

# Boston Teachers Union Election 2021



Ballots mailed out May 10.  
Mail ballots due June 1.  
In-person voting @ BTU June 2 (8 AM-6 PM)

See pages 5-10

BOSTON TEACHERS UNION, LOCAL 66, AFT  
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Boston, Massachusetts 02125



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# Boston Union Teacher



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## President's Report Jessica J. Tang

# A Season of Change, A Season of Hope

Winter this year was difficult. Not just because of the usual cold and snow, but because pandemic fatigue really started to settle in after a full year of quarantines, social distancing and virus induced isolation. In March, horrific acts of violence in Atlanta and Boulder reminded us that we are not just fighting a pandemic, but continue to fight racism and misogyny in its many forms, as well as uncontrolled gun violence.

In addition, just as educators thought that the phase in of hybrid learning was going to be the last major hurdle of the school year, the state decided to mandate five days a week of in person instruction for April. The past year has undoubtedly been one of uncertainty, hurt, adaptation, unprecedented stress and constant change. This winter has seen its fair numbers of trials and tribulations.

As always, however, our educators and community have also continued to persevere and demonstrate incredible and heroic resilience, commitment, and heart as we continue to put one foot in front of the other and charge forward. As more and more BTU members and school staff continue to get their first and second vaccinations, there is a new-found sense of hope for the future. The warmer weather and spring flowers shooting through the ground are symbolic of welcome changes to come.

And there is much still to celebrate. Despite an unprecedentedly challenging year, we have had a number of important wins: We won four MOA's that have created safer schools for educators and families and are now negotiating a fifth. Our paras at the

Dever, UP Holland and UP Boston won over \$105,000 in collective back-pay for hours of unpaid work over

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the last few years. BPS family liaisons came together to join the BTU and will be recognized as BTU bargaining unit members.

Most recently, we won the fight against the state — with an incredibly important assist from President **Joe Biden** — to get a timeline and plan to vaccinate educators. We worked with the district and won a waiver for a delayed full in person start so that the BPS could have more time to plan, BTU members had time to adjust, and that everyone had more time to prepare for an expanded in person start. This also, critically, gave more time for more educators to get fully vaccinated, too.

These are just a few of the many wins we continue to achieve, despite the unrelenting vilification of teachers, educators and our unions. When we fight, we win. As always, there is still much work to do, though. This spring we are still fighting to address simultaneous teaching, for accommodations for educators who may

still need remote options (we have filed a charge), improving instruction for our remote students and lifting the many, many voices of parents who prefer hybrid instruction but have not been given a choice or voice, and of course a fifth MOA before the new April 26<sup>th</sup> start.

And on the horizon — throughout this spring and summer, we will be working hard to prepare a new initial negotiating package for our master contract and continue to build on our strengthened community and family relationships, as well as our internal BTU solidarity, to fight and win a new contract. We have a new historic mayor — the first black mayor, the first female mayor in Boston and former mayor **Marty Walsh** heads to Washington as the Secretary of Labor. We congratulate them both and wish them well as they both continue to represent Boston on new stages.

Mayor **Kim Janey** has been a



**Jessica J. Tang**  
BTU President

long-time public education advocate, particularly for special education students through her work both at non-profits and Massachusetts Advocates for Children. When she recently met with the AFT/BTU Teacher Leader Program fellow, she discussed at length what it would take to improve special education inclusion. She is no stranger to the BTU and has worked with us on many campaigns throughout her time on the council and beyond.

Thus, while the winter may have been difficult and the next few weeks will undoubtedly still challenge us all, there are also plenty of reasons still to be hopeful as we enter a new season and new day in Boston.

## A Historic Moment and a New Day for Boston



Acting Mayor **Kim Janey** was sworn in on a family Bible held by her 6-year granddaughter **Rosie** while Chief Justice **Kimberly Budd** administered the oath at Boston City Hall on Wednesday. Budd is the first Black woman to serve as the chief justice of the state's Supreme Judicial Court. Janey is the first Black Bostonian and the first woman to serve as the city's mayor.

—Photo by John Tlumacki, Boston Globe

# Supporting Outdoor Learning in Boston

By Sara Gardner and Karen L. Worth

The Friends of the Boston Schoolyards (FOTBS), is a volunteer organization that began in 2017 to carry on the legacy of the Boston Schoolyard Initiative (BSI). As such, FOTBS is committed to working to ensure that every child in Boston has access to quality outdoor education.

Boston is fortunate to have beautiful schoolyards in every neighborhood, that are ready for our children to learn, play, and dream in. As some teachers may remember, from 1995 to 2013, BSI, a public/private partnership, renovated 88 schoolyards, opened 32 outdoor classrooms, and led professional development for BPS teachers. BSI made Boston a national leader in the use of green schoolyards for outdoor education. Many teachers have used these spaces, and there are schoolyard champions in several schools who are enthusiastic about the value of teaching and learning outside. There is significant research that suggests that outside learning can enhance students' academic growth, help to build a strong, student centered classroom culture, as well as support students' social emotional growth and well-being.

The pandemic has raised awareness of the inequities in access to nature and the perceptions around safe local greenspaces that have long affected many of our students, and which have also often prevented them from being able to go outside. These children are now thirsting for authentic experiences in and around nature. Being outdoors in nature can play an important part in the healing that is needed, for students and teachers, after a year away from traditional in-school teaching and learning.

Fortunately, FOTBS believes that Boston is well situated to once again become a leader in outdoor learning. Our schoolyards and outdoor classrooms are ready for our students; and our partners, including the Arnold Arboretum, City Sprouts, Green City Growers, Mass Audubon's Boston Nature Center, Wakefield Estates, and Growing Resilience are anxious to continue their work. In addition the Facilities department has been working hard to ensure that schoolyards are welcoming places for our students on their return.

However, we know well that teachers need support in using outdoor spaces. During the 2018-2019 school year the FOTBS conducted a survey of teachers asking what challenges they faced in fully utilizing the outdoor environment for enhancing children's learning. The two most frequently mentioned challenges were maintenance of the spaces and support through professional development. We believe that there has been significant progress on maintenance through the efforts of the Facilities department and BPS Sustainability. Along with our partners FOTBS has been able to provide some professional development to BPS teachers, but we believe that more support for teachers is still needed. To this end our organization has been consistently encouraging the superintendent and others to create and fill a new position – an Outdoor Teaching and Learning Coordinator (OTLC) for FY21-22. Our many years of shared experience in outdoor learning have informed our advocacy of an OTLC as the necessary next step in carrying this work forward. This person will be able to work directly with teachers, principals, school communities, and BPS departments to build a shared culture of outdoor learning in BPS. They will also be able to identify and coordinate resources to support this work. The BPS Sustainability Department under the leadership of **Katherine Walsh** and the BPS Senior Project Coordinator for Science, **Marianne Dunne**, support this position and are ready and eager to work with an OTLC.

We feel the need to develop this resource has never been more vital to the health and well-being of our BPS teachers, students, and families. This position supports Dr. Cassellius' agenda of joyful learning and also addresses the need for equitable access to nature for all of our students. In addition, the OTLC would provide support for Superintendent Cassellius' goal, as reported in the Boston Globe 2/4/21, for "an enhanced, in-person summer school program that makes "creative" use of outdoor spaces."



**These images show the variety of outdoor learning spaces in Boston and convey some of the curiosity, joy, and excitement that characterizes children's outdoor experiences.**

We invite all members of the teaching community to join us in advocating for the inclusion of this position, an Outdoor Teaching and Learning Coordinator, in BPS's FY21-22 budget. Please consider writing a letter of support to **Dr. Brenda Cassellius**, ask your students what they love about outdoor learning and share this with our district administrators, talk to your principal and ask for them to vocalize their support for OTLC, and speak with families at your school who would be willing to write letters of support or speak at a community listening session. Additionally, we have an ongoing survey under the For Teachers and Staff tab at our website. <https://www.friendsofthebostonschoolyards.org>. We can also be contacted directly through this site.

We thank you for all you do for our BPS students, and look forward to seeing you outside in one of our vital learning spaces—the schoolyard.



# How Do I Interpret the BPS Seniority List?

The seniority list for BPS employees in the teachers bargaining unit includes only teacher bargaining unit members who have obtained (PTS) Professional Teaching Status or as BPS refers to it; permanent status. Provisionals or those in acting positions are not included, and thus have not obtained seniority in this district. It is very important to annually review the seniority list to make sure your information is up to date, to see what status your licensure is in, what your (PPA) Primary Program Area is listed as, whether your (APA) Alternate Program Area(s) are up to date, and to monitor your seniority order by PPA in your school/district. The list is usually updated mid-January of each school year, just prior to the staffing season and on-line on the BPS website.

The teachers' seniority list is aggregated in three separate ways. Each of these lists contains the same information that is grouped in a way that accesses the information differently. One way is by alphabetical (alpha) order: this list contains all permanent teachers in the district listed by alphabetical order irrespective of their PPA or school/department. The second way is by (PPA) Primary Program Area: this list reflects all of the teachers aggregated by the PPA they are currently listed in by seniority order. This second list is especially helpful for teachers in lower incidence areas such as Art as they can see how many other teachers in their discipline are in the district and where they fall in seniority order in case of layoff, etc. The final way teachers are listed is by School which the district calls Dept. This is the most useful seniority list to usually reference as it captures the teachers discretely at schools by their PPA. This is the list that informs teachers where they are located in seniority order by the program they are teaching within the school/department they are assigned. When referencing these seniority lists, it is always important to remember that provisional teachers who are teaching at their schools/departments are not listed, but are legally considered the least senior in any area due to the fact that they have no seniority as a provisional.

There are also a group of seniority lists for the smaller in number groups contained within the teacher bargaining unit including but not limited to nurses, SLP, OT, PT, COSSES, etc. These smaller groups are only listed straight up in seniority order; there is no other list in which they are contained as there are for teachers.

The following info describes how to read the seniority list by deconstructing the form. Look at the top row of labels listed vertically above the top line on the page of the seniority report. Start at the far-left side of this area of the form. Employee ID # speaks for itself. Directly next to the actual ID# in the body of the report will be the teachers name, last name then first name as it officially appears in the BPS records. Very important is what is listed directly below the teachers' name - Primary Program Area (PPA). This is what each teachers PPA is listed as for purposes of excessing, layoff and is supposed to reflect what the teach-

er has been teaching. Please keep track of this designation as it is how each teacher is listed on the school's roster. Only the school's administrator in conjunction with Office of Human Capital (OHC) can change this designation. However, if it is absolutely not what the teacher is teaching, that teacher should question it with their school/department administrator and let their respective BTU Field Rep know as it could adversely affect the teacher in being wrongfully excessed, etc.

