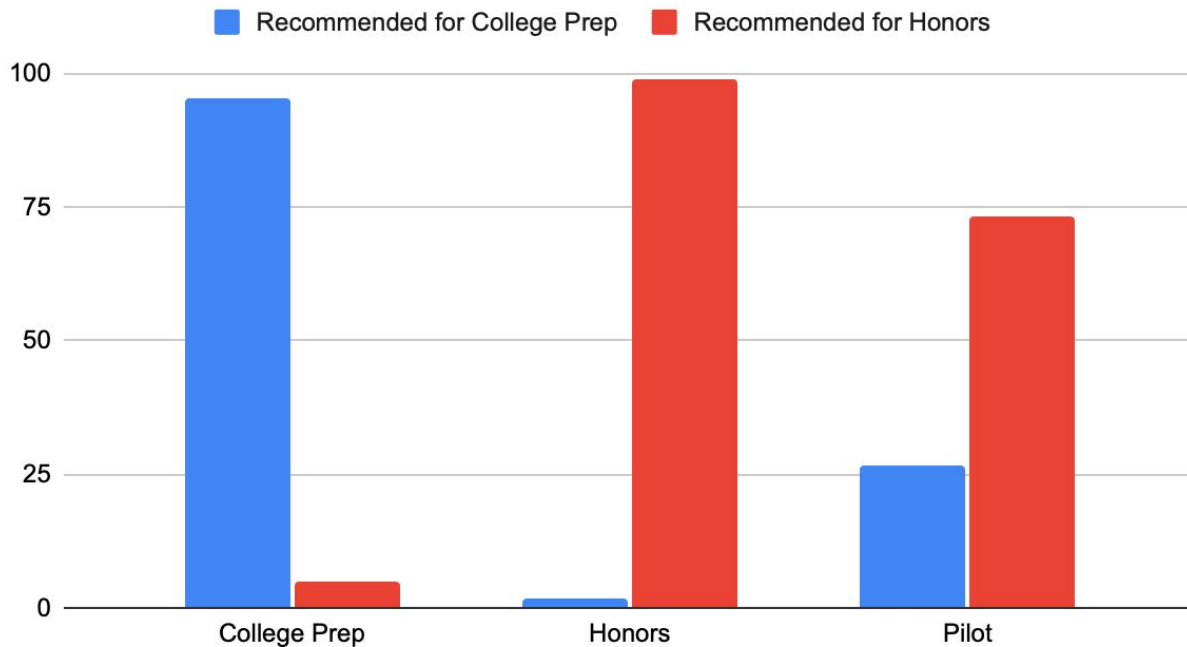
Hattie on Tracking (p. 186-187)

“Ability grouping fosters friendship networks linked to students’ group membership, and these peer groups may contribute to polarized track-related attitudes among high school students with high-track students becoming more enthusiastic and low-track students more alienated.”

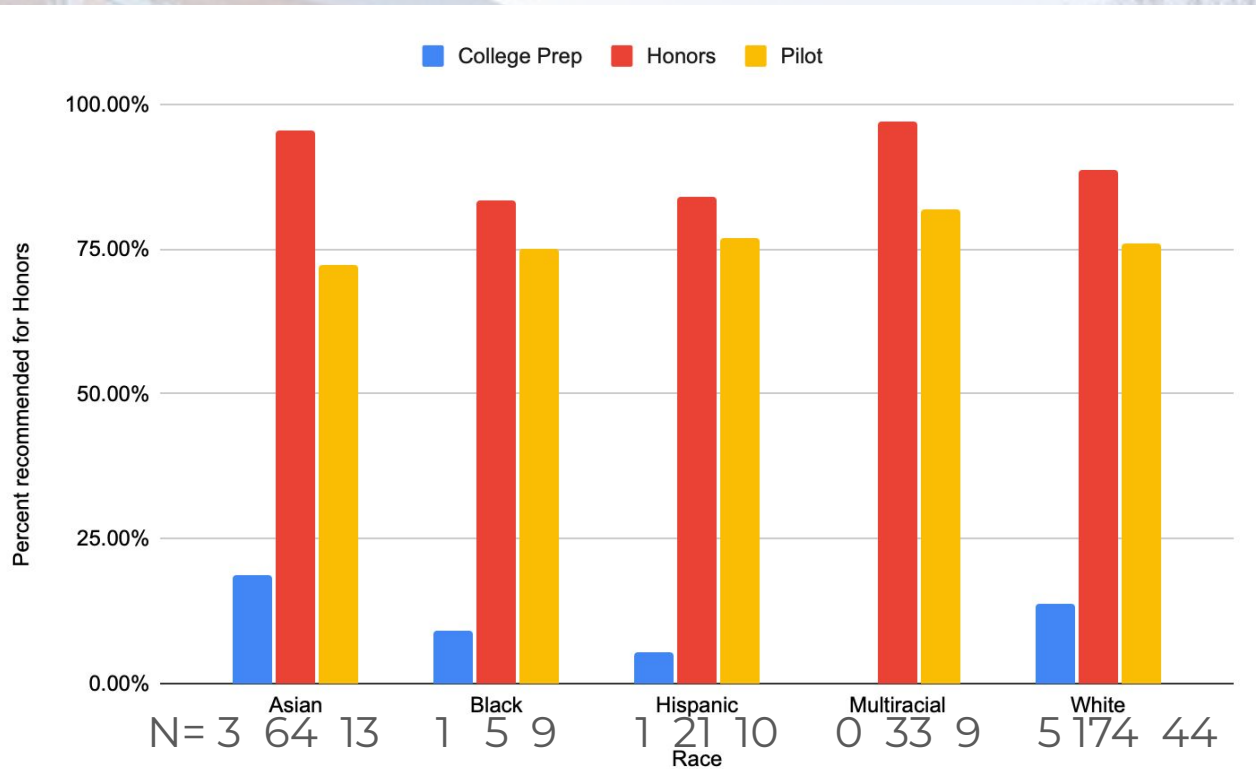
Hattie, John *Visible Learning, the Sequel* (2023)

