

The Public Schools of Brookline
School Committee Meeting of Thursday, February 1, 2018
Superintendent Report
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Superintendent of Schools

Principal Search Process at Driscoll and Pierce Schools

The first joint meeting of the Pierce and Driscoll Principal Search Committees was held on Tuesday afternoon, January 30. Human Resources Director Lisa Richardson helped me to lead the meeting during which we provided the committee members with an overview of the search process and shared all application materials with them. Committee members will spend a few days reviewing the resumes and interviews will be held over the next several weeks.

Coding Opportunities

On Thursday, January 25, our Educational Technology Specialists (ETS), Enrichment and Challenge Support (ECS) teachers, and some middle school science educators spent the day sharing and learning together about coding opportunities using Little Bits Coding Kits and Arduino Uno boards. Lawrence School parent, Chris Deister, a neuroscientist who uses Arduino in his professional life, also joined the staff for the day to share his expertise. Together the group spent the day learning, experimenting, and thinking about integrated curriculum opportunities to bring these experiences to our students. Special thanks to Sandra Sicard (Pierce School ETS), AnnMarie Mazzocchi (Lincoln School ETS), Tanya Gregoire (Heath and Pierce ECS) and Matt Durant (Heath School ETS) for collaboratively planning and facilitating a wonderful day of learning.

Assemblies at Brookline High School

Tuesday, January 30, was the first day of the second semester at Brookline High School. I had the pleasure of joining BHS students on this day for some important learning.

First, students met in the auditorium to learn from Emerson College professor and BHS parent, Dr. Jabari Asim, author of *The N Word: Who Can Say It, Who Shouldn't, and Why*. He delivered two engaging, thought-provoking lectures for students on this most important topic.

Following the lectures with Professor Asim, the entire student body met in the Schluntz Gym for the annual MLK Assembly. The assembly provided students with an opportunity to celebrate the impact and continued importance of Dr. King's life through student music, poetry and speeches.

Later in the day, to help students process their lessons from Professor Asim, teachers participated in and facilitated group breakout sessions for interested students. One was specifically for students of color, and others were open to all students. Over the course of the last two days students had a chance to debrief the work in their English classes, during which teachers created discussion spaces for students.

I would like to thank the BHS English department faculty and the many other educators and students who worked to make this a day of such powerful learning and action.

7th Grade Aquaponics Project Panel

I had the pleasure of participating in a panel at Upper Devotion School responsible for reviewing student presentations of their work on aquaponics. This project – a coordinated effort between 7th grade math and science teachers – aimed to help students understand how to grow plants and raise healthy fish locally and more sustainably, especially in an urban environment with an unpredictable climate. The students' goal was to improve

the current class aquaponics system, a small Back to the Roots Water Garden, and create a new aquaponics garden design that will allow them to grow delicious, nutritious, affordable and sustainable food for the 7th grade class.

The student presentations were fantastic – at once both exciting and thoughtful. It was a joy to be able to listen to some of them present and discuss their work so enthusiastically.

I would like to thank Desiree Schreck, 7th grade science teacher, and Victoria Cavanaugh, 7th grade math teacher, for their work organizing this project, and thank the Brookline Education Foundation for their support of this work through an Idea Lab Grant.

Kindergarten Registration is Open

The registration process for students who will be entering kindergarten in September opened a few weeks ago. We have already registered 120 kindergarten students since registration appointments began on January 17. Registration appointments are booked solid (10-12 per day) for the next several weeks. We look forward to welcoming the class of 2031 in September!

Superintendent's Parent Forums

My open forums with parents at each school continue. I met with parents at Lawrence School on Wednesday, January 31, and I look forward to meeting with parents at Pierce School tomorrow morning.

My open forum with METCO parents was held on Thursday evening, January 25, at the ABCD Headquarters on Warren Street in Roxbury. METCO Coordinator Dr. Keith Lezama organized a wonderful evening for parents to meet our team of PSB administrators. Joining me and Dr. Lezama were Deputy Superintendent Nicole Gittens, Senior Director Meg Maccini, and School Committee Member Barbara Scotto.

School Visits

My in-depth visits with principals to schools and classrooms continue. I have recently had the opportunity to visit the following schools:

- Runkle School on January 24
- Heath School on January 25
- Lower Devotion School on January 26
- Lincoln School on January 29
- Driscoll School on January 31