Looking back to the top line of the seniority report page is listed Dept ID which is the number for the school and next to it is the Dept. title which is the name of the school the teacher is assigned to. Below the top line, on the same level and to the right of the PPA, is the Alt. Program Area. This indicates whether a teacher may have activated an additional program area through filling out a form the SY prior in the Superintendent's Circular HRS #7 on Staffing documenting that the teacher has fulfilled the contractual requirements to add this Program Area to the seniority report as their Alternate. The requisites to do so are enumerated in the contract as well as in the afore mentioned Superintendent's Circular on Staffing. Activating an Alternate Program Area is a component of the process that the teacher is in charge of initiating and once approved by OHC, is good for five years.

Further along the top line of the seniority report form are designations for Gender, Equity Group, Veterans Status and Score. Next is listed Init (initial) Perm Date; Erlst (earliest) Service Date; followed by the most important - Seniority Date - the third date in from the left of the form. This is a date you should commit to memory as it is a very important fact that can affect your status in the district. Beyond this date are designations for provisional dates temporary (substitute) time a teacher may have worked in the BPS. On the form, directly below the seniority date is the designation of "License Title". Under that heading is a list of the areas/subjects a teacher is certified in. To the right of that is the heading "Stage" referring to the level of the licensure (Preliminary, Initial, Professional). It is the goal to obtain Professional level licensure. A teacher can only teach for five school years on the Preliminary and Initial level in each of the certification areas they have and then if the teacher doesn't apply for a one-time extension prior to the expiration or take the actions necessary to move their licensures to the next level-the licenses expire. To the right of that on the seniority report form, is the heading "Level" which designates the grade span this license the teacher has covers. Finally, to the right of that on the form, is the heading "Exp Dt" (expiration date). This is the date that a Professional level license must be renewed or it will expire thus rendering the holder of said license unemployable in a Mass. public school district. The responsibility for keeping track of the stage, level, and expiration date of licenses falls directly with the individual holder of said licenses: the teacher. It is not up to anyone else, the

district or DESE to remind the teacher of the status of their respective license and the actions that must be taken to advance or renew them. Please review this very important info on a regular basis and visit the DESE/DOE website to obtain salient info on the course of action to take in order to maintain your licensure. Without it, as with a car, one can't operate the vehicle or teach the children.

If you have the same PPA as a colleague in the district and you both have the same seniority date - how is the most senior teacher determined? There is a mechanism for breaking the tie if the latter is the case. When the PPA and seniority dates are identical the first component to be consulted to break the tie is the "earliest service date" on the seniority list. If these two dates are identical, the next component in the tie breaker is to consult the "initial permanent date". If these two dates are also identical for both teachers, then "veteran status" must be consulted with the veteran winning the tie. If both teachers are veterans, then the disabled veteran wins the tie. If neither or both teachers are veterans, then the final tie breaker is a flip of the coin by the administrator with both teachers who are tied present!

## What is the Contract Language About LATF (Language Acquisition Team Facilitators)?

The current contract language reads: "The Language Acquisition Team Facilitator (LATF) at all schools at the elementary level shall be granted an extra-curricular payment of \$300 per every 25 English Learners at their school to complete Language Assessment related duties. This will be the amount for school year 19-20 FY 20 and be eligible for annual wage increases thereafter.

At the middle and high school levels, the LATF shall be allowed two (2) administrative periods to perform these duties."



**Caren Carew**  
BTU Secondary  
Field Representative

## Do Itinerate Service Providers Receive Testing Kits or a Budget for Supplies?

The BTU/BPS contract language states: "The School Department will provide the testing kits and other protocols to all itinerant service providers. In addition, the BPS will budget \$200 per itinerant service provider for supplies related to their discipline. Itinerants will be surveyed by their supervisor for input in developing a departmental catalogue of approved supplies. Itinerant service providers, upon request, will receive \$200 per year in materials from this disciplinary catalogue."

## What's the Contract Language About Professional Development for Related Service Providers?

The contract language reads: "A separate yearly budget will be allocated

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BTU Phone Numbers	
Office.....	617-288-2000
Health & Welfare.....	617-288-0500
AFT Massachusetts.....	617-423-3342
Function Office.....	617-288-3322
Lounge Office.....	617-288-3322
Vision Center.....	617-288-5540
Tremont Credit Union.....	781-843-5626

# Boston Union Teacher

Boston Teachers Union, AFT Local 66, AFL-CIO

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The opinions expressed in the *Boston Union Teacher* do not necessarily represent the views of the Boston Teachers Union, or those of its members.

**WHEN WRITING:**  
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**DEADLINE:**  
The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of the *Boston Union Teacher* is April 14th. All copy should be e-mailed to [mmaguire@btu.org](mailto:mmaguire@btu.org) and [gvirchick@btu.org](mailto:gvirchick@btu.org). This deadline will be strictly adhered to.

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## BPS/BTU NBCT Leadership Team

### Interview with Noah Patel, NBCT

Interviewed by  
**Margaret Arlauskas,**  
BPS/BTU National Board  
Leadership Team

**Where do you teach in BPS? What subject do you teach?**

I am in my 16<sup>th</sup> year in BPS and my 13<sup>th</sup> year at the Franklin D. Roosevelt K-8 teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade math and science.

**What is your certificate area? When did you certify?**

Early Adolescent Math, certified in 2011 and renewed this year through 2031.

**What inspired you to become a NBCT?**

National Board Certification is the gold standard of achievement in education. I wanted to have the highest credential that I could hold without having to leave the classroom.

**How has becoming a NBCT helped your teaching profession?**

There is an incredible supportive network of NBCTs in Boston and across the country that are great resources to each other. I have met some incredible colleagues across the country that are doing amazing things for education- they inspire me to keep improving my craft. I take great pride in holding the designation and maintaining the high standards that the National Board requires.

**Can you explain how this process has made a positive impact on student learning?**

The certification and renewal process is extremely reflective and self directed. It is bar none the best professional development I have ever gotten. The focus of the certification process is demonstrating positive impact on student learning, and it really forces you to think about the decisions you make as an educator and the purpose behind them.

**Given that there are 53,000 students in BPS and the majority of them are students of color, do you think it is important that teachers of color are more represented in the Boston National Board than they are currently? If so, what do you think we should do to get more TOC to earn their NBCT?**

Absolutely! This is critical. I think that we do a great job in Boston of celebrating NBCTs the moment they certify or renew, but I think that by elevating the prestige of holding certification and



valuing this certification in practical ways, we can build more interest. Students benefit from having teachers that look like them and teachers that share their backgrounds and experiences, but imagine if those students also had a real understanding and appreciation of what it meant for them that the teacher in front of them has gone above and beyond to earn board certification.

**Any helpful information you would like to share with aspiring NBCT candidates in BPS?**

I think a lot of incredible educators are hesitant to jump in and go through the process because of how much work it is. I would say that there is no question that it is a lot of work but it ends up feeling very worthwhile. Finding someone to go through the process with you can definitely help motivate, but because you can fulfill the requirements over a larger span of time, the work can be made more manageable if done over the course of many months. The work you do can also align to evaluation goals amongst other things. My biggest advice is don't let the prospect of the process stop you. Check out the National Board website, read the expectations. They are clear and thorough – and then decide if it makes sense for you.

**Do you want to help BPS candidates through the National Board process?**

Sure! I had wonderful mentors and friends to help me in the process of certification as well as renewal, and I love helping others find their way too!

*If you are interested in attaining your National Board certification, please contact the BPS/BPS NBCT LT by emailing [nationalboard@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:nationalboard@bostonpublicschools.org).*

*You can also visit our website: [bit.ly/2019nbctlt](http://bit.ly/2019nbctlt) or announcements check us out on Twitter @BostonNbct*

## Understanding the COLA (Cost Of Living Adjustment) for RTC Members

by **Sandra M. Carle and Lawrence J. Connolly,**  
RTC Legislative Committee Co-Chairs

Recently, the Mass. Retirees have announced a COLA for members of the Massachusetts State Retirement System. This has caused some confusion to members of the RTC. Please note that Boston teachers' pension is under the Boston Retirement System which includes Boston police, firefighters, and other city workers. We received our COLA in July based on 3% of \$14,000 and the other system received 3% on \$13,000 in December when the state budget passed.

Unlike the federal pension and most other state pensions, Massachusetts does not grant automatic COLAs, nor does it grant the COLA on the full or a substantial portion of our pension. Each year in the spring at the Boston Retirement Board (BRB), members of the RTC Legislative Committee and Executive Board attend to try and improve the COLA through testimony and attendance at the meetings.

There are two measures that the BRB vote on:

1. The percentage allowed which is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), as used by Social Security, but no more than 3%.
2. The COLA base which now stands at \$14,000. The base has been very slow to move: 1998-\$12,000; 2010-\$13,000; and 2017-the present base.

After much lobbying at the state level, including "Days on the Hill", Chapter 188 of the Acts of 2010 passed which allows each retirement board to increase its members' COLA base up to \$18,000. At that time, we turned to the city to try to improve the COLA. Even though we are in a pandemic and our methods have changed, the Legislative Committee still continues to try to improve our base through zoom meetings with the Mayor's people and the Boston Retirement Board.

## Know Your Rights...

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for the related service provider disciplines (including but not limited to, occupational, physical and speech and language therapies, vision services, psychology, adapted physical education, Guidance Counselors, Student Support Coordinators, and nurses), for planning and implementation of relevant professional development requirements. The BTU and administrative members of the joint union management committee will plan the allocation of these funds for discipline specific professional development. The BTU will provide space for the meetings to be held when available."

### Are we entitled to time for cancer screening?

Yes. There is a BPS Personnel Bulletin which states that Mayor Menino signed an Executive Order allowing all city employees to use up to four (4) hours of leave per calendar year for various types of cancer screening including that for breast, prostate, colon, skin, thyroid, oral cavity, lymph nodes, reproductive organs, and lungs. The procedure dictates that employees are allowed one (1) four (4) hour period that cannot be broken into hourly units. It requires that they must make their leave request through their responsibility center manager and

then provide them a signed copy of a medical document verifying the date that the employee was given a cancer screening. This cancer screening leave time is not charged to any accumulated sick time.

### When Does the Principal Make Recommendations to Grant Permanent Status to Provisional Teachers?

According to the contract, "Principals will be required to make recommendations as to which provisional teachers they want to make permanent teachers by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Principals will be notified by February 15<sup>th</sup> if their recommendations have been approved. The Superintendent shall make permanent appointment of provisional teachers by March 27<sup>th</sup>."