10th Grade Course Recommendations by Class Level

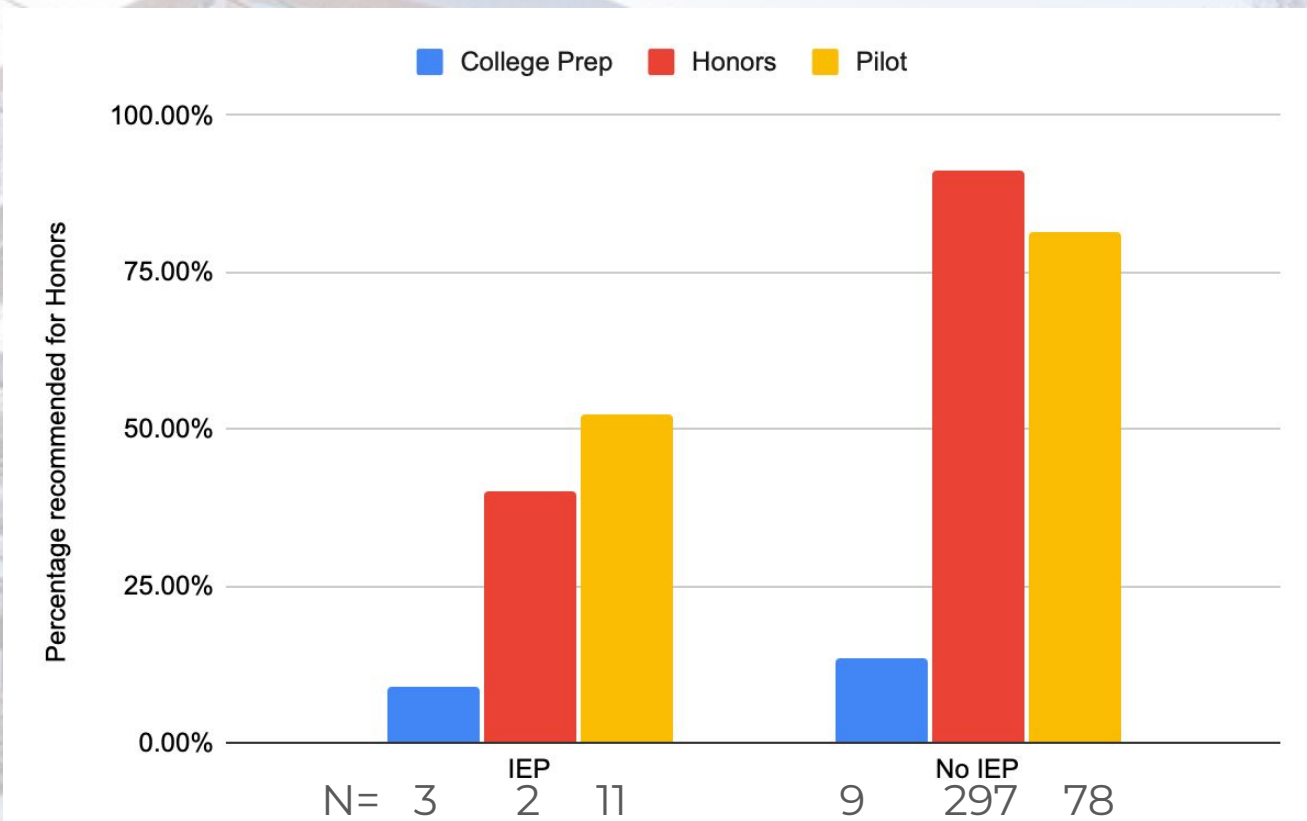
10th Grade English Course Recommendations by Level



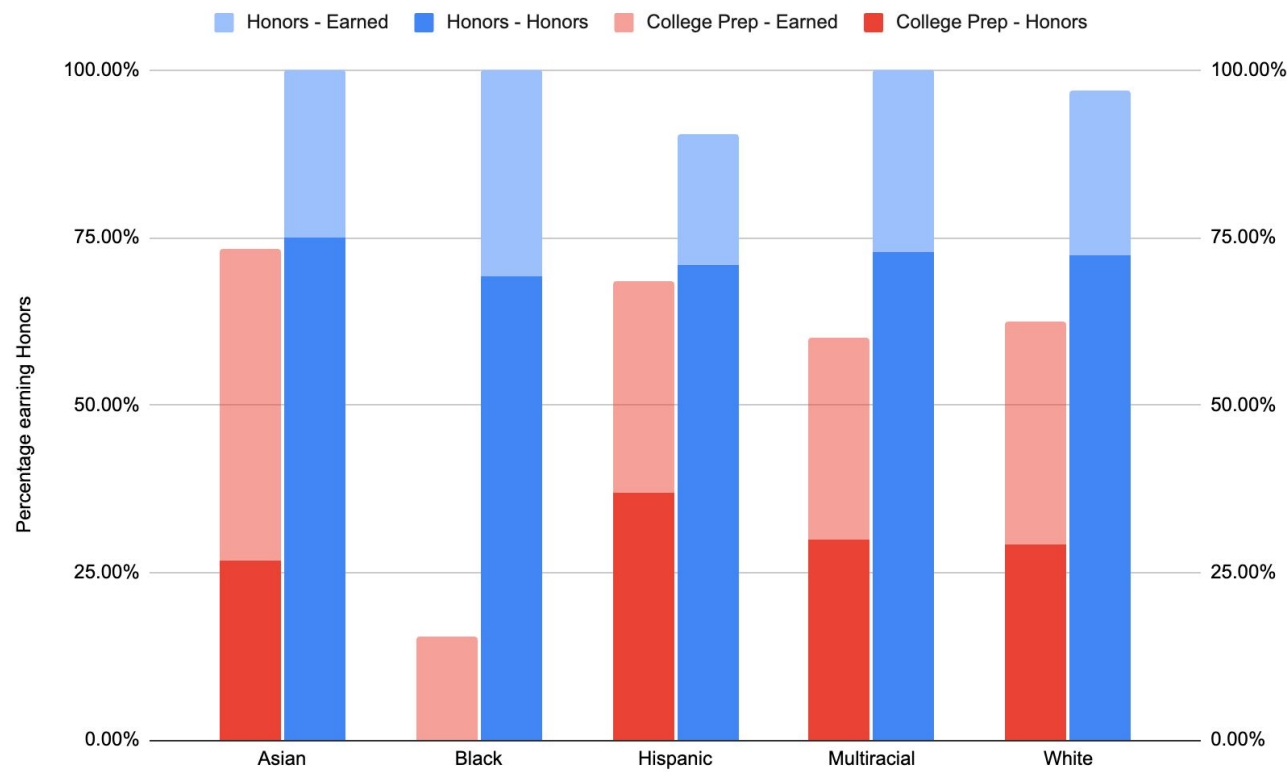
10th Grade Course Recommendations by Class Level



