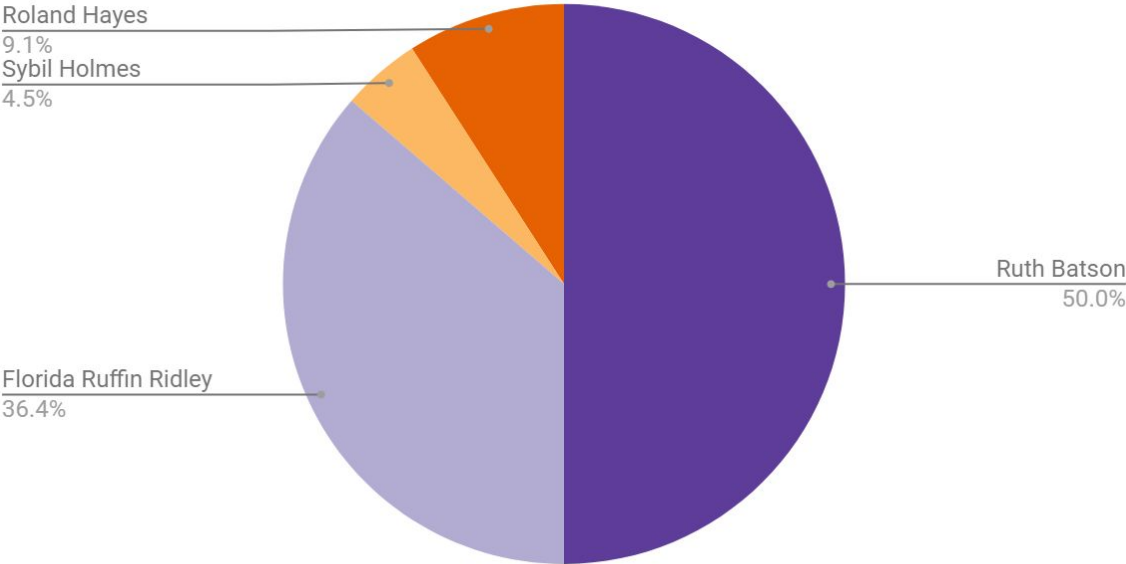




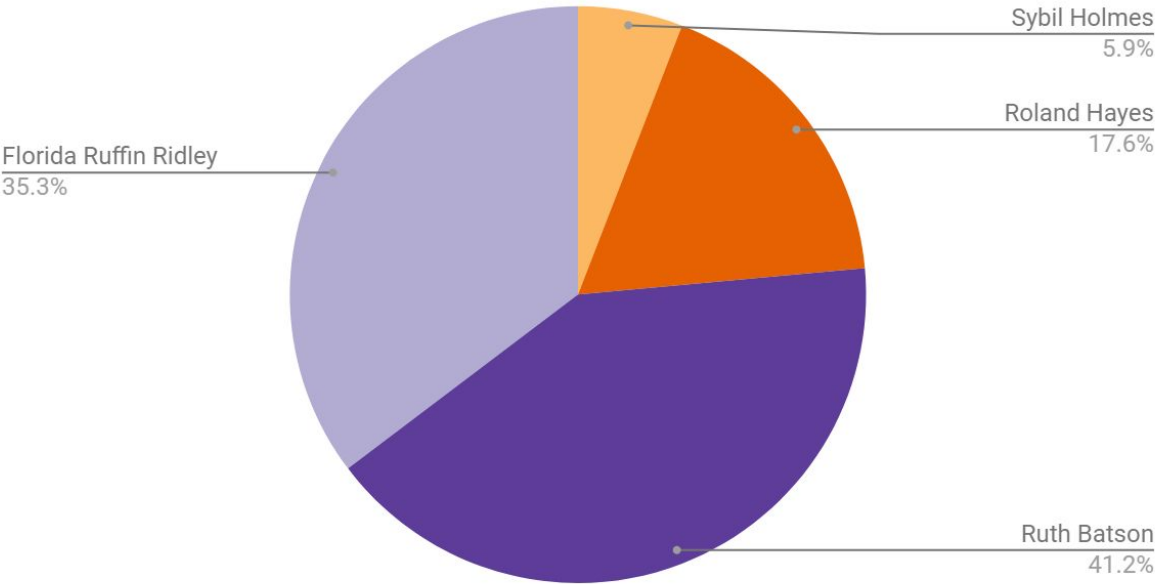
Feedback received on Coolidge Corner School Naming Finalists (Last Updated: 06/20/19)

Please note that this is a summary of and a listing of the input and comments gathered from online forms following the announcement of the four finalist names at the May 29 School Committee meeting. It is not intended to be comprehensive or capture all comments and input provided since that date.

Of the four finalists, which name is your first choice to become the name of the school?



Of the four finalists, is there another name that you would like to see become the name of the school?





Why do you think your first choice would be a worthy name for a Brookline public school?