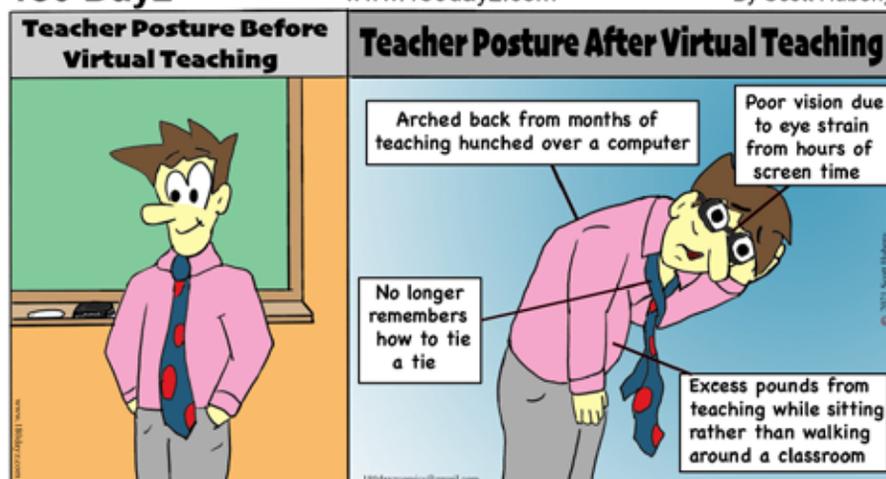
### How is the Student Member Selected to Serve on High School SSCs?

Student members of School-Site Councils at the high school level must be elected by the entire student body. They cannot be appointed by the administration; they must be elected expressly for this purpose. The student member represents all students on the SSC.

## 180 Dayz

www.180dayz.com

By Scott Hubeny



75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the  
**Boston Teachers Union**  
Celebration Party



**October 16, 2021**

# Boston Teachers Union Election 2021



Ballots mailed out May 10.

Mail ballots due June 1.

In-person voting @ BTU – Wednesday, June 2 (8 AM-6 PM)

Ballot Position	Name	School
<b>BTU President</b>		
1	Jessica Tang	BTU Office/ Young Achievers K-8 School
<b>BTU Executive Vice President</b>		
2	Erik Berg	Philbrick Elementary School
<b>BTU Secretary-Treasurer</b>		
3	Karen Cross	Richard J. Murphy School Teacher
4	Michael W. McLaughlin	Murphy/BTU Office
<b>Political Action Director</b>		
5	Johnny R. McInnis	BTU School
<b>Elementary Field Representative</b>		
6	Lea Serena	Mather
7	Colum A. Whyte	Lee K-8
<b>Secondary Field Representative</b>		
8	Caren Carew	King/BTU
9	David Sims	Consulting Teacher- Educator Supports Program
<b>Paraprofessional/ABA/Substitute Field Representative</b>		
10	Colleen Hart	Murphy
<b>Executive Board</b>		
11	Savannah Lodge-Scharff	Madison Park Technical Vocational High School - Science
12	James Timo Philip	Retired
13	Nicole Mullen	Boston Arts Academy
14	Cheryl L. Kelly, RN	Edwards Middle School
15	Rosalinda Midence	Boston Day and Evening Academy
16	Caitlin Gaffny	Tobin K-8 School
17	Christine Choukas	Donald McKay K-8
18	Shakeeda Bartee	Up Academy Boston
19	Allison Doherty	Fenway High School
20	Nora Paul-Schultz	John D. O'Bryant School of Math and Science
21	A. Vanessa LaRocque	Joseph Lee School
22	Robert P. Carroll	Retired
23	CasSandra Samuel	Curley K-8 Library Paraprofessional
24	Michael Maguire	Boston Latin Academy
25	Brenda Chaney	Retired
26	Alice M. Yong	Retired
27	Tarquinia Townsend	Irving Middle
<b>Paraprofessional Council (BY ALPHA A-Z)</b>		
28	Debra Brown	Kenney, Paraprofessional
29	Christina Buttiglieri	Retired
30	Awilda Concepcion	Blackstone Elementary
31	Cynthia Ferris	Perry K-8
33	Colleen Hart	Murphy
34	Debra Irby	Mather Elementary
35	Carla M. Johnson	P. A. Shaw Elementary
36	Todd Kerr	Coverage Paraprofessional
37	Vanessa La Rocque	Joseph Lee School
38	Sharon O'Dwyer	Condon K-8
39	Donovan Richardson	Lee K-8
32	CasSandra Samuel	Curley K-8 Library Paraprofessional
40	Matthew Tallent	Curley K-8
41	Sheila Yetman	Condon K-8

Ballot Position	Name	School
<b>RTC Chair</b>		
42	Marilyn Marion	Retired
<b>RTC Vice-Chair</b>		
43	Roslyn "Roz" Avant	Retired
<b>RTC Treasurer</b>		
44	Anne Broder	Retired
<b>RTC Secretary</b>		
45	Joan Devlin	Retired
<b>Delegate to All Affiliated Bodies (BY ALPHA Z -A)</b>		
46	Mikaela Zetley	Donald McKay
47	Alice M. Yong	Retired
48	Karen Wood	Boston Latin Academy
49	Tatiana Williams-Rodriguez	Boston Latin Academy
50	Colum A. Whyte	Lee K-8
51	Danielle West	Curley K-8
52	Darren Wells	Irving Middle
53	Samantha Weintraub	Sumner Elementary
54	Garret Virchick	Retired
55	Jose Valenzuela	Boston Latin Academy
56	Mary Ann Urban	Retired
57	Teresa Underwood	Retired
58	Paul Tritter	Human Resource Team
59	Bernadette Thornton-Giles	Consulting Teacher- Educator Supports Program
60	Paul Tenney	Retired
61	Regina Temple	Retired
62	Jessica Tang	BTU Office/ Young Achievers K-8 School
63	Matthew Tallent	Curley K-8
64	David Sims	Human Resource Team
65	Lea Serena	Mather
66	CasSandra Samuel	Cutler K-8
67	David Russell Weiss-Irwin	S. Greenwood K-8
68	Matthew Ruggiero	Charlestown High School
69	Dana Royster-Buefort	Retired
70	Teresa Reaves	Retired
71	Declan Power	Counseling & Intervention Center
72	Kristen Pinto	Retired
73	Bianca Pierre	Beethoven Elementary
74	Blank	
75	James Timo Philip	Retired
76	Sherry Pedone	Retired/Mildred Ave.
77	Nora Paul-Schultz	John D. O'Bryant School of Math and Science
78	Catherine O'Flaherty	Boston Latin Academy
79	Sharon O'Dwyer	Condon K-8
80	Nicole Mullen	Boston Arts Academy
81	Rosalinda Midence	Boston Day and Evening Academy
82	Michael W. McLaughlin	Murphy/BTU Office
83	Molly McKay Bryson	Succeed Boston
84	Johnny McInnis	BTU

Ballot Position	Name	School
85	Ryan McGoff	East Boston High School
86	Katina McClain	English High School
87	Elaine Mascall	Murphy
88	Gayle Marrow	Retired Mildred Ave
89	Marilyn Marion	Retired
90	Timothy Maher	Lyndon K-8
91	Michael Maguire	Boston Latin Academy
92	Sylvaine Lestrade	Trotter K-8
93	Nina Lessin-Joseph	Fenway High School
94	Josefina Lascano	Retired
95	Vanessa LaRocque	Joseph Lee School
96	Heather King	Orchard Garden K-8
97	Karen Kilmain-Patriquin	Sumner
98	Afra Khan	Blackstone Elementary
99	Todd Kerr	Coverage Paraprofessional
100	Cheryl L. Kelly, RN	Edwards
101	Adrienne Jordan	Charles Sumner
102	Marta Johnson-Faldasz	Roosevelt K-8 Lower
103	Charles R Johnson	Retired
104	Carla M. Johnson	P. A. Shaw Elementary
105	Colleen Hart	Murphy
106	Thomas Gosnell	Retired
107	Caitlin Gaffny	Tobin K-8 School
108	Maryclare Flores	Michael J. Perkins Elementary School
109	Cynthia Ferris	Perry K-8
110	John Enright	Madison Park
111	Betsy Drinan	BTU
112	Ed Doherty	Retired
113	Allison Doherty	Fenway High School
114	Gina Desir	Kenny Elementary
115	Natalia Cuadra-Saez	Snowden
116	Marjie Crosby	Retired OT
117	Karen Cross	Richard J. Murphy School
118	Michael Crain	Retired
119	Diane Crain	Retired
120	Quayisha Clarke	Grew Elementary
121	Michaela Chung	Curtis Guild Elementary
122	Paul Christian	O'Bryant
123	Christine Choukas	Donald McKay K-8
124	Brenda Chaney	Retired
125	Ilene Carver	BTU Organizer
126	Robert P. Carroll	Retired
127	Caren Carew	King/BTU
128	Layla Cable	Retired
129	Christina Buttiglieri	Retired
130	Joan Buckley Devlin	Retired
131	Debra Brown	Kenney, Paraprofessional
132	Maria Brooks	Mather Elementary
133	Anne Broder	Retired
134	Denise Berkley	Retired
135	Erik Berg	Philbrick Elementary School
136	Steven Benjamin	Dearborn STEM Academy
137	Shakeeda Bartee	Up Academy Boston
138	Roslyn "Roz" Avant	Retired
139	Christine Arnold	Charles Sumner Elementary
140	Maritza Agrait	OT Retired

# BTU Officers

## PRESIDENT

### Jessica Tang

It continues to be an honor to serve as the President of the Boston Teachers Union and represent the most hardest working, committed, and expert educators our city could ask for.



Despite the unprecedented challenges, our members continue to be a daily source of inspiration as we collectively grow our power even amidst a pandemic and unrelenting attacks on our union and profession. Over the last twenty months we have:

- Successfully negotiated and ratified the 2018-2021 contract, which included a full time nurse in every school, greater pay equity for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers, and full time paras for all kindergarten classes.
- Won pay increases for all our members as well as common good demands including additional funding for Homeless families as well as a commitment to expanding Hub Community Schools for wrap around services with the hiring of a city-wide coordinator.
- Successfully advocated for and won a once in a generation bill to Fund Our Future through the Student Opportunities Act that will significantly transform funding in both Boston and the state.
- Negotiated four agreements throughout the pandemic that surpass the CDC recommendations for mitigation conditions and have become a model for other districts and states.
- Continued to increase both our traditional media and social media presence with record interactions, engagement and visibility to share our vision, solutions and impact.
- Strengthened our presence at the State House and in political races, successfully endorsing and helping new and incumbent candidates win with greater political engagement amongst our membership.
- Increased our commitment to racial justice work, looking both inward and outward to address both implicit bias and the systemic ways in which racial inequity persists.
- Grown our organizing structures, early member engagement and overall activism to create the schools our students and communities deserve.

The last year has been particularly difficult as pandemic induced tensions, divisions and differences of opinions have tested all of us and our limits. Yet, we continue to advocate, fight, persist while building new relationships and creating new opportunities to grow and learn from each other, our students, families and communities.

I hope to continue to build on this work and the strong foundation that our predecessors have laid as we continue to create an inclusive, democratic union where all of our members, active or retired, new or veteran, have a voice, a home and feel *#BTUproud*. I humbly ask for your vote for President.

## VICE PRESIDENT

### Erik Berg

Dear BTU Brothers and Sisters,

It continues to be an honor and a privilege to be part of a great team working to support the educators of Boston to have a strong voice in the workplace.

