

Ruth



Batson

By Dan Hernan

“When we fight about education, we’re fighting for our lives. We’re fighting for what that education will give us. We’re fighting for a job. We’re fighting to eat. We’re fighting to pay our medical bills. We’re fighting for a lot of things. This is a total fight with us.”

RUTH M. BATSON



Who Was Ruth Batson?

Ruth Batson was the chairwoman of the Public Education Committee of the NAACP Boston Branch. One of Ruth Batson's most memorable accomplishments was challenging the all white Boston School Committee and the segregation of the Boston Public Schools. She fought for equal opportunity availability for all people. She also pointed out that schools with high black enrollments had poor funding and horrible school conditions. She was also the director of METCO, chairwoman of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, the first black woman on the Democratic National Committee, and the first woman elected president of NAACP's New England Regional Conference. She also studied at the Nursery Training School of Boston. She later received a Master of Education degree from Boston University in 1976.



Harvard University, Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, W490760, 1

Requirements

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General Criteria

Before making a recommendation on a proposal for the naming or renaming of a Public Facility, the Committee will take into consideration the following naming criteria:

- A. A person/organization of excellent reputation and character who/which has set an example of outstanding citizenship and/or has made an exemplary contribution of time, service, or resources to or on behalf of the community.
- B. A national noteworthy public figure or official.
- C. An event of historical or cultural significance.
- D. A significant donation or bequest, establishment of a trust, or other similar action.

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-Brookline Naming Committee

Specific Criteria

1. Honoring an individual who “addressed the history of slavery and racism and the need to more accurately recognize the contributions of people of color in history;”
2. Recognizing an individual who embodies the school’s core values of Work Hard, Be Kind, Help Others;
3. Selecting a name that provides restorative justice to the Brookline community.

Why Consider Her?

Ruth Batson has always been involved in education; whether that be in the Boston School Committee, or the Public Education Committee of the NAACP. “Equal education for all people” is what Ruth Batson based her career on. She worked hard to help others. I firmly believe that changing our school name from Edward Devotion to Ruth Batson is our best option. Based upon her actions, she clearly represents what Brookline Public Schools strive to be.



Last Remarks

Additionally, I want to fully acknowledge what Ruth Batson's experiences were like. Throughout her life, she encountered committee after committee filled with mostly white men. Her voice was obviously not being heard as much as other civic workers, and she knew that. Despite that challenge, she kept pushing for social and political reform. In other words, she fought for what she thought was right. Fighting for what is right is something later generations of students that go to CCS should learn and, naming our school after Ruth Batson would encourage and promote that idea.

MOTHER - TEACHER - CIVIC WORKER
Life Long Resident of Boston - Mother of 3 Daughters,
Aged 10, 8 and 7, attending Boston Public Schools.



Elect **MRS. RUTH M. BATSON**
to **Boston School Committee**

“Hicks is sometimes remembered as the Bull Connor of Boston — the staunchest defender of a racist status quo. Batson is rarely remembered at all.”

-The Boston Globe