- **[Batson is]** the perfect candidate. Local education who was instrumental in bringing integration to local schools
- I was so excited to see that **Ruth Batson** is one of the finalists. I so admire her work as a co-founder and director of Metco and her role in producing Eyes on the Prize. She has been a powerful local leader, the first black female member of the Democratic National Committee and chair of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination. I would so appreciate the Town taking the opportunity to name the school after such an accomplished woman and person of color.
- **Ruth Batson** founded METCO right here in Brookline in 1965, when Leon Trilling invited her to talk to the School Committee about bringing her busing programs to the suburbs. 52 years later, we enroll the second largest population of Boston students of all 33 METCO districts. Naming one of our schools after this unsung heroine of education civil rights would put the importance of a diverse learning community at the center of our town's narrative where it belongs, honoring the very students who were so disrespected by the previous name.
- **[Ruffin Ridley]** has ties to equity & inclusion, Brookline and education.
- **[Batson]** celebrates diversity and women of color
- I like the fact that **[Ruffin Ridley]** was both a suffragist and an advocate for equal rights among human races. She fought for a wide swath of society, using her education background. That ties in nicely with the Coolidge Corner School!
- **Sybil Holmes** dedicated her career to serving Brookline and Massachusetts. She exhibited educational excellence and hard work by becoming the first female lawyer in Brookline. She has been completely ignored in our town's and state's history. Naming the school after her is one small step toward telling her very worthy story.
- **Ruth [Batson]** has been so important for the METCO program which adds such great value to the brookline school system
- **[Batson]** is the only educational leader of the final four. Brookline is an open, diverse community with a strong commitment to education. Ruth Batson aptly represents what Brookline stands for. She is a woman of color who fought for the rights of minority students and was an early leader of Metco program which profoundly impacted Brookline schools with diversity.
- **[Ruth Batson's]** the best choice. She fought for school integration in Boston - an issue that plagues the Boston-area to this day. She's a role model any Brookline student can look up to.
- **[Ruth Batson]** is the most revelation to education, and she's very inspiring.



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- Because **[Ruth Batson]** was the executive director of Metco and fought for a better and equal school conditions for black students. Also Metco started in Brookline. She is more connected to activism around education.
- I especially support **Florida Ruffin Ridley** and **Roland Hayes** as the best option for the new name. Florida Ruffin Ridley exemplifies the importance of education and service through her life's work, and she also exemplifies the crucial connection between education and democracy. Roland Hayes exemplifies the epitome of artistic achievement through talent, hard work, and dedication, and is an example of the important connection between intellectual artistic achievement and the unity of all peoples.
- I support naming the school after **Florida Ruffin Ridley**. I think honoring and providing a role model of a strong black woman is incredibly important right now and will be in the future. She also has clear connections to Brookline and it's history. Her activism in the suffragette and anti-lynching movement are exactly the actions we want to commemorate with this process. Thank you.
- In addition to admiring **Roland Hayes'** outstanding achievements as an internationally renowned musician and a champion of civil rights, I love that he was part of the Brookline community. His daughter was a classmate of my father's at Driscoll School!
- I'd like to express support for the selection of finalists **Florida Ruffin Ridley**. She was actually a Brookline resident; it'd also be nice to have at least 1 school out of 8 named after a woman! And how appropriate to change the school's name from that of someone who enslaved people of color to that of a remarkable person of color, one who challenged so many societal barriers and achieved so much in her lifetime.
- This form requires that I pick from among the final lists of names, but as a parent of a child who attends the school, I want to begin by emphasizing the fact that my FIRST choice is actually to keep the current name: The Coolidge Corner School.

Certainly, the accomplishments of the aforementioned individuals are noteworthy, but the truth is that, for most of us us the names of the buildings we inhabit are important to us only in the sense that they are familiar . . . they are what we have always known and where, often, we have made memories. Rarely do we have a personal connection to or affinity for a building's namesake, and rarely to do we have to consider renaming a building or space. The name "Devotion", was and is dear to this community because that is the name of the building where we have watched our children grow, where our children have run, and played, and learned, and made new friends. Few of us, I would venture to guess, feel any particular fondness for Edward Devotion himself.

With all that in mind, this is a community that has tolerated a lot of change and upheaval over recent years. Had we not already discarded the Devotion name and adopted a new, albeit temporary one, selecting from the above might be fine . . . but folks have already made



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one transition. The goal has been accomplished in that we've left the Devotion name behind, and to those who say Brookline names its buildings after people: well, we'd still be doing that. (Hopefully there are no skeletons in David Coolidge's closet.)

If I have to weigh in on the candidates however, I like **Florida Ruffin Ridley** because, above all else, she was a teacher. Who better to celebrate, to recognize, when naming a school than a teacher?

I've heard some worry that her accomplishments seemed a bit thin, to which I would simply say: what greater accomplishment could there be than to become a teacher? As I think we all know, our society has long failed to recognize the vital roles teachers play in our communities and lives.

My only hope is that that's not a hyphenated name; the Ruffin-Ridley school would be a mouthful.

Please share any other input you have about the naming process.

- First, please do NOT consider names not chosen by the students. This process was long and had many, many opportunities for public input. If people chose not to get involved until the end -- and then largely to complain -- that was their choice. It should not undo the hard work of the students. Second, the students were not coerced or led down a "one-way road" when choosing names. They were thoughtful and deliberative and learned communication and compromise skills residents of this town could all benefit to learn. Their choices are valid and should be honored. Third, Ethel Weiss was a wonderful woman. Her name was nominated by numerous people. The kids gave her full consideration. She is not one of the finalists and should not be considered. Finally, name the school after a woman. It's long past time to work toward equity at every opportunity possible.
- I am excited about the choices for the new Coolidge Corner School name. Thank you for taking into account my comments.
- I am so proud of these four finalists!
- You've all done a great job!
- Honestly, please choose a woman. The vast majority of the public schools in Brookline were named for men. Yes, it was a product of the times. But it's a new era. We have girls coming to Brookline from countries that look down on female education. Let's nurture their inner sparks of learning by showing them that we value a woman's place in justice, mercy, and learning!
- I think all 4 nominees are outstanding. I would have a small personal preference for a woman to inspire the name.
- So happy we're re-naming the school! Such a great idea and opportunity.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS of **BROOKLINE**



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- This unique and inclusive process has been inspiring to witness and partake in as a community member and parent of children in Brookline Schools.