

**Q.** Why is education such an important priority for you?

**A.** Turn to Page 3 for Mayor Menino's answer to this and other questions asked by BPS students.



Students Ciara Martinez, left, and Sarah Blanchette interview Mayor Thomas M. Menino for *The Boston Educator*.

PHOTO: DON HARNEY



## SUPER WOMAN

Johnson has big plans for Boston Schools

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

In her second year as superintendent of the Boston Public Schools, Dr. Carol R. Johnson has maintained that she expects nothing less than the best from the district's students.

It seems as though she applies the same standard to herself.

Johnson was recently honored with the Joseph E. Hill Superintendent of the Year Award by the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE). She was recognized at the 36th annual NABSE conference, held last month in Atlanta.

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Carol Johnson has demonstrated that she was the right choice to lead the Boston Public Schools.

**Dr. Elizabeth Reilinger, Chair  
Boston School Committee**

The award is given annually to a superintendent who has demonstrated a quality of leadership that resulted in significant positive outcomes for student achievement.

Johnson was appointed superintendent by the Boston School Committee in June 2007. During her first year in the BPS, Johnson presented her

Acceleration Agenda, a set of recommendations to improve the academic achievement of all students

See **SUPERINTENDENT** Page 12

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carol R. Johnson greets East Boston High School freshmen Areli Navaro, left, and Laury Sanchez.

PHOTO: REBA SALDANHA

**City of Boston**

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

**Boston School Committee**Dr. Elizabeth Reilinger  
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# Renewed energy for the new year

**Dr. Carol R. Johnson**

As we begin 2009, we look forward to another year of providing the families of our city with a first-rate education in Boston Public Schools. At the same time, our nation is undergoing a new beginning as well, with the inauguration of a new president this month. We approach this new year with great hope and optimism, and with renewed energy to make a difference in the life of every single student, while recognizing that there are significant challenges ahead.

January also marks an important milestone in the school choice process, when families across the city will begin registering their children for September 2009 school assignments. This is an exciting time for families – including those new to the district and those already enrolled – to choose from the wide array of schools and programs available.

Schools opened their doors last fall during School Preview Time to attract and welcome prospective families. As a result of the Pathways to Excellence plan, there are new options available to families next year, including new K-8 programs, new pilot schools, and a Montessori program at the East Boston Early Education Center. We look

forward to getting these programs off to a successful start.

We must also be mindful, however, of the economic realities in which we live and work. Throughout our nation – from households to major corporations – individuals and institutions are confronting incredibly challenging financial constraints. In every sector, costs continue to rise much faster than the resources available to meet them. Without question, this economic climate forces all of us to make difficult choices, and the school district is no exception.

As we undertake the budget process for the 2009-2010 school year, we will identify strategies to control spending and make reductions in every school and central office, while at the same time remaining focused on creating even better schools. Underlying every one of these choices is an unwavering commitment to providing every child in Boston an outstanding education.

After 16 months as your superintendent, I continue to be inspired by what I see in schools and classrooms throughout the city. From pre-school to high school, teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and students are working hard every day to improve academic performance.

I also am impressed by parents' and volunteers' active participation in our classrooms and our schools' efforts to offer every child enrichment and support beyond teaching and learning – including arts and music, sports and recreation, and so much more. I am confident that together we are developing young men and women to become scholars, artists, poets and leaders.

I am grateful for the opportunity to lead Boston Public Schools to the next level of excellence. The Boston Foundation recently released "Boston's Education Pipeline: A Report Card," which provides a comprehensive picture of both our successes and the work ahead. Our Acceleration Agenda is designed to close achievement gaps and ensure significant improvements across the board, and with your help, I have no doubt that we will make remarkable progress.

Mayor Menino, the Boston School Committee and I thank you for all that you do on behalf of the students of Boston. We wish you the very best for a great year ahead!

*Dr. Carol R. Johnson is Superintendent of Schools in Boston.*

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# Q & A

## Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino

The following interview was conducted for *The Boston Educator* by Boston Public Schools students Sarah Blanchette and Ciara Martinez. Blanchette, a South Boston resident, is a senior at Odyssey High School. She was a Caroline Knapp Summer Journalism Intern and

hopes to pursue journalism in college next fall. Martinez, a Mattapan resident, is a junior at Health Careers Academy. Both are on the staff of Teens in Print (T.i.P.), Boston's citywide newspaper for high school students. Born out of a partnership between the Boston Globe

Foundation and WriteBoston, T.i.P. was founded to improve writing skills among local students. More than 300 students have been published since the first issue in May 2004. Blanchette is a senior editor and Martinez is a peer leader at T.i.P.

**Q** What were you most excited about at the start of this school year?

**A** I saw new energy in the schools, new enthusiasm. It's Superintendent Johnson's second year and she's gotten parents as well as students involved and engaged in school.

**Q** What can BPS students do to make the schools better?

**A** I want students to be achievers, to work hard. I want them to be active after school as well. That helps you mature and grow — to be in extracurricular activities. You network with other people in the city. There are great resources are out there for students, like when you're involved in the Teens in Print newspaper at *The Boston Globe*. It's a great paper.

**Q** Why is education such an important priority for you?

**A** Education is the most important thing in our society. A high school diploma isn't enough, and we need to help students be prepared for success in college, too.



Students Ciara Martinez, left, and Sarah Blanchette interview Mayor Thomas M. Menino for *The Boston Educator*.

**Q** What are some important changes in the schools that you've seen in your tenure as mayor?

**A** We have more books in the classrooms; the schools are wired for internet (we were the first urban school district to do that); we have more permanent, quality teachers in the classrooms; the janitors keep the schools clean. The stars are in alignment right now to make sure every child in Boston has a good education.

**Q** What was it like to see the transformation of the Burke?

**A** It's very special to me. Did you know I once was in the old building and almost got hit in the head with a ceiling tile? The new school has everything in one building, everything you need to grow physically, mentally, and emotionally. It's an education portal, community center, library, all in one building ... all aspects of learning in one building ... teaching the whole child.

**Q** What are your hopes for the future?

**A** With Superintendent Carol Johnson leading the schools, we need to continue to progress in sending students to college and ensure that they graduate in four years. We want them to get in and stay in. I want colleges to reach out and help our urban students.

**Q** What are your highest priorities in the next two years?

**A** Every student is special. We have to educate every student. Our goal is to teach every student to the best of his or her ability. My goal is for people to say "Wow — what an exceptional urban school system Boston has."

**Q** What are your proudest accomplishments?

**A** The Broad Prize for best urban school district; continuous improvement in school test scores; and the general physical appearance of the schools. We invest in our future and we invest in our children. My six grandchildren are all in the Boston Public Schools.

## Boston plans school reorganization

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Sometimes, on the road to excellence, leaders must be able to effect change. In Boston, Superintendent Dr. Carol R. Johnson is doing just that — driving a comprehensive reorganization plan to strengthen Boston Public Schools (BPS).