10th Grade Course Selection & IEP Status

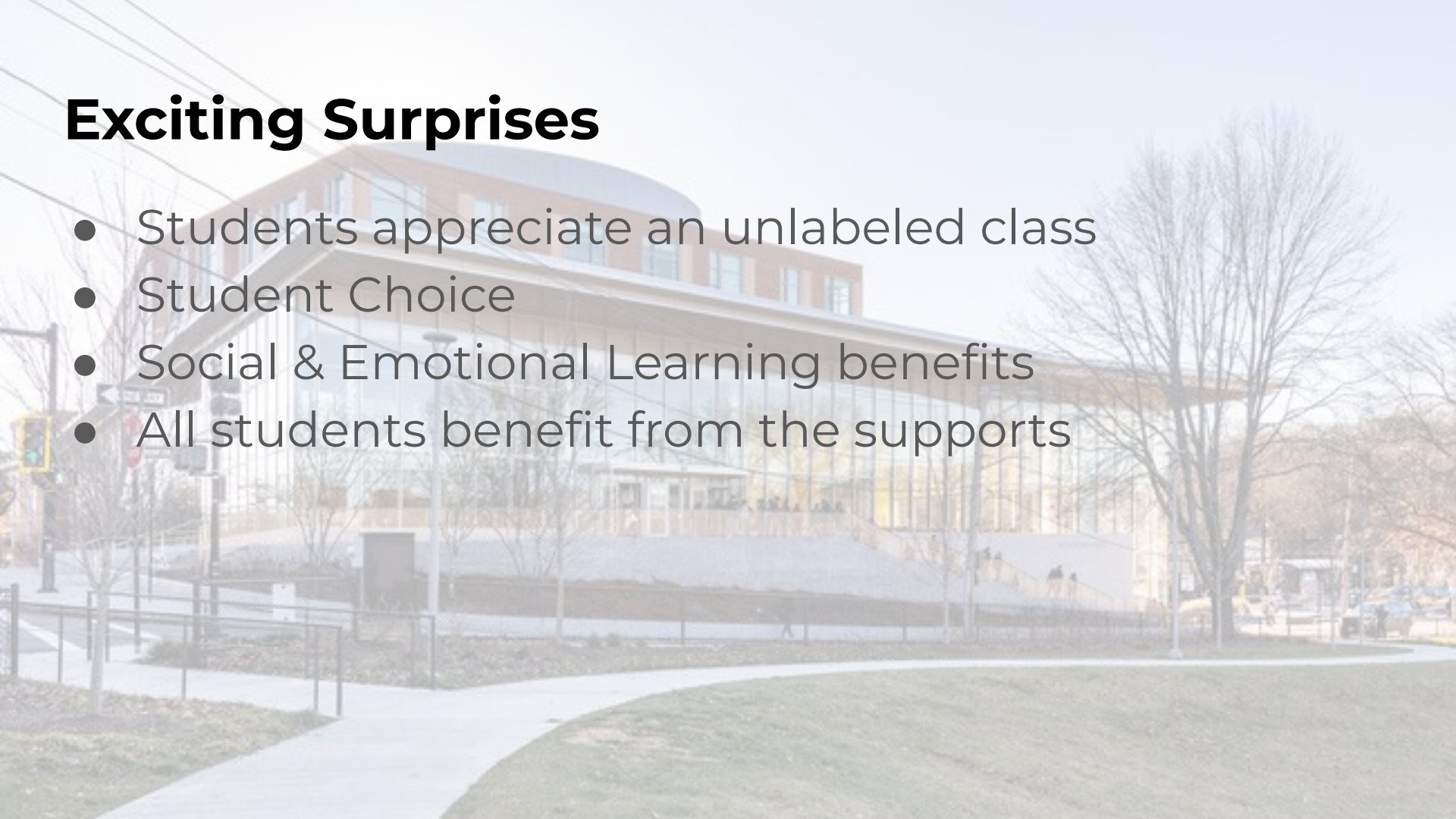


Course Level of Current 10th Graders According to 9th Grade Level



Exciting Surprises

- Students appreciate an unlabeled class
- Student Choice
- Social & Emotional Learning benefits
- All students benefit from the supports





NEXT STEPS

**Full Implementation
for 2024-2025**

**2nd Semester 9th grade
common assessments**

Pilot Team Recommendations for Q3/Q4

- Work with 9th Grade team to develop a Common Assessment for Reading to more closely model MCAS structure and provide data on how the differentiated text are affecting reading skills.
- Work with 9th Grade team to develop a common final exam so that we can see how students develop in second half of the year.
- Work with deans, guidance counselors, parents and caregivers to help Pilot student utilize existing office hours.
- Ensure students are making text/assignment choices that match with their intended goals for 10th Grade English.



Discussion

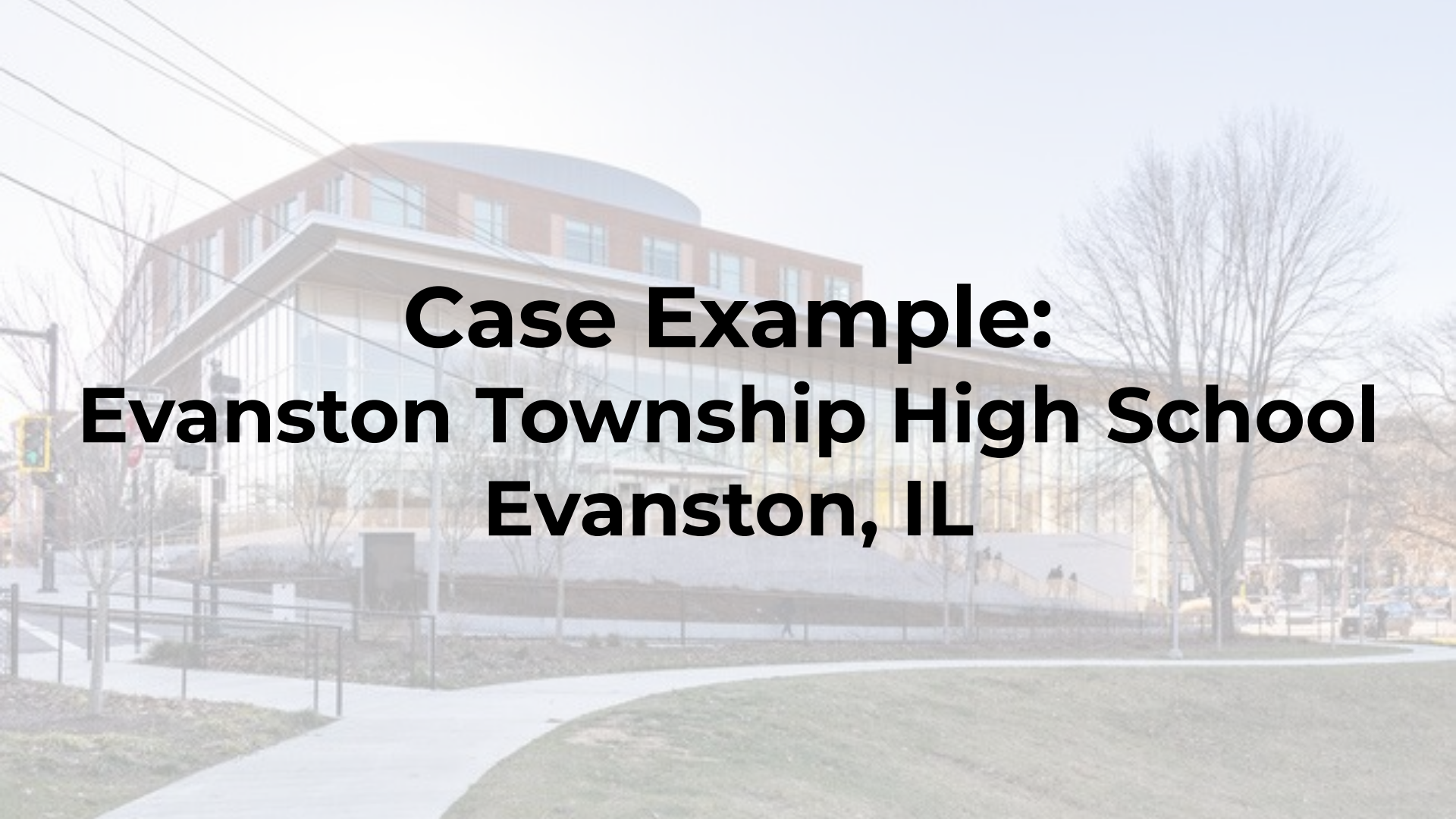


RESEARCH

DOE Study

Meta Analyses

Case Example: ETHS

The background image shows a modern high school building with a curved, multi-story facade. The upper portion of the building is constructed with reddish-brown brick and features a series of windows. The lower portion is primarily glass, reflecting the sky and surrounding trees. A wide, light-colored concrete walkway leads from the foreground towards the building. To the left, a traffic light and some utility poles are visible. Bare trees are scattered around the building, suggesting a cooler season. The overall scene is captured in a slightly desaturated, high-key style.

Case Example: Evanston Township High School Evanston, IL

Evanston Township High School

- 2,300 students
 - 30% Black, 15% Hispanic, 43% white, 41% low income
- Originally 4 tracks
- Self described inconsistency and variability in the curriculum
- Student experience “largely depended on the student’s placement and teacher”
- In Year 1 Detracked English, Social Studies, and Science (Bio)

Evanston Township High School 5 Years In

- 91 students who would have been placed into regular-level (lowest) courses in 9th grade, took AP courses in 11th grade.