Over the past two years, I have worked to advocate with our members through the grievance process, and have had many important victories. In particular, we were able to resolve outstanding class size grievances on behalf of hundreds of members, resulting in payments of over \$2.5 million to teachers whose classes were oversized. I'm proud that, working with our legal team, we have prevailed in a large majority of the arbitration decisions that have come in since I have been in office, and we've been able to settle many other cases on favorable terms.

We settled a solid contract with BPS earlier than previous recent contracts, and we will soon be working on another agreement that is fair to our members, and provides our



students the education they deserve. At the same time, I led negotiations and settled a first contract for our newest members at City on a Hill Charter School, bringing them just cause protections and a transparent salary scale. I also chair the Educator Supports Panel, the Health and Welfare Trustees, and worked on many other issues ranging from the Face Surveillance ban, to impact bargaining, employee discipline cases, evaluation, BTU building issues, mediations, wage and hour claims and election to work agreements.

Over the next two years, I hope to work with our team to settle a fair contract, and continue to enforce it with vigor and candor. In addition, I hope to continue our work to put rank and file members front and center in everything we do. A member-driven union with a social justice focus requires the involvement and participation of all members, and I ask for your vote and your support in reaching that goal.

## SECRETARY-TREASURER

### Karen Cross

My name is Karen Cross and I am running for the **Secretary-Treasurer** of the Boston Teachers Union.

A little background; Both my parents are refugees from North Korea. My grandfather, whom I've never met, put my mom and her family on a boat to the South. My father, one of 9 siblings, took refuge in the South and started working at a young age to bring food home to the family. They came to the US for better opportunities. They fostered in me: Love, Respect, Honesty, Determination, Perseverance and Resilience. They share abiding faith in this nation as I find faith in our **Boston Teachers Union**.

As we enter an age with COVID constantly evolving with variants, our BTU has continuous changing needs.

As a trustee and Secretary of the Legal Prepaid division of BTU, my fellow trustees and I are introducing a financial wellness program that will help counsel in the areas of student loan, medical, housing and auxiliary debt. Stay tuned.

Currently a Math teacher, tutor, Trustee & Secretary of the Pre-paid Legal division of the BTU, Building Rep and CAT (Contract Action Team) Coach, Faculty Senate, MLT, Parent, Sister, I've been through the thick of it with the BTU.

As Secretary-Treasurer, **PLEASE GIVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY** to work together:

- Committed to making sure all **fiduciary duties** are carefully met in the interest of all BTU and expenditures are examined with a fine tooth comb. I have the experience and financial background to execute this job.
- Advocate **more** for "**Social Emotional Wellness**" for students & staff. In-house **Guidance Counselor** and **Social Worker** at **EVERY** school.
- Help create more change and opportunity for those affected by systemic racism and inequality - help create a community where everyone thrives. Where **#BLM** meets **#MeToo**
- Proactive, ready to **listen to & hear your voice** on needs for **negotiations**.
- Fair work conditions enable us best to serve our **students and communities**.
- Greater support for **inclusion, health** benefits, **protection for our SPCs**
- **Increase Member Participation**.

As Amanda Gorman states, "We are striving to forge a union with purpose, to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man."

I am ready and resilient for a year that prioritizes transparency, communication and respect for one another. I am my brothers' keeper. I am my sisters' keeper.

In Solidarity,  
Karen Cross

[www.karencross4btu.org](http://www.karencross4btu.org)



## SECRETARY-TREASURER

### Michael W. McLaughlin

I'm grateful to the late and former Paraprofessional, E-board member and Murphy School colleague, Patricia Glynne, who encouraged me to be more involved. As wise and intelligent retirees and educators you know timing is important. I hope you agree that the timing is right for my candidacy for Secretary Treasurer, a position I've always aspired to because of Pat.



I am humbly asking for your vote based on my work record, strong advocacy and reputation. With that said, my past standing as a field representative alone should not be the sole determining factor for earning your vote.

The fiduciary responsibility of this position is significant. I'm fully aware of the weighty responsibilities of this position. As an elected trustee of the Boston Retirement Board for the past nine years I have executed my fiduciary responsibility with the highest regard. Yearly, I review and give input to the BRS operating budget for 24K members. Monthly, I view and give input to BRS' balance sheets of member contributions, refunds, transfers and warrants. As important as all this is, it's due to the entire board's diligence and sound fiduciary actions that BRS has greatly improved in the last nine years.

I have a vision for what we can accomplish together in the next two years as your BTU Secretary-Treasurer. Sustainable, innovative and realistic; this vision encompasses initiatives that will improve our operation and benefit membership. First, paper membership cards need to be replaced with a swipe card. This will be a welcome upgrade making signing in to meetings and qualifying for your BRep's stipend a no brainer among other things. Second, we need to upgrade our office space and make it COVID safe. Third, the BTU needs an on-line merchandise store. Members will access inventory, order merchandise and arrange delivery.

As you know, I've been your BTU Elementary Field Rep. for several years. I'm grateful for those years. I've been a strong advocate working tirelessly for the benefit of all. I'll bring the same to the Secretary Treasurer position.

Considering the current tumultuous times, we need proven, strong and experienced leadership. With experience and firsthand knowledge of how this position functions, this is the right time. Senior leadership is needed now more than ever, I'm ready and able. Please vote for me for Secretary-Treasurer

**TOGETHER WE WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

## ELEMENTARY FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

### Lea Serena

My name is Lea Serena and I am a second grade teacher at the Mather Elementary School in Dorchester. I am a 9-year educator, and have spent the past 6 years in Boston Public Schools. I started my BPS career at the Lee Academy Pilot school in Dorchester, where I taught 1st and 2nd grade and served on their Governing Board and Instructional Leadership team. Currently at the Mather, I serve as a member of the School Site Council, the Instructional Leadership Team, and the School Culture Team. As a former student at the Mather, I am deeply committed to ensuring that my students are given every opportunity to succeed. I care deeply about racial equity and adequate funding for public schools.

One of my deepest passions is recruiting and retaining teachers of color. I have served as a Lead Fellow for the Department of Education's InSpired Fellowship (In-Service Professionals who are committed to Increasing the Racial and Ethnic Diversity of our teacher workforce), as well as a fellow for Boston Public Schools Recruitment Office. I am also a member of the ALANA planning committee and Co-Chair of the Educator's Committee of the BEAM (Black Educators Alliance of Massachusetts).

I have been a BTU Building Representative for 5 years, and have served on the BTU Negotiating Team for two contracts. I am an AFT delegate and presented at the AFT TEACH conference in 2019. I also received the 2019 AFT MA Distinguished Service Award for a Member 35 or Younger. I am the mother of a 10-year-old, and co-facilitate the Parent/Caregiver Educator support group. I have taken advantage of many of the opportunities offered to me by the BTU, including participating in the BTU Inquiry Project, the AFT Teacher Leadership Policy Program, and BTU's Professional Learning Advisory Board.

If elected as your next Elementary Field Representative, I will continue to support Union Reps, as I have as a former Regional Rep and Negotiation team member. I will continue to uphold the contract and advocate for contract language that supports educators. I will always be an active and engaged listener to and for our members and voice for all. I humbly ask for your vote as the Elementary Field Representative.



## ELEMENTARY FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

### Colum A. Whyte

As a Boston Public School product, parent and teacher, Colum has a firm grasp on the inner workings of the system and the wherewithal to make a difference.

"I'm running for **OUR UNION**. Since 2007, I've been a strong voice for our members and our kids. As a 17-year teacher, former BPS student, and current BPS parent I know the challenges we face. As your next Elementary Field Representative, from day one, I will bring the rank and file experience we need in the Office of the BTU."

Growing up in Dorchester, Colum has overcome many of the same obstacles that our students face today. He has a firsthand understanding of poverty, the effects of substance abuse in a home and navigating the BPS system as a parent of a child with disabilities. All of these factors led Colum to a career in education, and they make him great at what he does.

For Whyte, the role as Field Representative won't be relegated to grievances and advice. He will continue to be a strong voice in working towards the resistance of privatization, while pushing for the policies that will benefit the students in the Boston Public Schools.

Colum is prepared to roll his sleeves up and do what he does best, advocate – For the new teachers, veterans and the retirees, for the students of today and tomorrow. Please vote Colum A. Whyte for your next Boston Teachers Union Elementary Field Representative.

- Successfully ran for Building Representative 14 times
- Chaired Faculty Senate
- Served on both the School Site Council and Instructional Leadership Team
- Served on the BTU Elections Committee, Rapid Response Team, Legislative Committee
- Held roles of Sergeant-at-Arms and Chair of the BTU Speaker Series;
- Served on C.O.P.E. (Committee on Political Education)
- Elected to the Executive Board
- Elected as Delegate to All Bodies
- Served as Co-Editor of the *Boston Union Teacher*.

In 2014 Colum was awarded the Elementary Building Rep of the Year Award and he currently serves as Delegate to AFT, AFTMA, and all Affiliated Bodies.

#### Other Acknowledgments:

- Boston Red Sox Most Valuable Educator award; 2014
- Essential Puzzle Piece Recognition at the Light Up the Night For Autism; 2016
- Keynote speaker at the Do the Write Thing Boston Awards Ceremony; 2017
- Teacher Ambassador to the National Campaign to Stop the Violence – Washington D.C. (2018, 2019, 2020)

Thank you for your consideration.



While sugar-coating isn't my style, you'll find that my direct, factual, empathetic, & passionate approach is effective.

Working for social/economic justice, we'll strengthen community & political partnerships through increasing our influence while maintaining hard-fought collective bargaining rights pursuing excellence for all of the children we educate. Strong public schools are our democracy's cornerstone. I effectively & passionately speak up making sure your voice is heard during contract negotiations & beyond!

We are at a crossroads in public education. As members of a public sector union we frequently find ourselves characterized as public enemy #1. We must work together with each other joining our public allies, parents & the community as one to refocus the agenda through our collective actions & the continued pursuit of excellence for all of the children we educate in the BPS. Our work conditions are the children's learning conditions. Maintaining & strengthening our voice in collective bargaining only serves to lift our profession, the work, as well as the students we hold dear. Public education & labor rights are social justice issues. Schools our **#Students-Deserve #FundOurFuture #BTUProud!**

I'm fighting for you - standing together in **BTUnity!**

It is my honor to be your advocate.

I appreciate & thank you for your consideration & vote.

## SECONDARY FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

### David Sims

If elected, I will build partnerships with all stakeholders to organize around their unique issues and find solutions. I will represent all members and utilize my deep knowledge of the contract to ensure it is fully enforced.

The past year has forced us all to face a unique set of challenges. While navigating a pandemic and grappling with the reckoning of social injustice, our members have shown up for our students and families in ways we could never have imagined.