In November, the Boston School Committee approved most of the recommendations in Johnson's Pathways to Excellence plan. As a result, the BPS will undergo an internal makeover, with several schools closing and others merging or expanding to create K-8 and 6-12 feeder systems. The plan also calls for the expansion of Boston's pilot schools, with three new schools scheduled to open next year.

"This plan is all about providing all of our students an outstanding public education," said Dr. Johnson. "We've heard from families across the city about the programs they want for their children, and these proposals enable us to offer more of what parents are asking for. Above all, we are striving to make the Boston Public Schools every parent's first choice for their children's education."

"The superintendent's plan seizes the opportunity to bring about significant improvements to our academic programs by making better use of the resources available to us," said Dr. Elizabeth Reilinger, Boston School Committee chair.

Pathways to Excellence addresses changing demographic and economic realities, most notably a decline in the school-age population as well as decreasing state, federal and private resources. The recommendations are estimated to reduce spending over five years by approximately \$25.4 million.

Included is the cost-savings from the closing of six schools: Dickerman Elementary School; the former Fuller Elementary School (currently housing Boston International High School); Hamilton Elementary School; Higginson Elementary School; P. A. Shaw Elementary School; and Stone Elementary School.

The approved recommendations include:

- ◆ Two high schools at the Dorchester Education Complex — Noonan Business Academy and the Academy of Public Service — will merge into a new high school, Edward G. Noonan Academy for Business, Public Service and Law.
- ◆ The new Mildred Avenue K-8 School in Mattapan will serve students currently enrolled at the P. A. Shaw Elementary School in Dorchester. By 2012, the Ellison/Parks Early Education School will establish a feeder pattern with the Mildred Avenue School to offer K-8 continuity.

◆ Boston International High School will relocate and expand, and a Newcomers Academy for late-arriving English Language Learners will open at the former Thompson School building.

◆ TechBoston Academy, currently a pilot high school, will expand to a grade 6-12 school, with middle school grades opening at the Wilson Middle School building in Dorchester.

◆ The new Edison K-8 School in Brighton will host students from the Hamilton and Garfield elementary schools.

◆ The current Lewis Middle School building will house a new Higginson / Lewis K-8 School in Roxbury, adding students from the nearby Higginson Elementary School.

◆ Students completing grade 5 at the Grew Elementary School in Hyde Park will be guaranteed assignment to the nearby Rogers Middle School, as they become a "feeder pair."

◆ The King Middle School in Dorchester will return to its space as the new Martin Luther King Jr. K-8 School, along with students from the neighboring Dickerman Elementary School.

Most recently, the School Committee also approved Johnson's recommendations to open three new pilot schools in September:

◆ The Boston Teachers Union (BTU) Pilot School will open in Jamaica Plain with kindergarten through grade 2, as well as grade 6 classrooms, eventually becoming a full K-8 school.

◆ The Mary Lyon Pilot High School in Brighton will serve high school students beginning with the addition of grade 9.

◆ The Dennis C. Haley Elementary School in Roslindale is converting to a pilot school.

The School Committee approved the changes prior to the school choice process, which includes open houses and School Preview Time activities. Registration begins in January for students entering kindergarten, and grades 6 and 9 in September.

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This plan is all about providing all of our students an outstanding public education.

**Dr. Carol R. Johnson**  
Superintendent of Schools

# Leaving a legacy

## Holland retires from Boston Public Schools after 30 years' service

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

During his distinguished 30-year career in Boston Public Schools, Albert Holland has guided generations of students in South Boston, Dorchester and the Fenway. He has been an advocate for anti-violence, a leader in public school-university partnerships and a motivator for students in the pursuit of college and career aspirations.

Throughout it all, he has never lost an ounce of passion.

"My life has been blessed to have worked in Boston Public Schools," said Holland. "It's been one of the

greatest experiences I could have imagined."

Holland retired from the BPS in August as headmaster and executive director of Health Careers Academy (HCA). Though he no longer holds an official title, he will forever remain an educator, dedicated to the advancement of Boston's youth.

"I understand how important public education is, and how critical it is to the health of our city and our community," said Holland. "I understand the urgency that exists right now to make sure our schools are performing at their full potential so that our students can reach their full potential."

"Al Holland is an educator of the highest caliber," said Superintendent Dr. Carol R. Johnson. "His service to students and families is immeasurable; we are all in his debt."

Born and raised in Boston, Holland graduated from the James P. Timilty Middle School in Roxbury and the former Jamaica Plain High School. The education field was not originally in the cards for Holland, who was pursuing a different career as a juvenile probation officer. However, when Boston was facing its second year of court-ordered busing to achieve school desegregation in 1975, Holland was called upon to

facilitate the transition, becoming an administrative assistant to the superintendent. "It was something I'd never seen before — police escorts and metal detectors. It was a very difficult time in Boston's history."

Holland spent seven years at South Boston High, leaving as assistant headmaster. From there, he served as headmaster at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School from 1982-93.

"Those were some of my most challenging and most rewarding years," Holland said.

At the Burke, Holland worked to improve academic standards, prevent gang violence and create a safer learning environment. He also sought out new partnerships and resources with community organizations and businesses.

After more than a decade at the Burke, Holland went on to become an assistant superintendent in charge of high schools. He also worked with the Boston Police Department to install violence-prevention programs and initiate dialogue between students and authorities. He later helped launch the Boston Pilot Schools Network. In 2001, Holland returned to the high school environment, accepting the position at HCA.

"It was time to go back to what I enjoyed most," he said.

Located on the campus of Northeastern University, HCA is a Horace Mann Charter School founded in 1995. The school provides a supportive learning environment and strong academic curriculum for students exploring careers in the health professions and related fields.