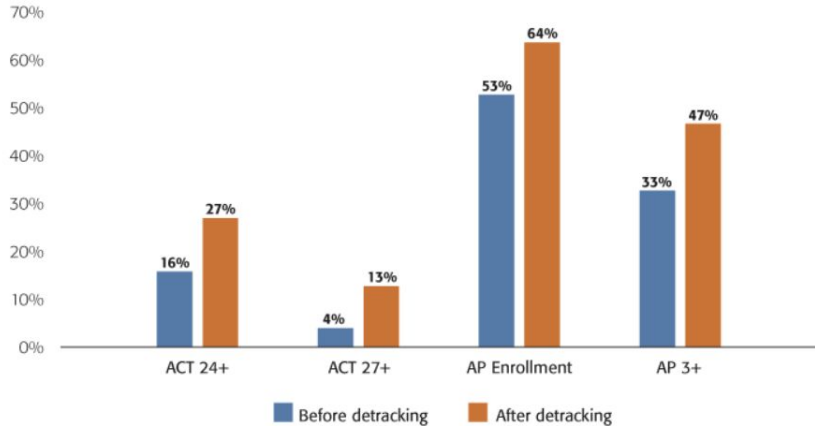
Performance of Evanston Township High School graduates on ACT exams

	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	TWO OR MORE RACES	ASIAN	LOW INCOME
2011 graduates – % earned ACT composite of 24 or higher	79%	17%	22%	41%	48%	14%
2015 graduates – % earned ACT composite of 24 or higher	84%	23%	30%	64%	67%	21%

Evanston Township High School 5 Years In

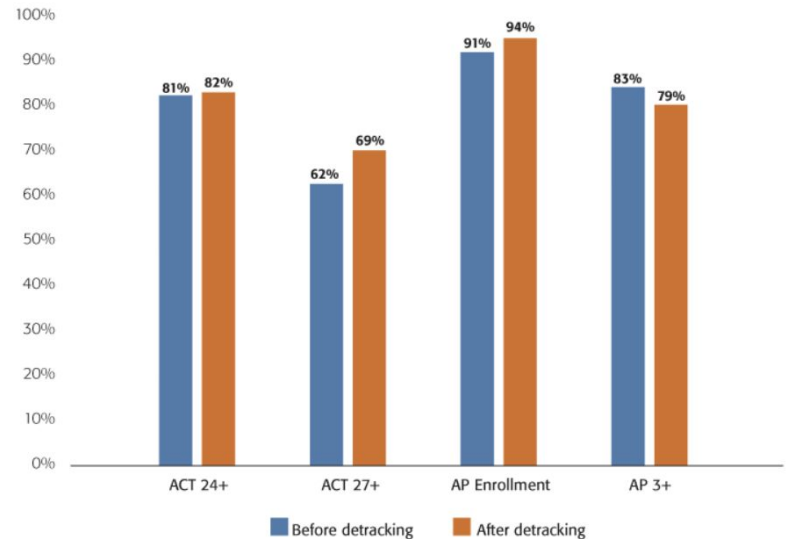
How do "regular-level" students do?

After detracking, "regular-level" students enrolled in honors-level courses in greater numbers and subsequently improved their performance on Advanced Placement exams and on the ACT exam.



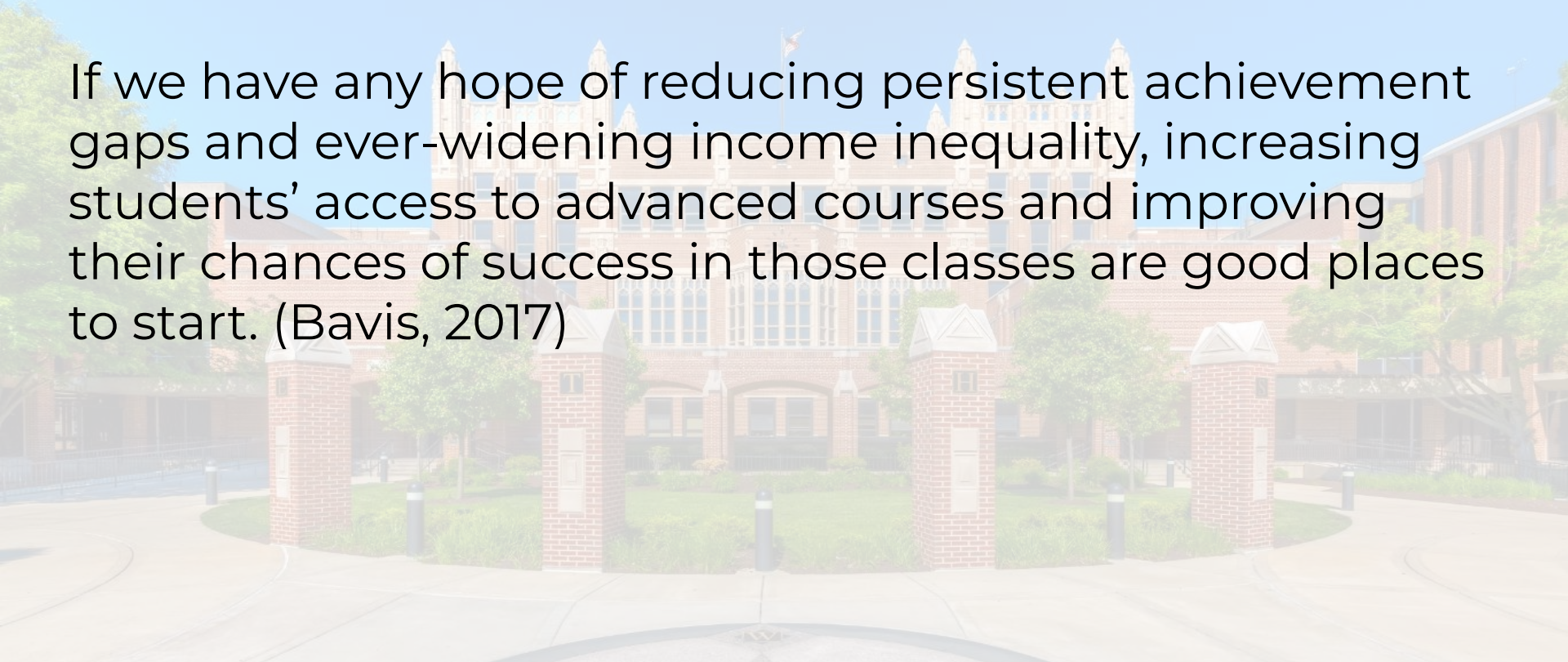
How do "honors-level" students do?

After detracking, "honors-level" students continued to enroll in Advanced Placements courses and continued to have high performance on both the Advanced Placements exams and on the ACT exam.



Evanston Township High School 5 Years In

If we have any hope of reducing persistent achievement gaps and ever-widening income inequality, increasing students' access to advanced courses and improving their chances of success in those classes are good places to start. (Bavis, 2017)



Defining Terms

Leveling

The current system at BHS whereby some classes are sorted by level (Standard, Honors, AP etc...) but students and families have choices about which course to take.

Tracking

A system by which students are assigned to leveled classes with few (if any) chances to move between levels. Typically linked to some type of entrance exam or grade requirement.

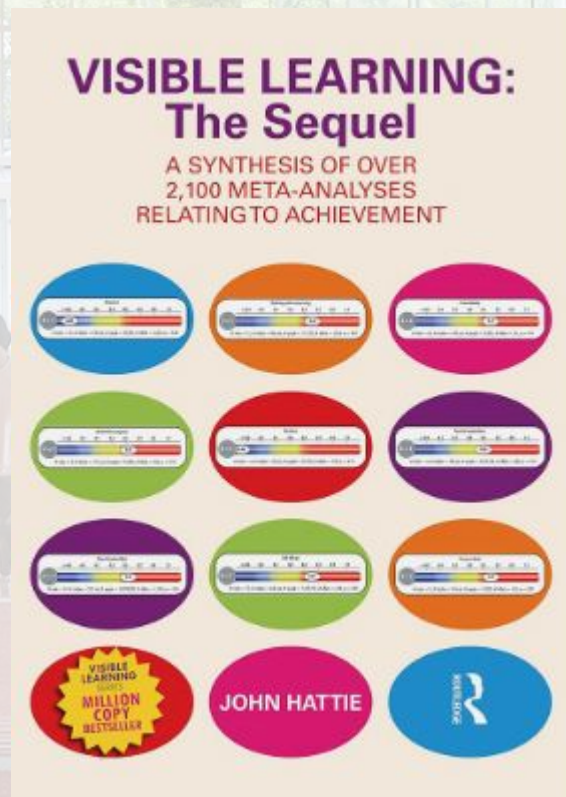
Heterogeneous Classes

Classes where students who might otherwise be in different level classes are in the same course together.

