

The Public Schools of Brookline
School Committee Meeting of Thursday, March 30, 2017
Superintendent Report
Andrew J. Bott
Superintendent of Schools

Race, Equity and Leadership in Schools Conference

Last week the district leadership team, including deputy superintendents Nicole Gittens and Sam Zimmerman, principals Mary Brown, AC Sevelius, Heidi Cook, Jen Buller, David O'Hara, Monica Crowley, Christine Kelly, Brian Denitzio, and Vicki Milstein, Headmaster Anthony Meyer, Lawrence vice principal Laura Horst, incoming Runkle principal Genteen Jean-Michel, Gabe McCormick, Suzie Talukdar and I attended the Race, Equity and Leadership in Schools conference at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The conference included lectures and presentations focused on big ideas, with multiple small group break-out sessions during which facilitated time was provided to discuss ways to apply these ideas to our everyday work in schools.

The remainder of our leadership team meetings this year are focused on equity, and the work that must occur in our schools and throughout the district if we are to achieve equitable outcomes for all students. Agendas for these meetings include an in-depth hiring workshop led by Elaine O'Sullivan, the development of school schedules that more fully support all learners, our responsibilities and best practices from other districts in support of LGBTQ youth, time to begin planning SY 2017-2018 professional development, and work to begin understanding the root causes of achievement gaps in our schools so that plans to successfully address and tackle these achievement gaps can be developed.

Along with the above work that will take place during weekly leadership team meetings, a newly formed district equity team is convening for the first time on April 10, 2017. This team will begin researching effective practices with the goal of developing a multi-year plan for equity focused professional learning at all levels of the district.

Lawrence School Principal Search Update

The search process for a new Lawrence School principal is proceeding as planned. On Monday morning I met with Lawrence School parents and guardians and on Tuesday afternoon I met with the Lawrence faculty. These meetings were designed to allow parents and staff the opportunity to offer feedback, suggestions and comments on the leadership profile that was created last year for this position. In addition to these meetings, parents and staff also have been asked to complete a survey as another means through which they can share their feedback and opinions. The information gathered from these open meetings and from the survey responses will be used to update the leadership profile so that it meets the current needs of the school community. The leadership profile will guide the Search Committee as they review applications and conduct interviews. The Search Committee will have its first meeting tomorrow morning and first round interviews will be scheduled between April 6 and April 13, 2017.

Genteen Jean-Michel's Visit to Runkle School

On Friday, March 17, I spent the day at Runkle School with Genteen Jean-Michel. The visit - her first to the school - was designed to introduce her to the Runkle community before she officially assumes her duties as principal on July 1. We will be planning additional opportunities for Genteen to visit Runkle over the course of the next few months.

During this visit, Genteen hosted two open parent meetings (in the morning and again in the late afternoon) and two open staff meetings (before school and immediately after school). Throughout the course of the day she also visited with groups of educators in their classrooms, toured the building, and introduced herself to staff. Genteen provided parents and staff with questionnaires through which they could share their ideas and suggestions with her; she will use this information as she builds her entry plan. Genteen was warmly received by parents and staff alike during the course of her very busy day. We look forward to having her back at Runkle School for more visits before July 1.

Steps to Success Update

In the spring of 2016 the transition of Steps to Success to becoming Steps to Success, Inc. a private non-profit 501(c)3 was completed. This transition necessitated a redefinition and clarification of the PSB/STS partnership in service of low income students who need additional support to ensure school success.

Prior to Steps to Success becoming a private non-profit 501(c)3, the functioning of Steps to Success was overseen by the Executive Director, who, as a PSB employee, reported to the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. The Executive Director also reported to the Steps to Success Board of Directors. The original partnership included the Brookline Housing Authority, which continued to be represented on the Board and to work directly with the Executive Director. The role and responsibilities of the Executive Director were well outside of the role of other PSB Directors. For example this included fundraising, management of donations, and development of programs that functioned apart from the PSB, but which were designed to support PSB students living in Brookline Housing Authority properties.

In the Spring of 2016, the Steps to Success Executive Director resigned and Steps to Success successfully completed the process of becoming a private non-profit, now named *Steps to Success, Inc.* These events prompted the PSB to engage in a review of the partnership as a number of operational practices needed to be updated and modified as Steps to Success, Inc. transitioned to its new private non-profit status. Two of the areas identified for review included:

- The crossover of the public/private partnership created operational and state ethics (Chapter 268A) conflicts for employees and the School District. As a private 501(c)3 entity STS Inc. needs to hire, supervise, and fully fund its own executive director.
- There were concerns regarding the duties and responsibilities of the program advisor positions, with a lack of clarity on employee hours, responsibilities, and lines of supervision.

Since transition work began in the spring of 2016, the following changes have occurred:

Personnel	Pre 2016-2017 School Year	2016-2017 School Year
Executive Director	PSB Unit B employee; reported to Deputy Superintendent for TL and STS Board	STS, Inc. employee, reports to the STS Inc. Board of Directors
Elementary/Middle School Advisors	2 PSB employees, supervised by the Executive Director	4 PSB employees supervised by school principals
BHS Advisors	2 PSB employees, supervised by the Executive Director	3 PSB employees supervised by BHS Deans
College Success Initiative	2 PSB employees, supervised by Executive Director; funded by STS Inc.	2 STS Inc employees supervised by Executive Director; funded by STS Inc.

The above changes can be summarized as follows:

- As a private non-profit, STS Inc. now hires and supervises its Executive Director
- The purview of STS Inc. is extended learning time, and as such it hires and manages extended learning time employees, including College Success Initiative (CSI) advisors.
- The purview of the PSB is the school day, and as such, we have expanded in-school support for the 2016-2017 school year, increasing from four to seven the number of program advisors directly serving students.

As discussed with the School Committee last week at the March 23 School Committee Workshop, there is much work to be done to successfully complete this transition. Following last Thursday's discussion and prior to tonight's meeting, I have spoken with STS Inc. Executive Director Shoma Haque and we have committed to working together between now and the end of the school year to redesign our collaboration, define and strengthen the partnership between the PSB and the now independent STS Inc., and to develop a strategic plan for our partnership in support of students. I believe that through this work we will present to the School Committee and to the STS Inc. Board of Directors a plan that will not only continue the long-standing good work of Steps to Success, but also support the district's goals of eliminating achievement gaps and ensuring equitable outcomes for all students.