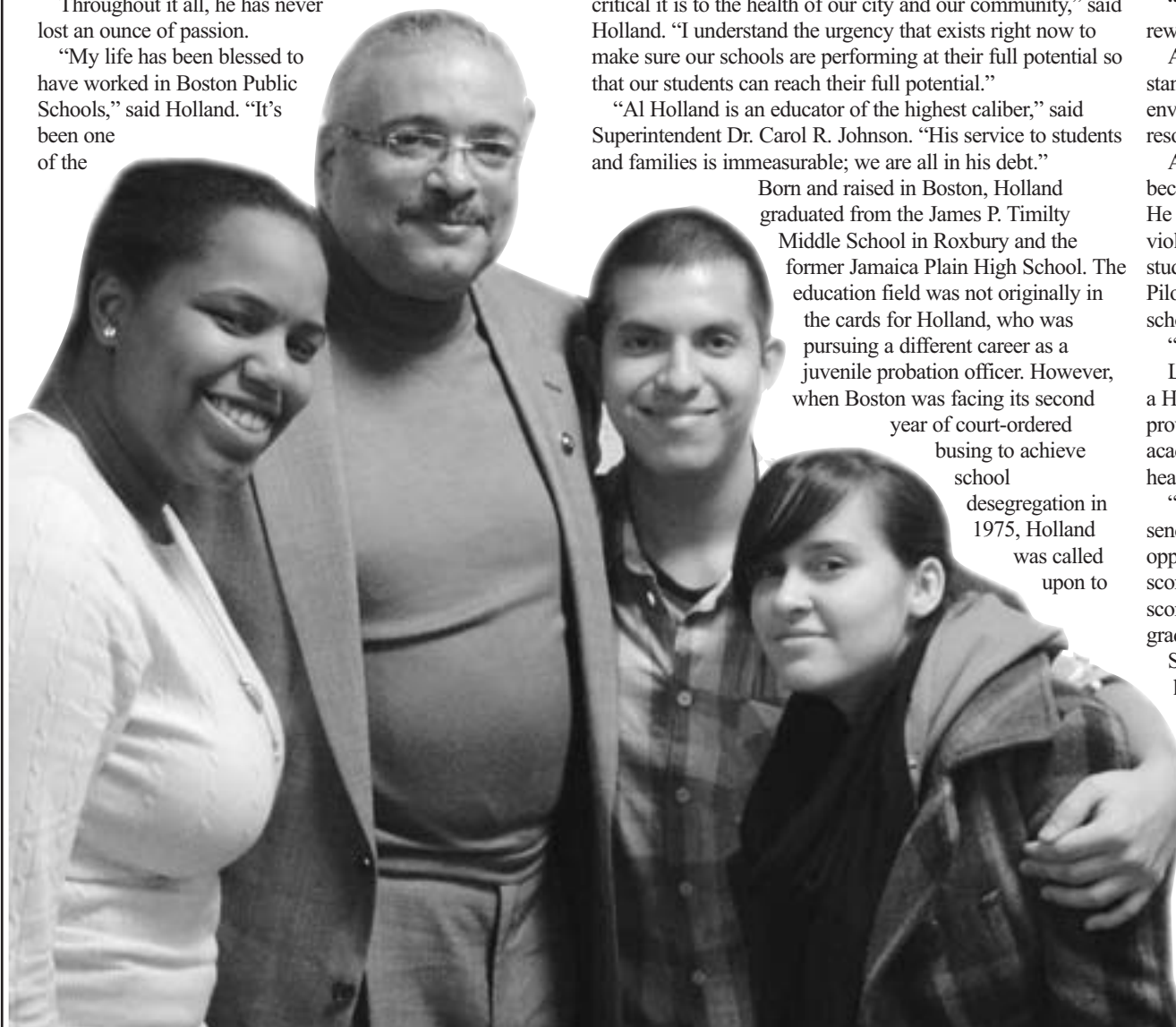
"The school is meeting its mission," said Holland. "We're sending more kids to college and we're paving the opportunity for students to go into the medical field. MCAS scores have risen every year, with more and more students scoring in advanced and proficient. Since 2006, the graduation rate has been between 95 and 100 percent."

Students have access to university science and computer labs, libraries and other resources. They also have the opportunity to participate in diverse job shadowing, internship and summer work experiences in health care.

Partners include Brigham & Women's Hospital, Children's Hospital, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Harvard University School of Public Health, Massachusetts General Hospital and TJX Companies, in addition to Northeastern — Holland's alma mater.

Holland currently serves on the HCA board of directors and is still active within the BPS.

Al Holland visits with HCA seniors, from left, Stephanie Martinez, Victor Gonzalez, and Jessica Restrepo.



## Schools offer online courses to help students graduate

BY JESSICA BENSON

High school students on the verge of dropping out are now getting another chance to graduate.

Last summer, Boston Public Schools began offering online correspondence courses to students who were just a few credits shy of qualifying for graduation. By August, 80 of them had earned their diplomas.

"It was a very successful program," said High School Academic Superintendent Irvin Scott. "We were able to have a graduation."

Without the program, some students would have ended up going back to school in September with class schedules revolving around only a class or two. Having such a

light schedule makes it easier to justify dropping out altogether, Scott noted.

"They're sort of in a limbo area. The tragedy of these students was that they needed only one or two credits to graduate," he said. "What do you do with a kid like that? How do you build a schedule for that kid?"

It can also be frustrating for the student. "The further they get behind in the race, the more discouraging it gets," Scott said.

That's why the Credit Recovery Program was started earlier this year. Students must be close to graduating, with passing MCAS scores, in order to participate.

Though the classes are taught through the Internet, the students work on the computers at a centralized location, under the

supervision of teachers. The courses, which are all based on state curriculum frameworks, were offered at five different locations last summer.

At the end of the six-week course, a graduation ceremony was held for the 80 graduates, along with other students who finished high school by taking more traditional summer-school classes. A total of 127 students received their diplomas during a special ceremony in August.

According to Scott, with the online program, students are able to work at their own pace — something they couldn't do in a regular summer school.

Now, the school system is looking to offer another session of the program over the winter, to help even more students finish

high school. Schools are currently looking for good candidates for the program.

The number of sites hosting the program will also be doubled, to a total of 10.

Scott said he hopes it helps more students finish high school and earn their diplomas. And with studies showing that "dropping out" is still a problem for high schools everywhere, the program is needed as much now as ever.

"It allows students who are failing courses and getting further and further behind to take courses in an accelerated way and be successful in those courses, so they don't eventually drop out," Scott said. "Credit recovery is a way for students to catch up, get back on track and finish the race."



# Tuning in to education



Tim Murnane, Comcast Vice President of Government and Community Relations, and Principal Vivian Swoboda drop in on students at the Dever School.



Comcast Metro Boston Regional Vice President Paul D'Arcangelo, left, and Principal Simon Ho talk with students at the Guild Elementary School.

## Comcast executives participate in Principal for a Day program

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Stepping out of the corporate office for a day, Comcast Metro Boston Regional Vice President Paul D'Arcangelo walked in the shoes of fellow Northeastern University alumnus Simon Ho, principal of the Guild Elementary School in East Boston.

Both men pursued similar educational paths — D'Arcangelo earning his degree in technical communications, and Ho in economics — but answered different callings in the private and public sectors. Despite their diverging career paths, the parallels in their day-to-day responsibilities are easily recognizable.

"The business aspect is very similar," said D'Arcangelo. "In both fields, you're managing people, working together and sharing ideas."

"A school administrator is very much like a manager," agreed Ho, who is in his 16th year at Guild. "You have to be able to recognize opportunities and seek out resources and partnerships. You also have to be able to communicate well and act as a team player."

