

The Public Schools of Brookline
School Committee Meeting of Thursday, October 13, 2016
Superintendent Report
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Superintendent of Schools

Senior Leadership Priorities for 2016-17

The Senior Leadership Team met yesterday to discuss our priorities for the year in preparation for the School Committee Workshop on October 20. Each member of the team discussed the top priorities they are currently working on, additional priorities for the remainder of the school year and other items that may be longer term. As we continue to focus on getting to know the schools, the district, and how we operate, we are resisting the temptation to create long-term plans until we have a deeper understanding of the strengths we possess and the challenges we face. Over the next week, we will be summarizing the priorities we discussed so that we can share them with the School Committee and allow for a thoughtful discussion.

Townwide PTO/School Council Monthly Meeting

Today I held my monthly meeting with the PTO Presidents and School Council Co-chairs. The agenda of these meetings is jointly developed, with the parent leaders suggesting topics. Although we've only had two meetings, I very much enjoy working with this thoughtful group of leaders. I am impressed with their ability to balance their individual school needs with the broader perspective of the entire district. Today's agenda included a discussion on improved coordination with the district on software purchases for schools. We shared the portions of Section D(7) of the District Policy Manual that relate to PTO and school fundraising in an effort to help them become more familiar with the current policy. Our discussion focused on how to move a pilot effort, funded by a PTO, toward a district-wide program that is integrated into the curriculum approval and annual budget development processes. Other important items we discussed included the 9th school site selection, the process for BHS expansion, an update on contract negotiations, and follow-up to the BHS graffiti incident. For our November meeting we have already identified two agenda items: principal searches and the registration process/welcoming new families.

School Visits

With school only in session for two days since the October 6 School Committee meeting, I have not had the opportunity to complete many school visits. Today, however, I was able to spend time in the afternoon at Pierce administering the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) to students in Mrs. Harvey's 4th grade class. I worked with two students and thoroughly enjoyed the time we were able to read together and to talk about their understandings. The BAS is an assessment that takes time to administer, but my time today reaffirmed my belief that it is a valuable tool for learning about individual students as readers.