Members have adapted to the new challenges of remote, hybrid, and in-person instruction. In my current role as a Consulting Teacher for the Educator Supports Program, I have been a part of this work daily as a coach and mentor. I partner with educators to adapt to these new demands. Through my work with educators across all grades and disciplines in BPS, I have witnessed the nuances of evaluation issues for members in many different roles. I have helped members navigate their unique evaluation circumstances by collaborating with the BTU, building reps, and school administration when necessary to help facilitate favorable outcomes for educators and their students

As a 16 year veteran of BPS, I have taught in many different classroom settings. Teaching history classes in the L/AB cluster at Brighton High School was my first role in BPS; I moved to Boston Community Leadership Academy (BCLA) where I taught substantially separate, inclusion, and Sheltered English Immersion classes. While at BCLA, I was a History Curriculum Team Facilitator, member of the Instructional Leadership Team, and New Teacher Developer. I have worked tirelessly to support both new and veteran educators throughout my career.

I have been a part of designing and leading specialized programming for school districts and organizations in the Greater Boston area. I am keenly aware of the issues facing educators and our most marginalized students. I will relentlessly fight to improve the teaching and learning conditions for all at the bargaining table. My belief in high quality public education is unwavering, and I will continue to advocate for educator access to top-notch professional learning in order to advance our schools, while ensuring that educators have the autonomy they have earned and deserve. It would be my honor and privilege to serve as your Secondary Field Representative. Thank you for your consideration.



## PARAPROFESSIONAL/ SUBSTITUTE/ABA FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

### Colleen Hart

My name is Colleen Hart; I am your Paraprofessional/Substitute/ABA Field Rep. I have been in this role for almost four years. It has been my pleasure getting to know my fellow union members more closely in my time as a field rep. I would love the opportunity to continue to advocate to create a better working environment for each of us. If re-elected, I will continue to grow more training programs for the paraprofessionals and opportunities where



other can share in expertise. I also plan on providing more training opportunities for substitutes, as well as advocate for the many challenges they face. Another focus, if re-elected, would be to work with the ABAs on understanding their contract and find ways to improve as they are still the newest bargaining unit.

I feel that my experience as a paraprofessional for 21 years and a building rep for 13 years has helped me in my role as Field Rep advocating for my fellow union brothers and sisters. I hope you consider me for re-election for the Paraprofessional/Substitute/ABA Field Rep.

I am also running Delegate to represent the Boston Teachers Union. In role as delegate I have been able to meet many other union members from other locals. It was great opportunity to learn and collaborate and stand in solidarity many unions. I hope to be able continue being delegate to represent the BTU family.

Please remember to vote for Colleen for Paraprofessional/Substitute /ABA Field Rep and Delegate in your Hart you know she is right!!!!

## POLITICAL DIRECTOR

### Johnny McInnis

I am campaigning for re-election as Political Director. Since being elected I have kept our members informed about our unions political advocacy. We have recommended candidates to our members who have been elected into office. We organized our members in the pre-COVID knocking door to door for our endorsed candidates, making phone calls to our members as we still do, and participating with coalitions for ballot initiatives and various other campaigns. I have met with many elected officials advocating for issues that are important for our members.

I have served our union as a Delegate to All Affiliated Bodies, Vice Chair Boston Chapter of AFT Black Caucus, Building Rep, Building Rep Regional Leader, 2007 Secondary Building Rep of the Year, BTU Intervention Team, Music Teacher Faculty Senate, and BTU Arts Committee. In another role I serve as a Vice-President to AFT-MA. The advocacy role as Political Director gives me the opportunity to represent the BTU locally by having conversations with local elected officials and nationally with AFT by having conversations to advocate with legislators in Washington, DC to address issues on a national level. This work has allowed me to advocate for policies that support sustaining high quality schools.

Representing our members during tough times I will continue advocating to keep our BTU Strong! I am asking for your vote while continuing to keep our union **Politically Strong!**



## Executive Board

### Savannah Lodge-Scharff

My name is Savannah Lodge-Scharff and I want to thank you for nominating me for a position on the executive board. For nearly a decade I have devoted my personal and professional self to accumulating diverse skills in curriculum development, project and inquiry based science education, restorative practices and learning to use data for anti-racism. I have had the privilege of implementing all that I have learned at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, where I have been an educator for four years. Upon entering BPS, I was struck by the glaring opportunity gaps that were in stark contrast to the wealthy, suburban, and majority white districts in which I had previously taught. Furthermore, as the pandemic exacerbated the existing racial inequities endemic to the structure of the Boston Public Schools system, I realized I needed to expand my radius of impact. This compulsion led me to campaign for a seat on the executive board.

I am running to be a member of the executive board because it is time for our union to drive student-centered social change. It is time for anti-racism and equity to be at the forefront of the decisions we make, and the actions that we take. Leveraging my leadership and the skills gained from my time in the education field, I will bring these issues into focus. It is time for action, and I'm ready to take it.

Thank you again for helping me take the first step in making this our reality.



## SECONDARY FIELD REPRESENTATIVE

### Caren Carew

In these challenging & changing times, you can count on my experienced proactive leadership & tenacious, tireless advocacy as your Secondary Field Representative. I've developed a wealth of first-hand, in-depth union knowledge working with & for you, listening to your concerns, expeditiously addressing them while fighting for the respect we all deserve – coupled with being a strong & effective teacher in under-resourced schools which honed the leadership skills for me to be your strong, vigilant advocate.

Given there will be a novice BTU Elementary Field Rep after the election, my cumulative experience & knowledge on the job, of the teacher's unit contract, & historical/past practices not enumerated in the contract, will be imperative to maintain for the good of the Union & YOU. I also support great teaching by speaking up on your behalf while effectively dealing with administration, prosecuting grievances, arbitration testimony, representation at hearings, prompt email/call responses, addressing work condition changes, conducting SSC trainings, providing evaluation/performance support, conflict resolution, organizing & holding school-based meetings, while problem-solving & thinking outside of the box.



### James (Timo) Philip

BTU members: Please vote to re-elect me to the BTU Executive Board and as a delegate to our affiliates.

Throughout my 47 years of BTU membership, I have been a **LOUD** advocate for increased participation among all members, more opportunities for BTU members to connect with colleagues around the country, and greater **DIVERSITY** within BTU leadership.

I am proud to have represented you nationally-at AFT conventions and as an officer in the AFT Black Caucus, state-wide-as a 30 year Vice-President of AFTMass, and locally-wrote the first Code of Discipline for the BPS, selected a Superintendent, and have served you for 36 years on the E-Board. If re-elected, I will continue to represent your interests in the struggle for Quality Public Education in Boston.

As a retiree, I represent the 3,000+ members who value the BTU's effect on our lives, professionally and afterwards. We continue to support your struggles in many ways. Some of us volunteer in schools; we testify at hearings while school is in session; we swell the crowds at Union demonstrations; and we always seek improvement of retirement benefits. I shall vociferously oppose any attempts to limit retiree participation in this Union.

I need you vote to keep me in the fight. However, If I am not your choice, **PLEASE VOTE!**

### Nicole Mullen

I respectfully ask for your vote to re-elect me for the position of Executive Board and Delegate to all Affiliated Bodies of the Boston Teachers Union. I firmly believe that by working together, our union can be a strong voice that advocates for public education and always strives to support and energize educators, students, and our communities. I feel that listening and advocating for the issues and policies that directly affect our members should be at the forefront of everything that we do at the BTU.

I am a proud Boston resident and I have worked in BPS since 1998, five years as a classroom paraprofessional and since as a special education teacher at both the Mary Lyon K-8 and The Boston Arts Academy Pilot School. I have served as a BTU building representative for many years and have held various other leadership roles in my school. In these roles I have worked collaboratively with BTU members and administrators to include teacher voice in decision making, negotiate working conditions outlined in the election to work agreements, educated members on their rights outlined in the contract and uplift due process. Through these processes and creative problem solving, I have helped to facilitate communication and advocacy in the school community and beyond. In 2011 I was awarded as an Education Policy Leadership Fellow from the National Institute for Educational Leadership sponsored by Northeastern University.

I have served on the BTU Negotiating Team since 2015 along with the E-board, a Delegate, and on the Grievance Committee since 2017. Previously served on the Election Committee as a chair of the Inclusion Committee, on various Pandemic Reopening and Creative Schedule Taskforces and was a member of the BPS/BTU Inclusion Working Group.

Please give me the honor of continuing to serve as one of your reps!

### Cheryl L. Kelly, RN

Dear BTU Members,

My name is Cheryl L. Kelly, RN – Edwards School Nurse. I have proudly served as the nurse at the Edwards Middle School, which by the way, is going to close in June 2021 – for the past 33 years. All of us received excess letters via email. I guess there was a big savings on postage.

I have been a member of the Executive Board for the past 25 years. I have also served on other various committees such as: Nurse Faculty Senate, COPE, Pre-Paid Legal Service Trustee, and Delegate.

Im asking for your vote for re-election to Eboard and



Delegate. I will continue to advocate strongly for the rights of BTU members and as well. By the way, I would be remiss by not adding this: the addition of a Full-Time Nurse in every school was not only timely given the current situation, but long overdue.

I was raised in Boston, attended Boston Public Schools and graduated from Brighton High (Go Bengals!). I am now an employee for the City of Boston. Thank you for your time.

### Rosalinda Midence

Dear Fellow BTU Members,

My name is Rosalinda Midence, and I am running for a position on the Executive Board, it would be my honor to represent all my BTU members, students, and families. I am a proud Boston Public School graduate, BTU member, and Community Field Coordinator at Boston Day and Evening Academy. My professional experience extends over 20 years of educating, mentoring, and advocating for students throughout the Boston Public Schools. My experience and dedication has given me the ability and insight to understand that education gives us the freedom to progress, the voice to speak out against injustices, and the chance to have a seat at the table. I have served on several committees within Boston Public Schools and in my community that have molded me as a life-long learner and advocate. My experience includes:

- COPE Committee (Committee of Political Education)
- Restorative Justice Committee for BTU / BDEA
- Ward Committee Member / Secretary
- Founder of the Young Women's Leadership Group
- ETWA (Election to Work Agreement Committee)
- Delegate to ALL Affiliated Bodies
- Board Member for the Benjamin Healthcare Center

I have served on several committees, but representing my fellow members, and families, if elected to the Executive Board, will be an honor and my priority is to stand with conviction and maintain transparency and inclusion in the work that we are doing as a union to ensure all members are being heard. I believe in the work that our union is doing, but the work is far from over to assure we continue to mobilize pathways for equity and equality for all. I will work for you and with you!

Thank you for your support and vote.