Hattie *Visible Learning* 2nd Edition

A 2023 synthesis of over 2100 meta-analyses relating to achievement

Moving from “what works?”
to “what works best?”



Hattie *Visible Learning* 2nd Edition

A 2023 synthesis of over 2100 meta-analyses relating to achievement

Moving from “what works?” to “what works best?”

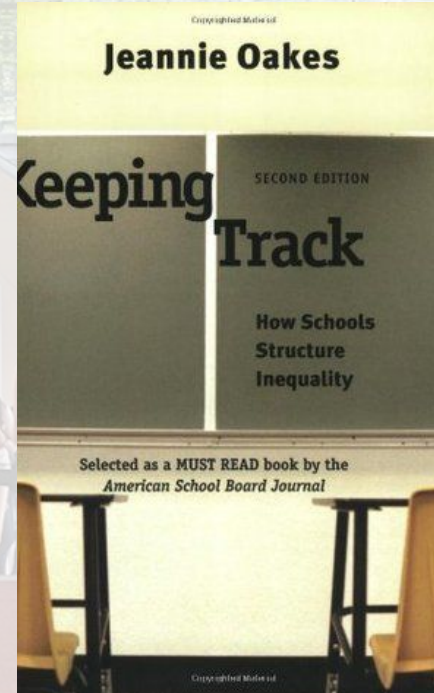
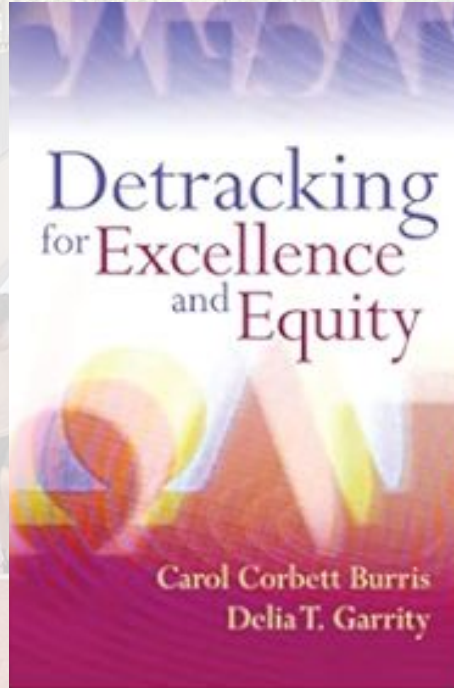
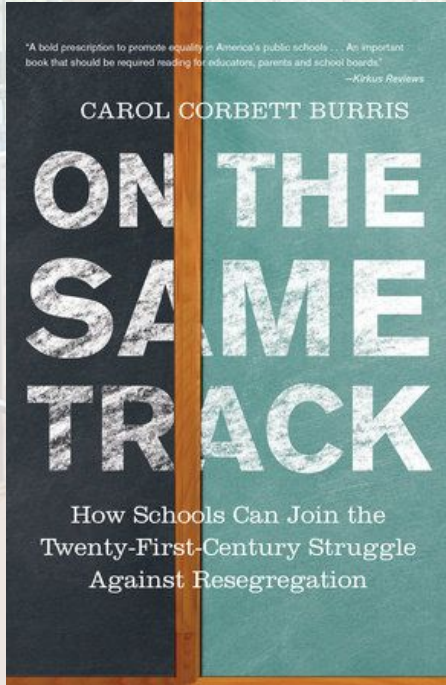
Effect size of $d \geq 0.4$ is desirable, greater than what a teacher can typically do in one year and likely worth spending time on

0.40 is a standard from which to judge effects
(p 17)

The zone between $d = 0.0$ and 0.15 is what students can probably achieve if there was no schooling (p. 20)

Any effects below $d = 0.15$ can be considered potentially harmful and probably should not be implemented.

Additional Sources





PUBLIC SCHOOLS of
BROOKLINE



FY25 Budget Information

February 29, 2024

Agenda

- Town/School Partnership Thumbnail Update
- CIP Funding
- Enrollment Forecast
- Revolving Funds & Q&A Follow-up
- Budget Changes
- Potential Additions

All information also posted on <http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/budget>

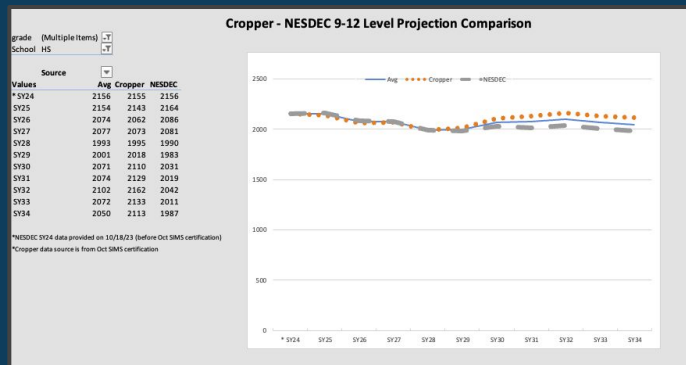
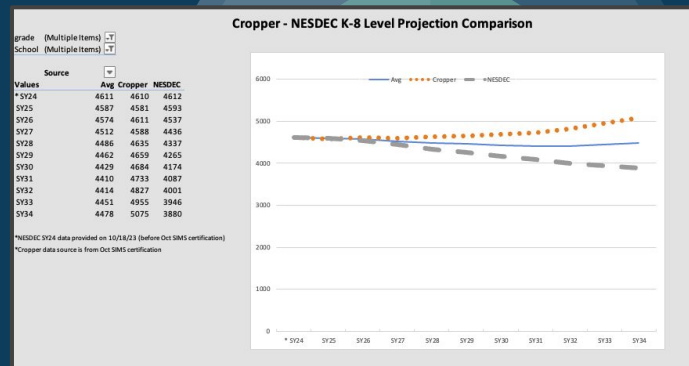
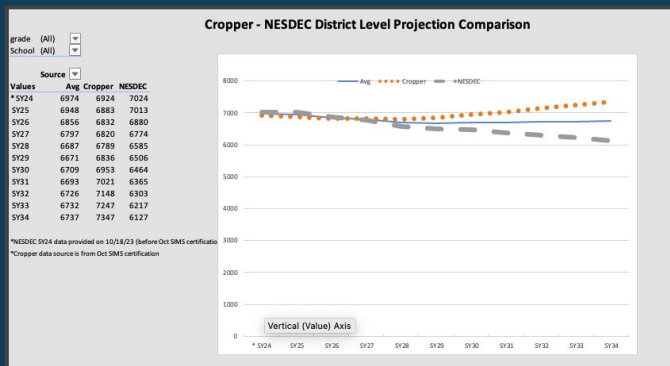


Town School Partnership & CIP Update

Capital Improvement Plan				
FY25 Request vs. Approved Capital Improvement Plan				
February 23, 2024				
	Projects	Request	Approved	Change
PSB	Classroom Capacity (Leases)	640,332	717,332	77,000
	Failing Furniture & Fixtures Replacement	200,000	200,000	0
	IEP Accommodations - School Modifications	50,000	200,000	150,000
	Deferred Maintenance	2,120,675	4,670,209	2,549,534
	Long Term Capital Plan	250,000	250,000	0
	PSB Subtotal	3,261,007	6,037,541	2,776,534
DPW	Lincoln Playground Renovation			
	Heath Playground Renovation			
	Lawrence/Longwood Playground			
	Baker Playground Renovation			
	DPW Subtotal	0	0	0
Buildings	HVAC Equipment		100,000	100,000
	Underground Tank removal	60,000	100,000	40,000
	Town/School ADA Renovations	127,680	90,000	-37,680
	Town/School Elevator Renovations	100,000	400,000	300,000
	Town/School Energy Conservation Projects		205,000	205,000
	Town/School Energy Management Projects		100,000	100,000
	Town School Building Envelope/Fenestration Repairs	1,747,731	500,000	-1,247,731
	Town/School Roof Repair/Replacement Program		0	-500,000
	Public Building Fire Alarm Upgrades	150,000	225,000	75,000
	Town/School Building Security/Life Safety Systems	180,000	170,000	-10,000
	Town/School Compactor Replacements		0	0
	Buildings Subtotal	2,865,411	1,890,000	-975,411
Total		6,126,418	7,927,541	1,801,123