For the fifth year in a row, D'Arcangelo participated in Boston's Principal for a Day program. The annual event, co-sponsored by the Boston Plan for Excellence, Bank of America, the Boston Public Schools and Mayor Thomas M. Menino, paired 136 leaders from business, government, media, non-profit, arts and culture, education and other sectors with principals and headmasters in the BPS. The event is designed to expose corporate and civic leaders to the joys and challenges of working as a public school principal.

"It's my favorite day of the year," said D'Arcangelo. "It's very insightful. I always

come back from the experience with stories to share. That's why two of my team members signed up this year."

Across town, Comcast Metro West Area Vice President Vic Pascarelli visited Principal Eileen Morales at the John F. Kennedy Elementary School in Jamaica Plain, while Comcast Vice President of Government and Community Relations Tim Murnane visited the Dever Elementary School in Dorchester, shadowing Principal Vivian Swoboda.

"There were a lot of similarities to the corporate world with respect to managerial issues," said Murnane, who was participating for the first time. "We started the day with three staff meetings where department heads discussed their specialty areas. Then we visited the classrooms to see what happens day-to-day between teachers and students."

Murnane has been with Comcast for 11 years, but has experience in the education field. For seven years, he oversaw external relations for a quasi-public agency of the Commonwealth focusing on education technologies.

"Although I previously had spent time in an educational environment, I gained new insights during my day at the Dever School," he said. "A principal carries all the management responsibilities of a leader in the corporate setting, with people and issues to attend to both inside and outside the school."

Based on the experience, Murnane hopes to form a partnership with the Dever School, encouraging Comcast employees to visit the school and read to students. He understands the significance of bridging the corporate world and the public schools.

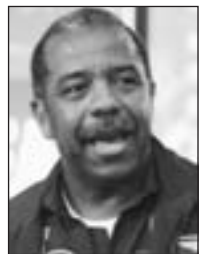
# Reaching the stars

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

## First African-American to walk in space visits Curley

In 1993, Dr. Bernard Harris accomplished his childhood dream, becoming the first African-American to walk in space.

Today, Harris is traveling the country, hoping to inspire students to realize their own dreams. On the ninth stop of his Dream Tour,



**Dr. Bernard Harris**

presented by ExxonMobil, he visited with Curley K-8 students.

"When we talk about America's future, we're talking about you," said

Harris. "Believe in yourself and believe in those who believe in you."

A trained aerospace flight surgeon, Harris rose from humble beginnings to pursue his education as a physician and later as an astronaut. At the time of his retirement from NASA in 1996, he had completed two space missions, logged more than 438 hours in space and traveled more than 7.2 million miles.

"I made it to this level because of my dream and determination," Harris said. "Be willing to work hard and take some time to figure out what your talents are. You are infinite beings with infinite



Former astronaut Dr. Bernard Harris simulates flight during an assembly with Curley School seventh-graders Xavier Wooten and Isabella DosSantos.

possibilities. You can do anything you want to do in life."

During three separate assemblies at Curley, Harris talked about his adventures in space and about the importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education in helping him get to that point. He earned his

bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Houston and later obtained a doctorate from Texas Tech University School of Medicine. He also holds master's degrees in medical science and business administration.

"America's students have incredible opportunities in careers

that haven't even been created yet," said Harris. "The Dream Tour is one way to open their eyes to the limitless possibilities they have in their hands as long as math and science education is part of the equation."

Dream Tour emcee and radio personality Ken Bell and

ExxonMobile's Jimmie James echoed Harris' sentiments, putting in perspective how STEM skills are applied in everyday life.

"Things we take for granted — cell phones, microwaves, Nintendo, digital cameras — weren't around when I was growing up," said James. "In another 25 years, there'll be a whole new group of inventions, and the ideas for all those inventions are right here. We believe in you and know you'll make a difference."

"You can make all of your dreams come true by studying the STEM subjects," said Bell. "Whether it's designing the next Jordan shoe or PlayStation feature, you'll need those skills in the future."

Bell also drew a comparison between Harris and President-elect Barack Obama, who most recently made history as the first African-American to be elected president.

"If you still don't believe after Nov. 4 that you can do anything, believe it," said Bell.

In addition to the inspirational program by Harris, the Dream Tour offers an interactive Web site, enhanced curricula, engaging classroom activities and scholarships.

The Curley School was one of 10 stops along the tour. Northeastern University was instrumental in bringing the tour to the Curley through Mayor Thomas M. Menino's Step Up Initiative.

## (100) Grand plan: Mason rewarded for MCAS success

BY JESSICA BENSON

The group of teachers and parents from the Mason Elementary School couldn't contain their joy when they found out their school won the \$100,000 grand prize.

Shouts and cheers erupted from their table when the winner of the Thomas W. Payzant School on the Move Prize was announced at a gala hosted by EdVestors.

But Mason Principal Harolyn Bowden said her own joy was not so much from winning the prize as it was from seeing her staff earn such a prestigious recognition.

"I just have the greatest staff. They really work hard," she said. "I just felt like they really deserved this. I was so proud."

The Mason School, located in Roxbury, was one of three finalists chosen for the prize because of the significant improvement on students' MCAS scores. The other finalists were the Hernández and Winship schools.

This is the third year that the award has been handed out by EdVestors, a non-profit organization that drives change in urban schools. Since its launch in 2002, EdVestors has raised more than \$4 million to fund school improvements in Boston and Lowell.

Laura Perille, executive director of EdVestors, said the Mason stood out due to the way the teachers and staff take ownership of their school.

"It's really about the adults in the school," she said. "It just sets up the school to keep moving to high levels."

With just 210 students, the Mason is a small school.

Partnerships with area schools, including Wheelock and Boston University, have allowed the school to put more teachers and assistants into the classroom — each class has two adults assigned to it. This has helped it keep class sizes low — 15 to 20 students per class. The internship programs also promote the school's teacher mentoring program, Bowden noted.

"This school operates like a learning community," she said.

As its reward, the Mason will be given \$80,000 of the \$100,000 prize. The rest of the money will pay for the Rennie Center for Education Research to conduct a case study on the school to document the successes at the Mason.

Eventually, EdVestors hopes to put together a library of case studies about the winners of the School on the Move prize. That way, other schools throughout the city and state can use them as a tool to improve their own teaching techniques, Perille said.

Bowden is now trying to figure out how to spend the prize money. She'd like it to go toward more training for teachers and paraprofessionals in her building, as well as to provide stipends for teachers to provide additional tutoring for students. She also hopes to build up the school's reading program and explore ways to use technology to improve education for special needs students.

Bowden admits that she shares the success with all of the teachers, staff and parents at the Mason, as well as former



Mason administrators, teachers and parents celebrate the School on the Move Prize.

principal Janet Palmer-Owens, now academic superintendent for pilot schools.

"It really has to be a collaboration. That's what made Mason successful," she said. "Even other people on the staff — the secretaries, the custodians — everyone is invested in the children."

Eight people from the school, including teachers and parents, joined Bowden at the EdVestors dinner gala. They didn't know ahead of time that they would be pronounced the winner of the prize, though they did realize that they were a finalist.