“Le agradezco su apoyo y voto. Juntos Podemos. Gracias”

In solidarity,  
Rosalinda Midence

Please support our campaign at @ [BTUforall.com](https://www.btuforall.com)



### Caitlin Gaffny

It has been an honor to serve on our Executive Board for two years and as a Tobin teacher for 21. We deserve vocal, active board members, and I pursued that mission in a multitude of ways. I joined the Collective Bargaining Committee and SEL Joint Task Force. As an Action Group member, I worked throughout the last year co-planning initiatives such as our Weeks of Action and co-created the Facilities Checklist to protect us on the job. I represented the BTU in an AFT/MTA work group for a safe reopening and participated in every public rally/event. I spearheaded the formation of an Educator Support Group for our members and sat on the Grievance Committee. I helped to establish a robust Contract Action Team at the Tobin and CAT coached a handful of other schools. I have continued to speak out at City Hall hearings, School Committee meetings, and to the media. One of my core beliefs is that the more connections we foster within our union, the stronger we will be. To this end, I have supported the New Educator Committee with outreach efforts as we welcome and engage our newest members. I endeavor to carry on building bridges with our RTC, so that we can learn from those who fought to achieve so much for our union and open more spaces to hear from experienced members. I will listen to and learn from colleagues, fight for equity, and support our on-going antiracist and social justice work. In future, my goals are to help increase our power, demand changes with PILOT, and strengthen our alliances with families, the community, and fellow unions. I will continue to devote myself to the BTU and respectfully ask for your vote for Executive Board and Delegate.



### Christine Choukas

Hello, my name is Christine Choukas, I teach third grade at the McKay K-8 school in East Boston. This is my twenty-fourth year teaching in Boston, I have been a building representative for twenty-one years. I have been a member of my school's Site Council, Instructional Leadership Team, and Co-Chair of our Faculty Senate. I am an elected delegate for our Boston Teachers Union and was a Building Regional Leader for four years. I believe that together our union is stronger and we need to be involved in as many ways as we can to continue to grow as a union. I would appreciate it if you would consider a vote for me, for the Executive Board.



### Shakeeda Bartee

I am Shakeeda Bartee. I am running for the Executive board. I came to BPS in 2017 after leaving my job at a local needle exchange. I am a harm reductionist at heart and that is what has brought me here. I believe that people should have autonomy over their bodies, but having clients and even friends die after a weekend was starting to become more than I could bear. I started thinking of ways I could help people before they felt like they needed to turn to drugs. The time that was most crucial for me was middle school at the newly built Mildred Ave. Middle school.

As a 6<sup>th</sup> grade ELA teacher and former para at UP Academy Boston I have grown into a space where I am not only a teacher but also an advocate for families, students, myself and other teachers. Working in a charter ( a system that has been historically racist) has been hard but has also given me the unique understanding of the inequities in BPS which also gives me a unique perspective of how to advocate and support all stakeholders.

I believe in what BPS can be as a BPS alum and as a parent of four students in BPS I want to make sure that BPS works for everyone involved and not some of us. Having a spot on the executive board will give me the opportunity to make sure that happens. I am currently active on the BLM at school committee for the BTU, I am a third year DESE Inspired fellow, I also founded the affinity group at my school to ensure everyone felt like they belonged. I believe our BTU executive board should be reflective of our extremely diverse community. I look forward to being of service.



### Alison T. Doherty

I am innovative, experienced, outspoken and a proud member of the powerful Boston Teachers Union. It would be an honor for me to be a re-elected member of the Boston Teachers Union Executive Board. Here are my qualifications:

I was elected to, and served on, the BTU Executive Board from 2003-2013 and 2019-current, BTU Delegate 2001-2021 the Greater Boston Labor Council Executive Board from 2011-2013, where I created the GBLC's Futures Committee, I was elected Young Worker "Futures" representative for the MA AFL-CIO 2010 and appointed by Randi Weingarten and AFT National to be on the Nation AFL-CIO Young Worker Advisory Council in 2012. I was a building representative at West Roxbury High and West Roxbury Education Complex for 19 years and currently am a rep at Fenway High School. I received the Building Representative of the Year Award in 2019 and was the recipient of AFTMA's "Distinguished Service Award" in the category for members 35 years of age or younger. I have been a member of impact bargaining teams for three separate negotiations fighting for the rights of BTU members. I have shown my vigor and commitment to stand up for Boston schools, BTU members and students. Please vote for Allison Doherty, BTU Executive Board and Delegate to all Affiliated Bodies. Thank you.



### Nora Paul-Schultz

I am excited to be running for a seat on the Executive Board of our union and to be a delegate! This is my seventh year as a physics teacher at the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science after completing my student teaching at Fenway High School ten years ago. Joining Unafraid Educators, the BTU's immigrants rights organizing committee, energized my union involvement. Over the past several years as a co-chair of Unafraid Educators, I have helped to build and promote the Unafraid Scholarship, which helps to fund college education for undocumented BPS students, as well as the Unafraid Relief Fund, which continues to provide \$150 VISA cards to BPS students and families during this pandemic. I have worked with students, grassroots organizations, spiritual communities, and legal groups to create and advocate for a policy that would limit information sharing between Boston School Police and the Boston Police Department and therefore limit the access federal law enforcement agencies including ICE and the FBI have to our students and their families. In essence, my motivation has been to work alongside students, community groups, and other educators to fight for policies in BPS that humanize us all – young people, their families, and school staff alike. I have come to recognize the power we have as a union to effect change in our schools and across the city and I want to be on the Executive Board so that I can help make these changes a reality. I am excited to work to make the union more anti-racist, to support members in tackling justice issues across our district and our city, and to champion the causes that improve teaching, learning, and living in Boston.



### A. Vanessa La Rocque

A. Vanessa La Rocque is a longtime Boston resident who has over 25 years in education, the past 18 of those years has been dedicated to supporting Special Education students in the BPS. La Rocque hopes to become a newly elected voice on the Executive Board and promise to work hard to not only advocate for all of our members but also give the paraprofessionals a much needed and deserved voice on the board. She wishes to be re-elected as a Delegate and member of the Paraprofessional Council As a long time building representative, La Rocque has been engaged in many union issues and battles, including but not limited to Covid 19 related matters, flexible schedule planning, advocating for schools our students deserve and helping lead the charge to save McKinley SEA from eviction. She believes the distinction and hard work exemplified by paraprofessionals is not fully appreciated, and would be a powerful advocate for them to have their unique concerns addressed. She is also committed to make certain the needs of paraprofessionals in all areas of the school system need to be strongly advocated.



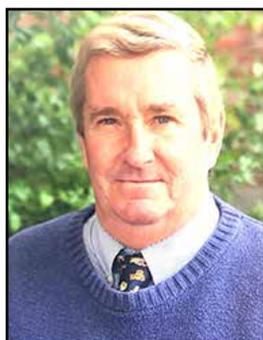
La Rocque's excellence has been recognized in many ways. She was amongst the first group selected for the Regional Building Representative Leaders. She is the past recipient of the AFT's Distinguished member award, In 2016, she was selected as the Paraprofessional Building Representative of the year. La Rocque also represents the union as a Delegate at state and national conventions, as a member of the following committees: Collective Bargaining Committee, COPE, Greater Boston Labor Council, Women In Leadership Development and she serves as an officer for A Philip Randolph Institute, Boston Chapter.

La Rocque will continue to be a powerful voice for all our members as they fight for a fair contract that recognizes their value to the system, and defend those who are not treated fairly and respectfully. If you are looking for a dedicated person who will work tirelessly on your behalf, than look no further than A. Vanessa La Rocque.

[www.votelarocque.com](http://www.votelarocque.com)

### Robert P. Carroll

Hello BTU friends and colleagues, Thank you for your support by signing my nomination papers for the Executive Board and Delegate positions. Now I ask you for your vote! My name is Rob Carroll and I have been a union advocate/activist for over 35 years. During that time, I have been a Building Rep (Holland, Sumner), a Regional Rep (West Roxbury/Roslindale), a delegate and an Executive Board member. I have always sought to bring support and protections for my union brothers and sisters. This past year of the COVID crisis, as a member of the leadership, I have strived to make sure that the children, parents, community, and **YOU** were safe and had all the protections possible. As we continue to navigate these unprecedented times I will also make sure we have the necessary protections for our safety.



I have worn many hats in my role as a union activist, but I particularly enjoy welcoming and engaging new members to our union. Someone did it for me when I was new and it's incumbent upon us to do the same. It is important that we pass on the history, struggles and knowledge of the BTU to the next generation of union activists!

I have just recently retired (June 2020) and look forward to the next chapter in my career. I welcome the prospect of working with my new family, the Retired Teachers Chapter of the BTU. This past year, I have continued to serve actively in the BTU as a member of the Social Committee, Grievance Committee, and member of the Executive Board. I was a member of the Collective Bargaining Team and worked with the organizers' action teams throughout last summer and fall. In closing, I would like to add that we must continue to engage and build our membership. We must advocate for the best possible solutions to our members' concerns. We need to create opportunities so our members' voices will be heard and I promise you – I will **LISTEN!** Thank you for your continued support!

### CasSandra Samuel

Hello fellow BTU Brothers and Sisters,

My name is CasSandra Samuel and I am a candidate for the BTU's Executive Board, Paraprofessional Council & Delegate to All Affiliated Bodies. On the Executive Board, there is an absent voice of Paraprofessionals. As an elected candidate for the Executive Board, I am determined to bring that voice to the forefront as well as serve all members of the Union.



My experience with Boston Public Schools started as a student and then as a parent of a Boston Latin Academy Alumna. I have been a BPS paraprofessional for 20+ years, currently working as a Library Paraprofessional at the Curley K-8. As a Paraprofessional, I have served in Lab class grades 3-5, 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade SAR, Library/Media, Early Childhood and as a One to One.

Additionally I have served as a Tech Goes Home Trainer, BTU Tech Goes Home Trainer for Paraprofessionals, Faculty Senate Representative, Building Representative, Volunteer Organizer with Texas AFT Back to School Campaign, Volunteer of The Parent Association EBoard at Bridgewater State University, Health and Welfare Para Trustee & BTU Negotiation Team member. Some of my work as a BTU member has been recognized with the BTU Building Rep. Award in 2012 and AFT Mass Distinguished Service Award in 2019.

I will bring my experience as an educator to represent you with honesty, integrity and energy. With this opportunity my knowledge will allow me to bring my skills and strategies to help coordinate decisions and facilitate new opportunities for all members that will move our Union forward in solidarity. Your Voice is Your Vote!

Your support of my election to the Executive Board and re-election to the Paraprofessional Council and Delegate to All Affiliated Bodies is much appreciated.

Best Wishes,  
CasSandra Samuel

### Michael J. Maguire

I love teaching. I fell into the profession as a substitute teacher at Boston Latin Academy in March, 1994. As I was preparing for the LSAT, I finished out a teacher's maternity leave. Then I taught summer school (since no one else wanted to). By then I knew that law school was not for me.



It's now 27 years later and I still love teaching. In that time I learned that teaching extends far beyond my classroom door. I learned that thousands of other teachers toil alongside me. I also learned that thousands of teachers before me fought hard to improve my students' learning conditions. By running for Executive Board, I hope to do my part.

Since the last union election I have published letters in the *Globe* and *Herald* promoting ways to improve teaching and learning. I have also been interviewed by the *Herald*, *Globe*, *Bay State Banner*, Channel 4 and 25, and most recently on NBC's *The Today Show*. As you might imagine, the main topic of these posts was teaching during the pandemic.