REVENUE	FY24 BUDGET	FY25 Forecast	FY25 Forecast	FY25 Forecast	CHANGE
Property Taxes	297,988,918	313,138,448	312,112,210	312,112,210	-
Local Receipts	30,028,757	31,718,810	33,050,910	33,050,910	-
State Aid	23,966,611	24,319,611	24,317,674	24,317,674	-
Other Available Funds	4,407,669	4,390,155	7,029,580	7,029,580	-
Free Cash	20,008,705	16,800,000	16,800,000	22,422,386	5,622,386
TOTAL REVENUE	376,400,660	390,367,024	393,310,374	398,932,760	5,622,386
\$\$ INCREASE		13,966,364	16,909,714		2,943,350
% INCREASE		3.7%	4.5%		0.8%
EXPENDITURES					
Departmental*	90,741,569	94,402,821	94,402,821	94,806,742	403,921
Schools	130,702,376	137,701,490	138,642,989	138,642,989	-
Non-Departmental - Benefits	80,044,128	84,760,257	85,289,197	85,289,197	-
Non-Departmental - General	6,382,149	3,769,968	3,804,407	3,804,407	-
Non-Departmental - Debt Service	36,093,387	38,310,079	36,902,341	36,902,341	-
Non-Departmental - Reserve Fund	3,069,471	3,245,681	3,245,681	3,245,681	-
Special Appropriations (CIP)	18,781,566	19,838,407	22,994,675	22,994,675	-
Non-Appropriated	10,586,014	9,999,338	9,853,909	9,853,909	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	376,400,660	392,028,041	395,136,020	395,539,941	403,921
\$\$ INCREASE		15,627,381	18,735,360		
% INCREASE		4.2%	5.0%		
CUMULATIVE SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		(1,661,017)	(1,825,646)		
DEFICIT AS A % PF OP REVENUE		-0.4%	-0.5%		
Total Town Surplus/ (Deficit)	35%	(581,356)			
Total School Surplus/(Deficit)	65%	(1,079,661)			

Enrollment Forecast Update



Additional Learning

- Revolving Funds
- Questions and Answers



Budget Changes – Funding Shifts

Move to:	Move From:	Amount	Note
High School - Salary	Athletic Revolving - Salary	\$400,000	Funding Source Correction - Coaching Stipends
BACE Revolving - Salary	OTL - Salary	\$397,000	Funding Source Correction- Administrative Salaries
High School - Transportation	OAF - Prof/Tech Services	\$257,225	Move Athletic Transportation to HS



Budget Changes – Reductions

Account Description	Amount	Note
OAF - Tech/Prof Services	\$134,000	Cleaning Contract Reduction
OTL - Education/Training/Conf.	\$ 13,000	Shift Standards Conference to Title IIA grant
OEE - Education/Training/Conf.	\$ 13,997	Shift IDEAs Membership to Title IIA grant
OEE - Salary	\$ 44,000	Shift Equity Leads to Title IIA grant

Total Reductions \$204,997



Potential Additions

- ELA Curriculum Implementation - \$19,157
- High School Teachers (2) - \$160,396
- Pierce School Staffing (Campus Split) - \$138,680
- OSS Expanded Services Opportunity - \$225,230
- OSS Transportation - Bids are Due March 7th
- School Maintenance and Repair - \$187,490

Total = \$730,953

Pierce School Staffing - Campus Split

- Intermittent Administrative Support \$40,000
- Special Education Teacher (1.0) \$80,180
- Northeastern Intern \$18,500

Total \$138,680

Office of Student Services

FY25 BUDGET
REQUEST

*Expansion of
Winthrop House*

What is Winthrop House (Grades 9-12)?

- Provides intensive therapeutic and educational supports to **students with complex mental health diagnoses**.
- Provides a sub separate therapeutic milieu to address academic and emotional challenges which interfere with a student's ability to be successful in a traditional environment.
- Provides a challenging grade level curriculum taught within a small group setting.
- Supports students with channeling impulsive energy into positive growth.
- Provides trauma informed supports to emotionally fragile students throughout the school day.
- Enables students to matriculate and graduate with their peers from the Public Schools of Brookline.

Expanding Winthrop House (for Grades 6-8)

- The mission is to provide challenging and troubled adolescents with a therapeutic education at an earlier age and stage, one that fosters the building of academic, personal and interpersonal skills,
- Decisions for placement at Winthrop House are made through an IEP process, informed by input from mental health providers and educators, as well as the student and his/her/their family.

Elements of Student Programming

- Academic Instruction - *Providing a solid foundation of classroom learning*
 - Aligned with PSB grade level curriculum
 - Provided in small group classes
 - Individualized academic programming based on student needs
 - Therapeutic elective offerings
- Therapeutic Services - *Learning to manage anxiety, stress, frustration and anger while resolving issues through reflection and non-judgmental, non-punitive problem solving discussions.*
 - Weekly DBT classes
 - Social Emotional Group Therapies
 - Individual and small group therapy sessions

Winthrop House Grades 6-8 Cost Analysis

Profile of Identified Students

Fiscal Projections for OOD Costs

1. Stabilization Programs (40-day EE) (currently 5 students/year)	\$90,000
2. Home/Hospital Tutoring ((currently 25 students/year; 12 hours/week)	\$67,000
3. Hospital Stabilization, Tutoring at Hospital,	\$100,000
4. OOD students/year	
(each placement = \$120,000	\$240,000
Approximately 100K each	
	\$529,000

Program Development Investment Costs

Personnel

	FTE	
School Psychologist	1.0	\$100,000
Special Educator	1.0	\$80,180
Paraprofessional	1.0	\$34,590
General Ed Teacher	2.0	\$160,360
Stipends (art/music)		\$25,000
Clinical Consultation		\$40,000

\$440,130

Offsets: Paraprofessional Re-alignment

School Psychologist & Special Educator: IDEA Grant

Winthrop Expansion Potential Funding Sources

- Staff Realignment
- Fund Code 240 Entitlement Grant
- Phase in Programming

Summary

Initial Budget Proposal = \$138,642,989

Town Budget Allocation* = \$136,413,421

GAP \$ 2,229,568

Reductions \$ 204,997

New GAP \$ 2,024,571

*As of February 6, 2024

Additions?



Revolving Funds

Materials Fees

PSB non-resident tuition program allows any town or school department employee living outside the district to apply for their children's enrollment in the school system. The tuition-based program is operated on a space available basis. The number of students accepted into the program each year can fluctuate depending on space availability after resident enrollment has been finalized. Parents pay a small fee in order to participate in the program. The fee is deposited into this revolving fund and personnel costs are expensed against this fund.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	290,603	600,000	600,000	0
Salary	399,619	584,268	637,836	-53,568
Non-Salary	53,295	0	0	0
Total Expense	452,914	584,268	637,836	-53,568
FTE		8.0	8.0	0.0

Circuit Breaker

Circuit Breaker is the state's special education reimbursement program. Its intent is to provide relief to districts for high-cost special education students. The threshold for eligibility is tied to four times the state average per pupil foundation cost. Circuit breaker reimbursements are based on the district's prior year expenses. Each summer, PSB submits claim forms to DESE listing the types and amounts of special education instructional services provided to each student during the previous fiscal year. Administrative and overhead costs are not reimbursable.