## STUDENT PROFILE



Moriah Smith is serving a two-year term on the Boston School Committee.

## Smith is the voice of BPS students

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Boston Latin Academy senior Moriah Smith is serving as the voice of thousands — 55,000 to be exact — as the student representative to the Boston School Committee.

Smith is serving a two-year term, which began in September 2007, as a non-voting member of the committee. Her student activism took root in eighth grade, when she was elected homeroom representative. She then became involved with Student Forum and the Boston Student Advisory Council (BSAC), on which she is currently serving as president. As the leader of this citywide elected student body, two of Smith's main responsibilities are to represent the student perspective on issues facing the school district and to serve as the agent of information between the School Committee and the Boston Public Schools student body.

"We are the Boston Public Schools," said Smith. "We're what everyone is working so hard for. Our voices should be the most important."

Through her presence at every meeting, Smith hopes to prevent the concept of "adulthood," or overlooking the voices of young people.

"It's definitely really important," said Smith. "Students are always facing issues specific to them and they want to get their ideas out there."

One of her priorities this year is to create a district-wide homework policy.

"We want to recommend a 2½-hour homework requirement, but it should be for effective and productive homework, not busy work," she said.

Smith is also attempting to promote involvement in student government and engage students in the interview process for new teachers.

A Dorchester resident, Smith began her BPS career at Dickerman Elementary School. Her goal in her last year in the BPS is to maintain academic excellence. She is enrolled in a number of challenging courses, including Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. History, AP English Literature, and Honors Calculus. She is also learning Latin and is a member of the Swim Team and Classics Club. "Between sports and the different activities, there's so much to get involved in," she said.

# In the zone



Elee Hart works on writing during class at the West Zone Early Learning Center.

## West Zone Early Learning Center earns accreditation

BY ALEXIS MALPICA

Tucked inside of the Hennigan School in Jamaica Plain is the West Zone Early Learning Center — a small, research-based school serving children from preschool to first grade — which has now become the fourth Early Learning Center in Boston to gain accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

"NAEYC accreditation represents the mark of quality in early childhood education," according to the NAEYC. "To achieve NAEYC accreditation, early-childhood education programs volunteer to be measured against the most robust and rigorous national standards on education, health and safety."

In order to gain accreditation from the NAEYC, West Zone ELC had to first complete a self-evaluation, before tackling the 10 standards, 50 topic areas, and more than 400 criteria required by the NAEYC. These standards range from health and safety assessments, to community relations, leadership, management, and child progress assessments.

Karen Silver, Accreditation

Specialist for Boston Public Schools (BPS), says the standards are a compilation of "all of the knowledge of all of the experts from around the country, their information and their feedback as to what constitutes a

quality program," which makes sure schools, "provide quality education for early childhood."

Dr. Jason Sachs, BPS Director of Early Childhood Education, calls the accreditation for West Zone ELC "quite an accomplishment," while praising Principal Eunice Fernandez and her staff for having completed an extraordinary task.

"West Zone ELC created an environment where children can learn in small settings," said Sachs.

With an 11:1 student-to-staff ratio, as well as Internet, computers, and hands-on learning materials in every classroom, "a lot of the curriculum focuses on exploring educational materials instead of sitting and listening in large groups," Silver added.

West Zone ELC is not the only school to take on this rigorous task. Currently, three other schools—the East Boston Early Education Center, the Haynes Early Education Center, and the Baldwin Early Learning Center — have already been accredited, while 12 more schools that are a part of the Accreditation Pilot Project are all scheduled to have completed the process by 2011.



Misael Melendez listens along as he reads during class.





The bulldog is a prominent feature in the new gym at the Burke High School.



Rebecca Etienne and Kitwana Grant work in an art class at the Burke.



The high school features a new weight and exercise room.



Bruce Cramer works with Ludovico Gomes in the new media center at the high school.



Mayor Thomas M. Menino gave a speech at the Burke's grand re-opening event.

# Extreme Makeover

## Burke Edition

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

The Boston Public Schools is building a legacy of learning in Grove Hall with a new chapter of opportunity and state-of-the art technology at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School.

The Burke underwent a two-year, \$49.5 million overhaul and now features a new gymnasium, school library, cafeteria and kitchen, visual and performing arts wing, family center, and renovated classrooms, science and computer labs, and offices. The project, funded in part by the Massachusetts School Building Authority, also includes a new Grove Hall branch library and community center scheduled to open in 2009.

"Today, we reopen the doors to one of the centerpieces of the Grove Hall community, and a great symbol of a new era for the Boston Public Schools," said Mayor Thomas M. Menino at the grand re-opening event. "The City's investment in this innovative project — a public high school, library and community center all under one roof — is an investment in the people of this neighborhood, especially the young people who represent the future of Boston."

"Today is truly amazing," said Burke Headmaster Carol Bradley Moore. "It's the culmination of a dream of this community and the opportunity to provide students with the educational resources they deserve."

The high school first opened in 1934 and was named after the former superintendent of schools, who died in 1931. It initially catered to girls in grades 9-11, but became coeducational in 1972. After the school lost its accreditation in 1995, Menino delivered his 1996 State of the City address in the Burke auditorium, pledging to transform the school and the entire district. Thanks to a major investment in both the building and the



Teacher Erin McNeil works with Luis Ramos in French class at the Burke.

school's academic programs, the Burke regained accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) in 1998, becoming a promising symbol for a successful new era in the BPS. "The community was truly upset the school lost its accreditation, but it had become clear that was the only way there would be change," said Pamela Gray Bennett, director of the Commission on Public Secondary Schools for NEASC. "The mayor worked closely with the administration and systematically addressed the concerns."

"The Jeremiah Burke High School has always held a special place in my heart," said Menino. "I've always been impressed by the spirit of the students and staff. I'm thrilled to be standing in the modernized high school, with state-of-the-art facilities."

"This is really symbolic," said Dr. Elizabeth Reilinger, chairperson of the Boston School Committee. "The changes are reflective of the larger changes going on in the Boston Public Schools. It wasn't only a matter of bricks and mortar, but a matter of making sure the resources were in place to create a culture of high standards and accountability."

Serving as a gateway to social mobility and college access, the newly renovated high school is divided into three small learning communities with the following academic and career themes: Arts and Humanities, Information Technology, and Health and Human Services. The building features 244 new computers and SMART Boards in computer and science labs, qualifying the Burke as a computer magnet school.

"It's been extremely positive," said Moore, who is in her eighth year as headmaster. "The lightness and brightness and the 21st-century look of this magnificent building make a difference. Students are encouraged; they want to be here."

"The new building is giving us opportunities we never thought possible," said student Shakeeda Bartee. "We have the confidence to do well, academically and in sports."

