



BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL
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Dear Brookline High School Families,

Last week, I pledged in the PTO Weekly Blast to craft a midyear update. As exams have ended and yesterday was our last day of first semester, it is high time to send this missive. Before I delve into details, I remind myself - and all of you - that learning and teaching is the most sacred work of Brookline High School. While construction planning and Old Lincoln School have occupied a lot of my and others' time this year, it is our teachers and paraprofessionals, counselors and clinicians, who daily engage in the most immediate, impactful work of BHS school. Excellent learning and teaching, with plenty of challenge and support, remain our focus.

Brookline High School Renovation and Expansion

Over the last three years, we at BHS have worked hard with district and town leaders, as well as Brookline citizens, to envision and plan a substantial renovation and expansion to our high school campus. Voters overwhelmingly supported a \$205.6 million dollar construction project that begins this June. Although we are thrilled about the future Brookline High School campus, we also acknowledge that there will be change, sacrifice, and a need for collective flexibility.

The school continues to work closely with the architects from William Rawn Associates, as well as the builders from Skanska, in developing the complete plan and phasing for the major construction that will happen around the Brookline High School campus. Beginning this June and continuing through the summer of 2021, many things will look and operate differently around the campus. Our goal to maintain the same high expectations for what happens within the walls of the school and in our classrooms, even if students may have to find new paths from class to class, and even though drop off and pick up will take different forms on the streets around the school. As always, we will communicate changes to both students and families.

Looking further afield, in September 2021 we expect to open a brand new building used primarily for ninth grade students next to the Unified Arts Building on Tappan Street. Similarly, a new Science Center with state-of-the-art facilities and an extension of our cafeteria will stand at the corner of Greenough and Tappan. Lastly, the Tappan Gymnasium will better connect with the Kirrane Aquatic Center and better support Athletics, Wellness Education, Recreation, and Adult Education. Our Brookline High School campus is growing, changing, and improving.

Later this week we will launch a new section of the BHS website devoted to the building project. The site will have project updates, the project timeline, and detailed FAQs about the project.

8th to 9th Grade Transition and Old Lincoln School (OLS) Planning

We have begun the annual process of orienting and informing eighth grade students and their families about the rich educational opportunities we offer at Brookline High School. Given that we will use Old Lincoln School for 9th graders during the two years of construction, there are rightly more questions than usual about our ninth grade program. Over the next two months, we will have seven separate events for families who have students entering BHS in September:

- Monday 2/11, 7:00pm: Curriculum Night

- Wednesday 2/27, 6:00pm: Electives Night
- Tuesday 3/5, 7:00pm: Life at BHS
- Monday 3/11, 7:00pm: Athletics at BHS
- Three additional evening meetings held at different K-8 schools. These “regional” events are a convenient opportunity for parents, guardians, and caretakers to hear from BHS leaders, ask questions, and learn more about the specifics about 9th grade, including how we will use Old Lincoln School in our Brookline High School campus.

All of this information and more will be communicated to eighth grade families at the end of this week, and we’ll have a specific page on our new Building Project website devoted to 9th grade.

We share all this with you, our current high school families, so that you are aware that this year’s transition process is particularly important. Our use of OLS will have minimal impact on tenth through twelfth grade students as their classes will be scheduled at our 115 Greenough Street buildings. Still, change is afoot and so sharing information remains critical.

Student Support and Administrative Structure Shifts

As BHS expands, we have taken the opportunity to assess our administrative and student support structure. For the next two years, we will have a structure designed to support 9th graders at Old Lincoln School and the 10-12 students at 115 Greenough. We are making thoughtful plans to ensure that all students at BHS will be supported and cared for as we move through this transition.

Beginning next school year, Lisa Gilbert-Smith will serve as Dean of Students for Ninth Grade and will be located at the Old Lincoln School. Alexia Thomas and Brendan Kobus will serve as Associate Deans for Ninth Grade. They will be joined by a team of counselors and clinicians focused on ninth grade.

Lisa Redding will serve as Dean of Students for Grades 10, 11, and 12 starting next year. Our Associate Deans for these grades will be Melanee Alexander, Rachel Eio, Summer Williams, and a new Associate Dean we will hire this spring. This team will be assisted also by Brian Poon, our Dean of Student Support Systems.

Through all this work, we are addressing counselor and dean caseloads so that all of our students receive the care and attention they need and deserve. Over the last several years, our mainstream guidance caseloads in particular have increased in ways that affect the service we provide students and families. We thus are working hard to determine how best to address various and sometimes competing needs thoughtfully and collaboratively. Our monitoring and support of students will remain robust, caring, and thoughtful.

Thank you for your continued support of our students and for your collaboration with Brookline High School faculty, staff, and administration. We look forward to sharing more details this spring. We are on to second semester, and now we really pick up the pace at BHS.

Sincerely,



Anthony Meyer
Head of School