As we move forward we can't simply return to the *status quo ante*. Far too many of our school buildings were overcrowded, dilapidated, and poorly ventilated long before we heard of the novel coronavirus of 2019. Now more than ever, we need to modernize our buildings for the sake of our colleagues and our students.

My wish to remain on the Executive Board is rooted in my desire to hold our elected officials accountable to their promises. We are witnessing dramatic changes in our city's leadership, let's remind them of the importance of a well funded public school system.

I ask for one of your 12 Executive Board votes. Thank you.

### Brenda Chaney

I'm a longtime member of the Boston Teachers Union. I've held and continue to hold many positions within the BTU.

I have held the part-time position of Community Outreach Liaison for the BTU since 2003, a position that was created by the pass President Richard Stutman. In this position I established open communication with several parent and community organizations.



I was an educator in BPS for 38 years, the last 26 years at the John D O'Bryant School of Math and Science. I was a building representative 35 of those years, as a building representative I handled many grievances and mediations.

I'm considered by many to be a hardworking, dedicated and knowledgeable of BTU issues person.

I'm proud to be an advocate for all educators, students, parents and the Boston Public Schools community.

I want to continue with the work that needs to be done to make our union, schools and community, a better space for everyone.

- Delegate to AFT Mass, AFT, AFL-CIO and GBLC, since 1989
- AFT Mass Vice-President, since 1990
- BTU Executive Board 1993-2001, 2013-present
- BTU Community Outreach Liaison, 2003-present
- Member of AFT Mass COPE Committee
- Member of AFT National Human and Civil Rights Committee

I would greatly appreciate your help and vote in the upcoming election. Please consider me for one of your 12 votes.



## Alice M. Yong

Today we communicate by Zoom and this has been a great avenue of reaching out to all BTU members. For the future of our BTU monthly meetings, I hope we can have the option of in-person meetings and Zoom capabilities for all others who would prefer this mode of communication. We need to hear all voices of our union and change is needed for all to be heard through different means of communication.



I have been an active member of the BTU for many years as a Building Rep. and on the Executive Board prior to my retirement. I do intend to fight for a fair contract for all BTU members. We need to be part of the community and connect with outside resources to hear our voice for contract negotiations. All BTU members need good benefits including our Retired Teachers Chapter. We need to be politically active and know who represents your district and seek involvement. Our contract is politically tied. We must not forget "No on 2" and "Fund the Future"!

I ask for your vote to continue the work on Executive Board and Delegate for All Affiliated Bodies.

Thank you.

## Tarquinia Townsend

My mission is to have at least 90% of our 10,000 members vote on all initiatives that the BTU is using to represent ALL of us in the media and the general public because 500 members voting at the end of a four hour meeting is not a true representation of the entire BTU community! My goal is to encourage our **ABUSED, OVERWORKED** and just overall burnt out members to become more active in the union and get their voices heard, so that they are no longer abused or overworked! Through this new activity of members, this will unite us around initiatives and give us the power back that we once had in this City. The power to demand and control the narrative of the BTU. We know what is best for our students and our schools should be shaped by what the students need and not predominantly by the Mayor and the Superintendent! Help me, help us, bring back the power our Union once had. **EVERYONE PERMANENT SHOULD NEVER BE AFRAID TO STRIKE** for the greater good of our students and faculty. It is time to change the dynamics and function of the existing Executive Board. **VOTE TARGUINIA TOWNSEND aka QUEENA** for Executive Board! I bring 21 years of special education experience and 16 years of being a **NO-NONSENSE** BTU Representative to the table! If you haven't heard my voice through the years at every meeting, that means, you haven't attended! **LET'S CHANGE THAT!....**Hope to get your vote!



ists and new members. Paraprofessional/substitute teacher and ABA roles are changing, and I want to insure the paras, ABAs and substitutes receive the dignity and respect they deserve from the BPS as well as the Boston Teachers Union. I will not let the Paraprofessionals, ABAs and Substitutes be forgotten in the Union. It's a whole new world out there for Unions and times may be tough, but I am ready for the challenge.

Please consider me for the positions of Para Council and Delegate to all Bodies when voting.

## Christine Buttiglieri

My name is Christine Buttiglieri, I have been a member of the BTU since 1990. In that time, I have worked at the Donald McKay School & the Mario Umana Academy. Started as a classroom Para and for the past 15 years I've been in the position of Library Para. Also have been elected Building Rep for my school for over 18 years, for which I received the Building Rep. of the Year award. I have been on Health and Welfare Committee as a Trustee plus a delegate for our union.



I recently retired in 2019, and in my retirement, I have worked with the Para Mentor program and presently been with the Para Council and the RTC. My 30 years' experience as member of the BTU shown me how to support and advocate for our members.

I am seeking re-election to the Para Council so that I can continue with my support for Paras. Plus, I am running for delegate once again. Please consider me as one of your candidates for these positions so that I may continue to represent all our members.

## Awilda Gigi Concepcion

My name is Awilda Concepcion also known as Miss Gigi, I have worked for the Boston Public Schools for 24 years. I've obtained countless experiences and insights throughout my career.



I have worked in various classrooms; special ed, inclusion and general education as an academic paraprofessional for elementary level. I have been fortunate to be among some very talented educators, gaining leadership roles, growth and compassion.

I have been a building rep for three years at the Blackstone Elementary School. Being involved in the Boston Teachers Union has led me to running for a paraprofessional council position.

With my leadership skills, professionalism, and a team player in the school system, I am confident that I will be a great candidate for paraprofessional council if elected.

## Donovan Richardson

Hello everyone, I am a friendly and outgoing Educator focused on comprehensive, life-based approaches to education. Energetic problem-solver, skill-builder, and conflict resolver. I have worked with Boston Public Schools for over seven years, I know I'm still a baby in the system. I began volunteering at the Lee Academy before being hired as a Surround Care Para. Currently, I work as an Inclusion Para at the Joseph Lee K-8 School. I enjoy assisting with lessons and collaborating with other professionals to provide the highest level of education for each student. I believe a motivational and encouraging attitude is needed to support students' self-empowerment. I am driven to provide academic and emotional guidance for ALL students. I am passionate about our public education as well as helping the community. Our students and staff deserve the best, and I will continually push for excellence; ask the tough questions, and demand thorough and transparent answers. The Boston Teachers Union has supported its schools and staff and in return, I would like to support the BTU and fellow Paras. We must support our staff as they educate our children.



## Matthew Tallent

I'm in my third year as a paraprofessional in an inclusion setting at the Curley K-8. I was born, raised and still reside in Dorchester. Before starting in BPS, I earned a B.A. in Political Science and French Language at UMass Lowell. I'm running for Para Council to give back to my Local and to my union peers. As a second generation member, the BTU has helped me in numerous ways throughout my life, and now it's my turn to give something back to the BTU and my fellow educators. Most importantly, I will be an advocate for all forms of labor. It's important to foster an appreciation for all workers, both for ourselves and our students, and to stand beside workers and marginalized groups. We must continue to use our collective voice to advocate for both our members and the students and families of Boston. It would be an honor and a privilege to serve the hardworking folks who fill the ranks of the BTU.



# Paraprofessional Council

## Debra Brown

My name is Debra Brown and I am running for the position of Para Council and Delegate to all Bodies. I would like to present my history with the Boston Public Schools and the Boston Teachers Union:



- Paraprofessional for 30 years
- Worked in the classroom in a variety of settings
- Currently an inclusion Para at the Kenny former Librarian Para at Charles Sumner
- Was Building Representative for the Charles Sumner School for over 25 years
- Para Council for over 20 years
- Trustee to the Health and Welfare Fund
- Member of the Collective Bargaining Unit
- Delegate for all bodies of the Union

To keep our union strong and to build this union, we need everyone's energy, talents and ideas, making it more important than ever that we bridge the gap between seasoned activ-

## RTC Officers



### We are running for RTC Officer positions

Clockwise from upper left: Roslyn "Roz" Avant, Vice Chair; Marilyn Marion, Chair; Anne Broder, Treasurer; and Joan Devlin, Secretary.

We enjoy working as your RTC officers and as Delegates to All Affiliated Bodies, and we want to continue working for you. We look forward to our being able to have in-person meetings, trips, and luncheons.

Please vote for us in June.

# Searching for Delight

One evening while searching for digital reading for a seventh grade classroom, I stumbled across a series from *This American Life* called, *The Show of Delights*. ([thisamericanlife.org](http://thisamericanlife.org) 692: *The Show of Delights*)

This series is “a show made up entirely of stories about delight” and is hosted by British writer and journalist **Bim Adewunmi**. In the first episode Bim interviews poet **Ross Gay** who has written a book of short essays called, *The Book of Delights*.

Ross “basically keeps track of the things that delight him. And that’s things, that’s people, that’s moments, whatever. And the word he used was negligence.” He said it’s a negligence if people don’t take the time to honor the things that they take delight in, but more importantly, that they share the things that they take delight in. And if you don’t do that, there’s a loss there. You have to do it to achieve humanity. You have to share delight.”

Some of us may have a hard time remembering delight after staring into the dark void of zoom, a crick in your neck, a tear in your eye. In this month’s column we asked teachers for glimpses of joy. I will go first.

article, *A Holistic Approach to Education in the General Music Classroom in Massachusetts Music Educators Journal*: “If

there is one thing we have learned during COVID in America is the importance of mental wellness. Quarantining has forced us to be alone and have less human interaction. Our students may feel it the most because developmentally, they should be interacting, growing, and learning with their peers but instead are isolated. Music is powerful because it is therapeutic and can help students express their innermost thoughts and feelings. Music can help students cope with these difficult times, so we have to be intentional about using music as a vehicle to address their social emotional needs.”

“Teaching remotely has forced me to adjust my teaching practices. One of the ways I have found success is by providing students with fun music experiences.”



**Lovely Hoffman-Wine**

Here are some other delights from around the district.

**Whitney Weeder**, Grade 1 teacher from the James Otis shared:

*Visitors to our Zoom have made our Fun Fridays even better. We had a friend who works at Lego join us on Zoom from Denmark! The kids were able to show him their lego inventions! His new creations for Ninjago have just arrived on the market so the students were thrilled to know him!*



**Whitney Weeder**

**Genesis Bonilla**, Grade 1:

*Diana Chow grade 1 teacher from the East Boston EEC came to our Summer Zoom and gave a tour of her beehives and dressed up as a beekeeper. The kids had been studying pollinators.*



**Genesis Bonilla**

**Ariana Delplank Bastianelli**, Grade 1:

*Last year and this summer we made a city scene out of recyclables at everyone’s homes. We had been studying 2D and 3D shapes and used toilet paper rolls etc! The ICA joined our summer class as part of the McKay/Otis program and showed us how to make Mobiles!*



**Ariana Delplank Bastianelli**

**Matt Shuman**, Instructional Coach from Mission Hill shared:

*Ayanna Lord and the 7/8 team does a bi-weekly opt-in talent show on Friday afternoons that is pretty joyous and involves a lot of beat making, some rapping, some song writing, poetry, etc. It is a wonderful way to have kids (and adults) connect and share of themselves remotely, routinely, and with not a lot of prep.*

**Kawana McKoy**, Grade 5 teacher at the Edison K-8 said:

“With students still learning remotely, one of the big things I keep in my mind is student engagement as it’s a challenge everyday, especially as we close in on the one year mark of the pandemic and remote learning. One strategy I use is my daily slideshow which I create and post everyday for students. It has become one of my routines in framing the day, checking in with students, and keeping all of us in my class on track. I am also a big fan of platforms such as Jamboard and Padlet, which encourage student voice, even when we’re far apart – or not in the mood to physically speak.”