The gymnasium now features a regulation basketball court with seating for 250, as well as dance and exercise spaces and a weight room. The former gymnasium has been transformed into arts wing, with a dance studio and classrooms for visual and performing arts.

"We're all in one space now," said visual arts instructor Kilola Maishya. "It's so convenient to be able to meet with each other and support one another in different ways."

The school library includes a main reading room, computer room, media center, career center and planning center for teachers. It also has direct access to the public library branch, which will offer a continuum of services beyond the traditional day. The community center will provide neighborhood residents office space, a meeting room and access to the athletic facilities when school is not in session.

"It still feels like home, but this building is just amazing," said 1992 grad Julienne Carty.



# It's 'Comcast'

## Madison Park benefits from partnership with Comcast

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Thanks to a \$5,000 grant from Comcast, students at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School will again have the opportunity to apply their academic and vocational skills in a real-world setting.

"This is a dream," said Headmaster Charles McAfee. "It's not about the money; it's about the partnership."

Comcast has partnered with Madison Park for at least 15 years. The grant funding assists students who are applying for candidacy in Comcast's co-operative program. Last year, four Madison Park students participated in one of Comcast's electronics or electricity programs.

"This partnership is good for the students in terms of dealing with customers and developing communication skills," said Doreen Harris, co-op placement coordinator at Madison Park.

Comcast Senior Manager of Government and Community Relations David Green presented the check and was joined by Susan Margiloff, human resources consultant at Comcast.

"I'm proud to be here on behalf of Comcast," said Green. "Madison Park is a shining example of the work being done to develop jobs in this city."

The Comcast-Madison Park co-op program is coordinated through the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), a public-private partnership that connects business, the Boston Public Schools, higher

education, government, labor, and community organizations to create innovative workforce and education solutions. PIC initiatives thrive when business and community needs overlap. The result is a win-win situation: businesses develop the workforce they need, and Boston youth gain access to career opportunities.

At Madison Park, Harris hopes to place more students in the Comcast program this year. The students are selected based on attendance and grades. Entering the program, they are already well-equipped with the skills they need to succeed.

"Before they step foot in the workplace, they're fully prepared with resume and interview training and dressing for success," explained Harris.

Generally, students begin with exploratory activities such as job shadowing, field trips, and even unpaid rotations through various departments. The paid co-op begins during the second semester of senior year and continues through high school graduation and, in many cases, into college. The goal is for the co-op experience to develop into a full-time career, which is the case for a number of Madison Park graduates now working for Comcast.

"That's the ultimate offer, but at the very least, they come out of the program more qualified and prepared for the workforce," said Harris.



Madison Park Headmaster Charles McAfee, left, accepts a check from Comcast Human Resources Consultant Susan Margiloff and Senior Manager of Government and Community Relations David Green.

## Boston students cover events via the Internet

BY JESSICA BENSON

With the latest technology in hand, Boston public high school students are preparing to become the next generation of television broadcasters.

Last year, Mayor Thomas M. Menino initiated a partnership with Atlanta-based Turner Broadcast Systems (TBS) to bring state-of-the-art technology and training to the Boston Public Schools.

The program began with students at the Media Communications Technology High School in West Roxbury last fall. TBS executives provided the district with several PlayON kits — portable equipment for producing high-quality coverage of sporting events and other activities.

"This new partnership will help our students understand the media in a new way," said Menino. "Our students have the opportunity to build the skills needed to pursue careers in the growing fields of broadcasting and communications

technology. This commitment from Turner Broadcasting puts Boston children on the cutting edge."

Media Communications Technology High became only the second high school in the country to use the technology. Since then, the program has expanded to include Madison Park Technical-Vocational High School and the English High School. Students serve as directors, producers, camera operators, announcers, and more.

"It's been impressive to see how excited students are to use the equipment and how quickly they become skilled in using it," said Christopher Horan, BPS Chief Communications Officer, who oversees of the program as part of BPS-TV.



**We certainly want to give students exposure to a lot of different college and career options. This is one more opportunity for them to learn new skills that may serve them well after high school.**

**Christopher Horan  
Chief Communications Officer**

Several dozen students have now been trained in PlayON, and student crews have filmed football, basketball, volleyball and soccer games, as well as student forums, arts performances and other events. Broadcasts are streamed on the Web at [www.bps-tv.org](http://www.bps-tv.org).

Superintendent Carol R. Johnson noted the added value to families and the community. "Our families lead busy lives and are not

always able to attend every baseball game or school play," said Johnson. "This student-produced programming gives parents and others in the community a chance to see — and sometimes to enjoy again — the wonderful activities that take place during and after the school day."

During the summer, BPS-TV Producer/Director Seth Pfeiffer conducted a citywide work/study program to train more students in PlayON.

"We've made a great start," Horan said. "We look forward to seeing it grow."

The partnership has evolved into a long-term relationship between the City of Boston and Turner Broadcasting. TBS now funds an annual \$5,000 college scholarship for a BPS graduate with interest and skill in broadcasting and media technology. Last spring, Menino presented the first scholarship to Boston Latin Academy graduate Connie Y. Chan to help her pursue studies in Graphic Design and Media Communications at Simmons College.

"We certainly want to give students exposure to a lot of different college and career options," Horan said. "This is one more opportunity for them to learn new skills that may serve them well after high school."



# Civic action



Civics in Action seniors, from left, Jasmine Cazeau, Ashton Bennett, and Christian Jamison at work at the English High School.

## Pilot course inspires students at English High, Madison Park

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Yes we can. The motto so eloquently established by President-elect Barack Obama, rings true in Efrain Toledano's Civics in Action class at the English High School.

"It's rewarding to see these kids getting involved and starting to care about making a change," said Toledano.

The Civics in Action pilot course was introduced this year as a means of empowering youth with the knowledge, resources and tools to be able to understand their rights and responsibilities as members of a society. The curriculum examines the purpose and structure of U.S. government, politics and legal system. Both English High and Madison Park Technical Vocational High School are piloting the course.

"The goal is to build a community of individuals who have the background knowledge and the ability to make a difference, and realize the potential of living in this country," said Shannon Snow, Civics in Action teacher at Madison Park.

The concept for the course was developed by the Hyde Square Task Force (HSTF) in Jamaica Plain and inspired by a guest editorial written in 2003 by HSTF youth leader Maria Padilla that was published in the *Boston Globe*. Mayor Thomas M. Menino was also involved in the early discussions. In the fall of 2007, HSTF Youth Community Organizers attended a hearing with the Boston City Council to explore the possibility of adding civics as a required class in all BPS high schools. Several HSTF youth testified about their positive experiences and the need for

increased civic engagement of young adults through a mandatory civics curriculum. Their efforts were rewarded this year, with four sections of the class being offered to seniors at the two participating high schools.