Circuit breaker reimbursements payments are made on a quarterly basis and are deposited into this revolving fund. In Brookline, Circuit Breaker funds are used to offset the the cost of Out-of-District tuition. For FY25, the amount of this offset is \$3,475,572.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	3,124,541	3,475,572	3,953,714	478,142
Salary				0
Non-Salary	2,948,524	3,156,936	3,475,572	318,636
Total Expense	2,948,524	3,156,936	3,475,572	318,636

Brookline Adult & Community Education (BACE)

Brookline Adult and Community Education (BACE) is one of the oldest non-credit, public education programs in Massachusetts. Adult education has been a part of the Brookline community since 1832, beginning with the formation of the Brookline Lyceum Society. It is now one of the largest public programs in the State. BACE is the hub of an educational network serving students from more than 50 neighboring communities in the greater Boston area and beyond. BACE is a self-supporting program of the Brookline public schools, funded entirely from course fees.

During FY24, while rebuilding programming impacted by the pandemic, BA&CE is on track to sustain its FY23 income level with over \$650,000 in tuition revenue. This amount was less than an overly ambitious goal of a 30% annual increase in revenue for each year, post pandemic (FY21). To Meet higher revenue targets, current staffing levels need to be increased to develop more course offerings and marketing them to the public. For this reason, the FY25 budget includes one additional full-time Program Manager. The new position would add approximately \$75,000 in administrative costs. In addition to this new positions, the budget will continue to support the salaries of the Director, 2 Program Managers, two Secretaries, Program Instructors as well as supplies, services, and materials.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	663,924	650,000	675,000	25,000
Salary	552,895	547,639	674,636	126,997
Non-Salary	258,463	200,000	229,054	29,054
Total Expense	811,358	747,639	903,690	156,051
FTE		5	6	1

Athletics

Brookline offers a robust athletic program. Though the majority of the program is funded through the school budget, fees are charged to participants as well. Revenue from these fees are deposited into this revolving fund and support a variety of expenses for Athletics, including: payment of officials, medical supplies, entry fees for meets, tournaments and leagues, state mandated CPR training for all coaches, facility rentals (including ice time), game personnel, repair and maintenance of equipment, and the purchase of both large and small equipment.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	454,690	510,000	455,000	(55,000)
Salary	0	0	0	0
Non-Salary	609,803	510,000	455,000	(55,000)
Total Expense	609,803	510,000	455,000	(55,000)

Brookline Early Childhood Education (BEEP)

BEEP provides a high-quality, inclusive, and developmentally appropriate educational experience that supports each child's needs and nurtures confidence and independence. BEEP enrolls a maximum of 348 preschool and prekindergarten students who live across the town. BEEP classrooms are "inclusive," meaning there are typically developing students and students with identified educational disabilities (e.g. Autism, Developmental Delay, Health, etc.). The mix of our students' needs, abilities, and interests and our interdisciplinary team's insights and expertise results in an enriched and supportive learning environment for all students. Typically developing students enrolled in BEEP pay tuition in order to attend the program.

In FY25, the program will expand to a full day early childhood program. Tuition will increase to reflect this change and the additional costs associated with this expansion will be funded through this revolving fund. During FY24, the revolving account funds 25.3 FTE, mainly paraprofessionals who provide classroom support and administrative staff. For FY25, 39.8 FTE will be funded from the revolving account and will include a combination of paraprofessionals, teachers, and administrators.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	2,293,800	2,266,902	3,000,000	733,098
Salary	1,730,966	1,981,013	2,812,580	831,567
Non-Salary	36,428	55,205	90,205	35,000
Total Expense	1,767,394	2,036,218	2,902,785	866,567
FTE		25.3	39.8	-14.5

Use of Facilities

The Facilities Revolving fund is made up of revenue collected from the rental of school department space to outside user groups for events and activities. The fund supports much of the overtime needed to oversee these events, as well as two custodial salaries.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	290,603	318,360	318,360	0
Salary	399,619	293,522	293,522	0
Non-Salary	53,295	0	0	0
Total Expense	452,914	293,522	293,522	0
FTE		2.0	2.0	0.0

Food Services

The mission of the food services program is to provide an attractive and nutritious offering while at the same time enhancing nutrition education for the students. Good nutrition and learning go hand in hand. The program is made up of a team of food service professionals that are dedicated to students' health, well-being and their ability to learn. We support learning by promoting healthy eating habits for lifelong nutrition. Meals, food and beverages sold or served at schools meet Federal and State requirements which are based on the USDA Dietary Guidelines. We provide students with access to a variety of delicious, affordable and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students.

The Food Services Program is self-funding with revenues estimated to be over 4 million dollars. The program employs 61.6 staff. In addition to salaries to pay these employees, the fund covers the cost of a food and all other operating costs.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	3,610,149	4,116,004	4,025,596	-90,408
Salary	1,618,753	2,380,254	2,402,025	21,771
Non-Salary	958,764	1,635,741	1,822,282	186,541
Total Expense	2,577,517	4,015,995	4,224,307	208,312

FTE	61.6	61.6	0
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BHS Restaurant

The BHS restaurant, Tappan Green, is both a vocational program and an operational restaurant open to the Brookline community. The BHS restaurant offers an educational experience and an important community space for students and staff to gather. Tappan Green is proud to be the most integrated program at Brookline High School. Participation in the restaurant program allows students from all grades, levels, and abilities the opportunity to work together to provide a meaningful service to the school and community. Students enrolled in the restaurant program receive industry-recognized credentials while using state-of-the-art tools and equipment, which prepare them to think critically and lead in collaborative and team-based settings. Some participating students leverage their Tappan Green training to pursue after-school employment opportunities on the student catering team.

Account	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change
Revenue	131,360	140,000	145,000	5,000
Salary	27,322	29,202	33,637	4,435
Non-Salary	124,934	120,000	125,000	5,000
Total Expense	152,256	149,202	158,637	9,435

FTE	0.5	0.5	0
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FY25 Budget Questions and Answers – February 29, 2024

Education/Training/Conferences

1. What is driving the increase for the line item Education/Training/Conferences, and what are the intended outcomes?

The District's strategic plan, school improvement plans, state-mandated changes, and the school committee's budget guidelines drive the increase in this line item.

The Office of Teaching and Learning has included funds to support the move to standards-based instruction in literacy. The Office of Educational Equity has included funds to support our commitment to educational equity with a focus on cultural competence and responsive practices. Specific to Special Education, the Office of Student Services (OSS) is transitioning to updated Individualized Education forms and procedures, which requires professional learning across the District for every age and grade. Regarding social emotional learning, the purchase of targeted curriculum and increased training and support for all educators and clinicians has led to significant enhancements in supporting all students. The Office of the Superintendent and School Committee has included funds to pay for a membership to the New England School Development Council Association (NESDEC).

2. What was the overall Education/Training/Conferences budget in FY22 and FY23?

The total expenses by year:

- FY22 - \$333,733
- FY23 - \$147,077

Total budget allocations for FY24 and FY25:

- FY24 - \$293,252
- FY25 - \$456,667

Office of Student Services

1. What is causing the 94% increase (\$236,080) in the OSS claims and settlements category?

Prior to FY25, Claims and Settlements were funded from the Settlement and Claims line item and the Out-of-District Tuition lines. In FY23, all claims and settlements were recorded to the Claims and Settlement line to accurately capture all of the expenses. FY24 Claims

and Settlements are estimated to be over \$750,000, not \$250,000. In FY25 all funding for settlements are properly accounted for in the Claims and Settlement line. The difference between the FY24 and 25 budgets represents a course correction in accounting rather than an actual increase in true costs.