**Lauren Clarke-Mason:**

*The ABA Team, Ashley Domaldo and Amanda Robichaud, at the BTU School plan Fun Friday cooking activities. They prepare take home kits to deliver to students or create a “shopping list” for families with everyday items that can be found in their houses to make a tasty treat, craft activity, or a holiday surprise. The kids and families look forward to Friday. They get to build, make, create, and sometimes eat the creations they make. Better still, everyone can participate regardless of their learning model. Often, teachers share the screens so that the in person students can see their friends who are learning remotely in order to share the laughs and build community.*

*Every Wednesday morning at the BTU School we have a Community Meeting. At first it was an opportunity to meet the students when we were fully remote. Now it has become a source of fun and joy that I look forward to every week. We’ve had up to 8 screens worth of students and teachers on the call and thankfully with the teachers acting as co-hosts all pitch in to help manage the crowd. Many different topics have been discussed, polls taken, jamboards filled in at our weekly*

*continued on page 12*

## –IN MY FEELINGS IDENTIFY A SONG THAT.....

NAME	MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE	MAKES ME SAD	REMINDE ME OF MY FAVORITE PERSON	LISTEN TO ON REPEAT ALL DAY
Mrs. Wine	Level Up by Clara	Remember Me from Cocoa the Movie	Bow Wow Wow Old School Song	Anything by Stevie Wonder
Vicky	Happier by Marshmello	Ben Nalha Vez	See you again	All of me by John Legend
Araceli	Good and happy	If u want love	See u again	
Alex	<b>TRASH Gang</b>	Death bed	Fall into the dark side	Hero’s come back Naruto shippuden opening 1
Jazmin Bermudez	Highest in the room by Travis Scott	Feeling something by Bea Miller	Alone by Alan walker	Dynamite by BTS

The best thing that I have done this year, my most stunning success, is a fifteen minute sing along that I started on a zoom with one K1 classroom, and then invited others to join. I dusted off my acoustic, pulled out my old *Rise Up Singing* songbook and belted out the songs. At first the kids just stared at me, but a few weeks in, reprising the same set list every week, the first delight made its entrance. I logged into the zoom and one by one the little faces appeared. Then began several minutes of excited “Good Morning, Ms. Anne!” as more faces logged on. Sometimes the first children to arrive would show me things like stuffed animals or magnetile structures. Once the singing started other siblings joined in, babies, big sisters and brothers from other classes. One student’s mom handed him a little guitar and she played along slightly off screen with her own guitar. For the finale everyone pretended to be a pony and ran around, at times holding a stuffed unicorn, a picture of a pony, even a reluctant cat.

**Lovely Hoffman-Wine**, music teacher at the Edison K-8 wrote in her recent

These are a few activities that students have responded well to in my general music classroom.

- Using the online music platform, Quaver, students create short movies by choosing from a library of short silent films and adding music and sound effects. Students are acting as foley artists and music supervisors without even knowing it!
- Using music production platforms like Band Lab and Soundtrap, students use music loops to compose their own songs, commercials, and even spoken word selections with accompaniment.
- As a fun SEL activity students complete a “mood music” activity in which they share songs that incite certain moods. Students identify songs that make them dance, sad, and that remind them of their favorite person. This is an especially important activity considering this pandemic.

To learn more about Lovely and her work, visit [www.LovelyHoffman.com](http://www.LovelyHoffman.com).



**Kawana McCoy**

# Why I'm Getting the COVID-19 Vaccine

By **Lea-Antoinette Serena**

As a Black woman, I have firsthand accounts of times I realized the healthcare system was not created and designed for me. I've been overly questioned when receiving pain medication. I've felt the hints of judgement and I've been ignored when expressing concerns about my health. And I'll never forget the racist comments made to me by an Obstetrician while carrying my son. I've also spent hours researching to find black doctors and specialists in hopes that I won't continue to experience these things and to receive the care I need. In addition to my personal experience, history

has given me, as a black woman, many reasons to be skeptical of the healthcare system. For example, from 1932 to 1972, the Tuskegee experiments set out with a goal to track syphilis. Researchers recruited 600 Black men and conducted studies on them without their consent and the men never received any treatment. Many of the men died, went blind, or developed serious health issues. This is just one example of why distrust between communities of color and the healthcare system exist. There are still healthcare disparities that exist in communities of color, distributing to further mistrust. There are real reasons and valid reasons

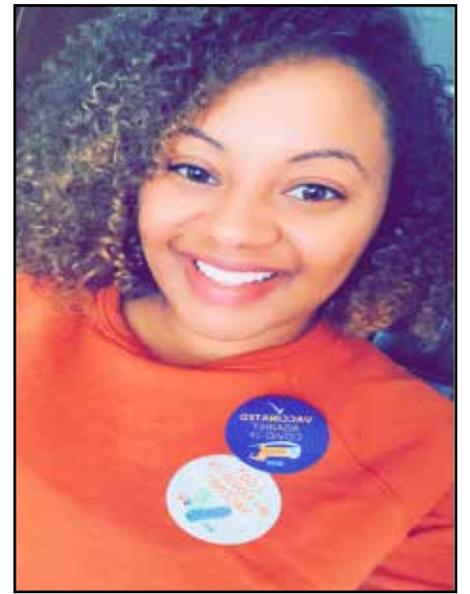
why communities of color are skeptical of new vaccines and I'll admit I wasn't sure if I wanted it at first either! In fact, my close friends have asked me not to get the vaccine and warned me against it many times. After some reflection and acknowledgment of my personal worries and the concerns of some of my loved ones, I have made the decision to get the vaccine and here's why:

My son and I both lost our grandfathers to COVID-19 last year. As we know this virus has disproportionately affected communities of color and unfortunately for us the statistics hit home. I want to trust that this vaccine will prevent my son and my students from losing loved ones to this virus.

I am young and healthy, but I miss hugging my grandmother and I don't want to hug her until I can do so with less fear.

I've done my own research online and spoken to healthcare professionals of color that I trust. I've asked about every publicized concern that I am aware of including infertility, the effectiveness of the vaccine, and beyond. Educating myself on the different vaccine types/brands and the known effects have made me more comfortable.

My kids need me. Herd immunity is



**Lea-Antoinette Serena.**

important for safe returns to school. If enough of the population is vaccinated then our children can have a sense of normalcy in school.

Our students' families need us. I want to give my families peace of mind as much as possible and continue to watch the amount of COVID-19 cases decrease and share the good news with them.

The decision is yours and respected without judgement, but I encourage you to have conversations with your primary care doctor and do your own research to make an informed decision. These are my reasons, but "this is our shot".

## The Test Stops Here

By **Colum Whyte**

This Fall, I opted my five-year-old BPS son out of MAP testing. I launched a **Scrap the MAP** campaign which was endorsed by the BTU Executive Board and Membership. This action came on the heels of my successful boycott of MAP Testing last year, which led to a policy shift from the Boston Public Schools.

After 17 years of teaching, it's fair to say I'm fed up with the testing and data mania tied to private profits. Will we finally have a common sense change in direction when it comes to testing? Well, if we hold President Biden to his campaign promises – we will.

During a December 2019 MSNBC Public Education Candidate Forum **Joe Biden** was put on the spot. AFT President **Randi Weingarten** and NEA President **Lily Eskelsen Garcia** organized the event. **Denisha Jones**, who – among many other hats – is a member of the Black Lives Matter at School Steering Committee – asked the question: "Given that standardized testing is rooted in a history of racism and eugenics, if you are elected president, will you commit to ending the use of standardized testing in public schools?" (pull quote)

Candidate Biden responded: "Teachers should be able to determine the curriculum in their schools... I think it's a big mistake to move in a direction where it's all about evaluating a teacher or student based on testing. Teaching to a test underestimates and discounts the things



**Colum Whyte with his five-year-old son.**

that are most important for students to know."

All too often candidates tell us what we want to hear – while doing what corporate donors pay them to do. This oligarchal cycle undermines our democracy. In education corporatism has led to further racial and class isolation, destabilization of schools and their communities, and a minimization of education to the lowest common denominator – testing data. Will President Biden keep his promise? We **ALL** should remind him.

Do you agree that testing is out of control? Do you want to take action? Then please join us. There is power in a **UNION** – let's use it. **Remember – Be safe. Be Strong. Be Teachers.**



"My self-made poster supporting why Black Lives Matter. I believe the Importance of anyone's Life should Matter! No One and Nothing should be taken lightly especially because of someone's Race, Nationality or Religious belief. We are all created Equal."

-Adrienne Jordan

## P2P: Searching for Delight...

continued from page 11

meetings. Some of our interesting discussions have been trading Kid Friendly Jokes, discussing our favorite books, and celebrating our successes each month with the Mustang Awards where we recognize students in each class who are working hard to do their very best. Students have so much to share that it is hard for me to end the meeting so kids can get to class on time.

The most endearing part has been helping the last few stragglers still logged on, either the youngest who are a bit confused or the oldest that are barely awake, to get to their correct Zoom link.

Here is final thought in an excerpt of Delight number 80 from the Ross' book of Delights called, "Tomato Onboard":

What you don't know until you carry a tomato seedling through the airport and onto a plane, is that carrying a tomato seedling through the airport and onto a plane will make people smile at you, almost like you're carrying a baby. I did not know this until today, carrying my little tomato, about three or four inches high in its four-inch plastic starter pot, which my friend Michael gave to me, smirking about how I was going to get it home.



**Anne Slater levitating with Ada Velazquez-Escobar's KI Edison K-8.**

I quickly realized one of its stems, which I almost wrote as arms, was broken from the jostling, and it only had four of them. So I decided I'd better just carry it out in the open. And the shower of love began. Before boarding the final leg of my flight, one of the workers said, "Nice tomato!" which I don't think was a come on.

Take care with your little tomatoes.  
Carry them carefully  
Keep looking for delight.

(The Peer-to-Peer column is written by Anne Slater ([aslater@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:aslater@bostonpublicschools.org)) and Lauren Clarke-Mason ([lclarkemason@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:lclarkemason@bostonpublicschools.org)). If you have a topic you'd like us to explore, please email us.)



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