In the first semester of the pilot course, content focused largely on the electoral process. At English High, students held their own election for Civics in Action class president, electing senior Jonathan Rivera. Rivera, who last summer interned at the



**Efrain Toledano**

John Adams Courthouse, hopes to pursue a career in law or criminal justice.

The students also actively followed the U.S. presidential election, gathering at City Year headquarters on Nov. 4 to watch as

Obama was elected the country's 44th president.

At Madison Park, students held a voter registration drive, which was jointly coordinated with the League of Women Voters. Approximately 50 students registered to vote. Students also held a mock election through the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, which addressed questions about war, health care and education. The votes were included in a nationwide tally of youth voters.

Next semester, coursework will focus largely on the judicial system. Toledano plans to bring his students on a field trip to witness a mock-trial. Students will also debate a Supreme Court case, as well as more current issues such as the legalization of marijuana and gay marriage.

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*BPS students discuss the election of Barack Obama as president of the U.S.*

**Hilda Baez, Madison Park**

"Obama promises a lot of changes and what I care about is what he can do for the U.S. I don't care about the ethnicity or race. I like to see and hear that change is going to be made, that he does what he promised."

**Jathniel Cardona, English High**

"This election showed me that we (the people) could make big changes in history if we get involved. It showed me that people could still make a big difference in today's society."

**Lourtchina Limage, Madison Park**

"Obama believed he could make a change and he fought for it. Now his dream has

become a reality. I hope that this election will be a start of a big change for many people in America and the world."

**Jason Marin, Madison Park**

"From the beginning I was more interested in this election than any one before. At first it was only because Obama was a black candidate. After learning more about the issues and the candidate's positions, I felt like I was a more educated voter."

**Chris Oller, Madison Park**

"Obama gives me hope. Now that we have a black president, I believe that we could also have a Spanish president. I wouldn't mind being president one day."

## Lilla Frederick students kept close eye on presidential election

Through a curriculum developed with the Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library, Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School seventh- and eighth-graders kept a watchful eye on the presidential election this past fall. Students tracked candidates on a map; debated issues; analyzed the key battleground states for the electoral college; and wrote letters to themselves, which they will open when they turn 18.

Additionally, MassVOTE provided two trainings to students on the importance of voting and on the voter registration process. Students were given voter registration cards to take home to their households, and also visited the Grove Hall Shopping Center on two occasions to advocate for the importance of voting.





# U.S. Secretary of Education visits Charlestown High

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

On a mission to equip students with the tools they need to aspire to and succeed in college, U.S. Secretary of Education Dr. Margaret Spellings visited with students at Charlestown High School.

Joined by Massachusetts Commissioner of Education Dr. Mitchell Chester, Superintendent Dr. Carol Johnson and Headmaster Margaret Bledsoe, Spellings toured the school, taking in forensics and Arabic lessons.

"I was very impressed with the kind of rigor here, and I hope that's something you take advantage of," Spellings told students at an assembly. "The opportunity to take Arabic at the high school level is rare; it's one of the few programs in the country."

During her tenure, Spellings has been a leader in reform to make education more innovative and responsive. She is coordinating the effort to pass a

nationwide initiative that would strengthen math and science instruction and encourage high schools to offer more rigorous and advanced coursework. She has worked to implement grants that are providing millions of dollars to low-income students who major in math, science or critical foreign languages. She has also proposed a landmark plan for higher education that would improve accessibility, affordability and accountability.

While in Charlestown, Spellings presented on the U.S. Department of Education's new interactive Web site, [www.college.gov](http://www.college.gov), which offers inspirational, real-life stories to motivate and encourage young people to go to college. It also provides information about preparing, planning and paying for college.

Spellings' presentation aligned with one of Johnson's major initiatives, Graduation for All. Launched in 2007, it

aims to ensure that every student graduates from high school with the skills and knowledge to succeed in college or other post-secondary education.

Another reason Spellings came to Charlestown is that Steven Berbico, who teaches Arabic, U.S. and world history and AP Government and Politics at the school, has been appointed to a Teaching Ambassador Fellowship (TAF) position with the U.S. Department of Education.

Boston Community Leadership Academy history and social studies teacher James Liou was also selected. The newly created fellowships offer highly motivated, innovative public school teachers the opportunity to contribute their knowledge and experience to the national dialogue on public education. The Classroom Fellows will remain in their classrooms and participate in the program through part-time projects throughout this school year.



U.S. Secretary of Education Dr. Margaret Spellings visits with student Ahmed Ali at Charlestown High during Steven Berbico's Arabic class.

## Superintendent has big plans for Boston Schools

**SUPERINTENDENT:** from Page 1

and to strengthen operations to support the academic priorities of the district.

"Clearly, Carol Johnson has demonstrated that she was the right choice to lead the Boston Public Schools," said School Committee Chair Dr. Elizabeth

Reilinger. "We are most impressed with her energy, passion and bold academic vision. During her first year, she worked tirelessly to reach out to all sectors of the community and establish strong relationships with students, educators, families and the community. She also proposed thoughtful, creative, comprehensive strategies to improve the academic performance of all students throughout the city and to ensure that our young people graduate from high school with the tools to succeed."

More recently, Johnson presented Pathways to Excellence, a set of proposals to strengthen and consolidate the BPS in order to carry out the district's ambitious academic agenda. Adopted by the Boston School Committee in November, Pathways

to Excellence includes a variety of strategies to ensure high-quality schools throughout the city that prepare all children for academic and career success.

Johnson has a wealth of experience in public education as a teacher, principal, and administrator. She previously served as superintendent of the Memphis City Schools in Memphis, Tenn. During her tenure, she successfully removed more than 100 schools from the state's No Child Left Behind "high priority" list, reducing the number of schools on the list by more than half. In 2007, the Tennessee Parent Teacher Association named Johnson Tennessee Superintendent of the Year. Prior to her appointment in Memphis in 2003, Johnson had



**Dr. Carol R. Johnson**

been superintendent of Minneapolis Public Schools, where she was named Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.

Johnson serves as chair-elect of the board of directors for the Council of the Great City Schools, and on the Spencer Foundation Board, the Harvard University Urban Superintendents' Advisory Board, and she has served on the College Board.

## Sybertz receives lasting praise for 30-year career

**SYBERTZ:** from Page 16

on to play in the NFL, one with great distinction. Tackle Ron Stone played in the NFL for 13 years, four times being picked for the Pro Bowl.

Sybertz remembers he had to coax Stone onto the football field, and he didn't play until his junior year.

"I harassed him until he came out," Sybertz said. "I think he came out just to get the crazy guy off his back."

Stone starred at Boston College before going to the NFL, where he played for the Dallas Cowboys, the New York Giants, the San Francisco 49ers and the Oakland Raiders.

When Stone returned from California to be inducted into the Boston College Athletic Hall of Fame, he invited Sybertz to share the weekend with him.

"He always made it a point to thank me for everything I did for him," said Sybertz.