Account Description	FY23 Expense	FY24 Budget	FY25 Proposal	FY24 vs FY25
Claims & Settlements	\$1,699,391	\$250,000	\$486,080	\$236,080

2. Can you explain the difference between "Tuition to Mass Schools" vs. "Tuition to Non-public Schools" vs. "Tuition to Out of State Schools"?

The definitions for these categories are as follows:

Tuition to Mass Schools: Tuition that PSB pays for Brookline students to attend Special Education Programs in other Massachusetts Public schools.

Tuition to Non-Public Schools: Tuition that PSB pays for Brookline students to attend Special Education Programs in Massachusetts Non-Public (Private) schools. This includes both residential and day placements at Chapter 766 schools.

Tuition to Out-of-State Schools: Tuition that PSB pays for Brookline students to attend Special Education Programs in Out-of-State Public and Non-Public (Private) Schools.

3. The Special Education tuition request calls for \$598,935; what is causing this change?

The main drivers of this change relate to shifts in student placements and increases in tuition charged by Chapter 766 schools. There are several students shifting from day to residential placements, which is a more restrictive setting. Residential placements differ from day placement in a few ways; students have round the clock care which adds significant cost. That being said, transportation costs decrease because they are not being transported on a daily basis.

Note: Chapter 766 school tuition rates are set by the Operational Services Division (OSD) and increase annually, and schools can request additional rate increases throughout the year.

4. Why are Out-of-District Schools (OOD) so costly?

Out-of-district schools are costly because they typically have smaller student/staff ratios, more constant supervision, adaptive equipment, significant medical services, and more. If a student is in a residential placement, it would also include 24-hour care, room, and board. When students are placed in OOD schools, PSB is selecting the best outside provider to address the student's needs.

Note: The District receives partial reimbursement from the State (Circuit Breaker funding) to provide some relief, but a significant gap exists between what the State reimburses Districts for special education and what it actually costs.

5. Why is the Office of Student Services expense increasing by 15.6% (\$697,311) if the number of students going out of the District is not increasing?

Students requiring Out-of-District (OOD) placements fit into one of three programs: Collaborative Placements, Private Day Placements, or Residential Placements. On average, OOD tuition increases approximately 4% annually but doesn't necessarily cover all the needed services. Circuit Breaker reimbursement fluctuates, which further impacts costs. However, OOD schools can apply throughout the year for Extraordinary Relief through the Operational Services Division (OSD), which can be used for building projects and other issues. Increasingly, we are seeing School Districts receive letters of approval for tuition increases of up to 12% in the middle of the year. PSB accounts for all these increases.

Despite stabilizing our student numbers, the cost shows a different result. Over the last three fiscal years, our OOD population has been decreasing; we are slowing down the overall growth of OOD placements through exemplary In-District options that offer our students the opportunity to remain in their home communities.

It should be noted that students requiring Out-of-District programs generally have more significant needs. For example, some students may require additional staffing beyond what an out-of-district program generally provides, which must be considered in our planning. Our efforts to continue developing comprehensive In-District programs remain a high priority, and our proposal to expand the PSB Winthrop House model for grades 6-8 will support students with significant therapeutic needs to remain in-district, the least restrictive environment. If we don't actively work on this, the OOD numbers and costs will grow at a much faster rate.

Office of Educational Equity

1. Who is the consultant proposed for the equity audit work?

A proposed consultant has not been selected. We have had conversations with the following consultants:

- Disruptive Education Equity Project (DEEP) - We are working with Dr. Darnisa Amante-Jackson as part of our M.A.S.S. REDI work.
- Longview Education, LLC

2. Will the equity audit include an exhaustive curricula review under the above mentioned parameters?

PSB has conducted several curricular reviews, but they were limited in scope. The equity audit would comprehensively assess Pre-K through High School curricula, instructional, systems, etc.

3. What are the intended outcomes of the proposed investments in the OOE department?

The investment will develop Equity Leaders at each school, establish an all-encompassing district-wide data set that spans Pre-K through 12th Grade, and make recommendations for action.

A significant portion of the requested increase in funding will establish and compensate 22 Equity Leads (two in each K-8 school and four in the high school) and one unaligned position. Equity Leads will be current school-based staff members who will be compensated to lead equity at work at their respective schools meaningfully. This builds the capacity of this office while minimizing expenditure by utilizing the capacity we already have.

Note: Funding for equity leads and the IDEAs membership has been moved from the operating budget to the Title IIA grant.

Demography

1. For the Baker School student population, are the project numbers 2025 reflecting the new 250 units Franklin House at Puddingstone in Hancock Village apartment complex opening this Summer 2024?

The enrollment projections prepared by Cropper GIS and NESDEC took into account enrollment yield for this development. Based on the projection, we believe there is enough capacity within the sections at the Baker School to accommodate any additional students who may enroll from the Puddingstone development at Hancock Village.

- 2. Is there a projected Metco student quota? There are overpopulation concerns, and we want to ensure we are hosting students without impacting the District's students.**

Recent demographic studies and enrollment projections forecast PSB's enrollment will decline over the next five years and therefore, we do not expect overcrowding to be an issue in our schools. There is no quota for METCO students. Generally, annual METCO enrollment is around 300 students.

Operations (Facilities and Transportation)

- 1. Is the South Brookline bus being funded as promised in the operating override or returning to a per-child fee? (Page 23-24)**

The South Brookline buses for the High School that were approved as part of the override at the spring Town meeting are fully funded within the FY25 proposed budget.

- 2. Can you explain the transportation costs, specifically who is getting bus rides in Brookline? Given the zoning of K-8 schools where most students walk, there appear to be no buses at BHS.**

We provide elementary busing for students in K-8 who reside more than 1.5 miles from their zoned school. Four buses are used for this purpose and are funded in the FY25 budget.

- 3. Dr. Guillory mentioned that the \$571,099 increase in private transportation may even be higher based on the bids going out. What does the private transportation item include, and why such a significant increase?**

It includes both regular and Special Education transportation, as well as transportation for students in foster care and those experiencing homelessness.

There is a shortage of drivers and transportation vendor availability, so costs are rising steeply. We are opening bids for Special Education, Foster Care, and Homeless Transportation on March 7, 2024. We hope to stabilize costs by combining these three areas.

While the state reimburses towns for complying with the law by educating students with special needs, to date, it has paid nothing to help transport those students to school. According to a 2010 study by the Massachusetts Special Education Transportation Task Force, the cost of special education transportation grew by 89% from 1995 to 2003, compared to a 50% increase for regular education transportation.

4. How much deferred maintenance does the Baker School have over the next five years, and where can information about school building maintenance plans be found?

The deferred maintenance budget includes funding for flooring upgrades, painting, and new stair treads at the side entrance used for recess at the Baker School. The total amount allotted for this work is \$128,000. This summer (2023), flooring in five rooms was replaced, the auditorium/flex room was refurbished, and ten classrooms were painted. Information related to the Capital Subcommittee (School Building Maintenance) is located on our website under [School Committee Meeting Materials](#). Please refer to Capital Subcommittee meetings in July, August, and September.

5. Please explain the \$291,631 cleaning cost for Driscoll and Pierce. (Pages 22-23).

Upon further review, the operations team has reduced their request by \$134,000. The remaining increment is associated with the annual increase to the cleaning contract.

Office of the Superintendent and School Committee

1. Please break down the salary line of five positions from page 19 and report specific raises from FY24, if applicable.

Superintendent (New Contract)	\$256,000
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent (New Hire)	\$ 92,000
Communications Specialist (New Hire)	\$ 87,500
Executive Assistant to the School Committee (New Hire)	\$102,843
BEU President (New President)	\$112,544

Note: Additional benefits (longevity, buybacks, etc.) totaling \$10,203 are also funded in this line.