Duke Pettitjohn starred at Syracuse and went on to play for the Jacksonville Jaguars; he now plays in the Arena Football League.

But Sybertz is just as happy about the former players who have gone on to success in other fields. Take Patrice Oneal, for instance, a teammate of Pettitjohn's who is a successful comedian and has appeared on late-night TV.

"It does my heart good that so many of

our kids do well," he said. "It overwhelms me."

He also paid tribute to two of his longtime football assistants: John Conley was also the school's baseball coach until 2001, when Sybertz took over, and Kevin Gadson is now the very successful head football coach at O'Bryant High.

When Sybertz had the horses, his teams could play with anyone. In 1995, West Roxbury played perennial Catholic Conference Division I power BC High and whipped the Eagles, 33-12.

He said kids have changed through the years but his relationship with them is one thing that never changed.

"Any time you coach you love your kids," he said. "I loved them like they were on my own. They're on my side. I'm on their side."

"It has always been about the kids with Leo," said Ken Still, director of athletics for the Boston Public Schools.

While he was teaching his players football fundamentals, he was also teaching them fundamentals of life, which is why so many of them turned out to honor him.

"There are a lot of lessons to be learned from football," he said. "The importance of hard work and perseverance. You only get out of it what you put in. And the most important of all: be the best you can be and have some fun out there."



# AROUND

## Boston's

# SCHOOLS

### Elementary/ Early Childhood and K-8 Schools

#### Emerson Elementary

Students participated in a special art class, when renowned Israeli artist Hanoeh Piven visited the school to conduct a hands-on workshop. Piven showed the students how to create portraits and other three-dimensional works using everyday objects. Piven's colorful and witty collage portraits have appeared throughout the last 14 years on both sides of the Atlantic — in most major American magazines and newspapers and in many European publications. Since 1999, Piven has been conducting Drawing with Objects workshops for children and adults in many countries.

#### Nathan Hale Elementary

Two performers from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus — Brandon of Clown Alley and Katya, who does a hand-balancing act — visited the Nathan Hale Elementary School to congratulate students on winning the annual ReadBoston/Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Read-a-Thon. The competition is held every year for elementary and early childhood students in Boston Public Schools as a way to motivate students to read at home. Students must read for at least 20 minutes each night and track their reading for two weeks. The school with the highest rate of student participation wins. With 80 percent of students completing the challenge, the Nathan Hale was this year's winning school. Students also received free tickets to the circus.

#### Joseph P. Manning Elementary

OfficeMax partnered with Adopt-A-Classroom to

identify schools across the country and recognize extraordinary teachers for their dedication and innovative approach to education. Teachers selected were honored with a gift donation from OfficeMax for their classrooms valued at more than \$1,000, which includes a swivel chair and box of classroom supplies. Bonnie Paton, a first-grade special education teacher at the Manning, was chosen as one of these select teachers.

#### James Otis Elementary

The Otis outdoor classroom is in its final stages. Students from the Pulse Program at Boston College are a wonderful help in the lower grades. The Otis School faculty has voted to partner with the Harvard University Graduate School of Education's Pre-K to 3 initiative which looks to improve the family school partnership.

Preparations for the spring production of *High School Musical* are under way. The school also wrapped up a very successful Technology Goes Home Program through which parents learn basic computer skills and have the chance to purchase a brand new computer for less than \$100. The science club is doing amazing projects with robotics and Lego engineering. The Otis Family School also has 20 families improving their English skills for two hours a day every day after school.

#### Winthrop Elementary

On Nov. 13, students and parents at the Winthrop School reported to school for a special event designed to help prepare them for a bright future. Thinking About the Future offered workshops to help children and adults prepare for college, career success, and financial stability. Speakers from area colleges, corporations, public agencies, community-based organizations and other partners led sessions about a variety of topics, including: getting ready for college;

managing your money; GED programs; starting your own business; and raising financially responsible children. The first 50 families to arrive received a copy of "We Beat the Street," a true story about three young men from Newark who became doctors.

#### Young Achievers School

Young Achievers School inaugurated its new Arts Annex with a ribbon-cutting event. About 75 people attended, including parents, students, teachers, staff and city officials, to formally open the new classrooms for the school's music and visual arts programs. The school will lease the space from a neighboring church for one year.

### High Schools and Special Programs

#### Boston Day and Evening Academy

Boston Day and Evening Academy celebrated its fourth graduation ceremony of 2008 by honoring 21 new graduates (bringing this year's total to 83), and welcoming them to the ranks of BDEA alumni. In addition to passing MCAS, all grads also meet 600 benchmarks, and research and present Capstone projects as part of demonstrating competency. This year, all students have also benefited from the school's first Enrichment Program, which features painter and sculptor Nora Valdez, as well as a photographer, choreographer, a Spoken Word coach, and cooking classes taught by organic chef and cookbook author Didi Emmons.

#### Boston Latin School

In its annual ranking of the 100 Best High Schools in America, *U.S. News & World Report* magazine recognized Boston Latin School as one of the

best in the country. The study, which examines a variety of factors about a school's performance and ability to prepare students for college, ranks BLS No. 27 out of more than 21,000 high schools nationwide.

#### Carter Development Center

The William E. Carter School won a national award for its innovative Sensory Garden and Outdoor Classroom. The American Horticultural Therapy Association recognized the garden with the Therapeutic Garden Design Award at its national conference in Lexington, Ky. Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Boston Public Schools officials joined families and supporters of the school to dedicate the 16,450-square-foot garden. It was designed to create sensory appeal and learning motivation for students who are educationally challenged by severe cognitive and developmental disabilities. The garden, funded through public and private sources, features wheelchair-accessible pathways through tall grass, plants and flowers, leading to interactive installations, swings, and water features.

#### Community Academy

On Nov. 14, Community Academy held the first in a series of roundtable discussions focusing on creating a systems approach to removing the barriers to learning. Specialists from an array of organizations sat on a panel that was moderated by Dr. Alice Frye, a scientist from Wellesley Centers for Women who works with Boston schools to research coping mechanisms in African-American youth. The discussion was an overwhelming success, focusing on topics from teen parenting to unemployment to teacher training. Parents, students, and community members were an integral part of the roundtable and they posed a series challenging questions to the panel.

## Students are Adams' chief concern

BY JESSICA BENSON

She started out as a special education teacher, working with learning-disabled children. They were "tough" students. Still, she loved seeing their eyes light up with excitement when they learned something new.

Now one of the top administrators in Boston Public Schools, Barbara Adams says she still loves witnessing those magical moments in the classroom.

"That's where the action is," she said. "That's why I find this still exciting after all these years."

Last spring, Adams was named the chief academic officer for the BPS, where she is overseeing employees involved with curriculum and professional development. She was recruited for the position from the West Coast by Superintendent Dr. Carol Johnson.

"The superintendent just really cares for people and cares for kids," Adams said. "She's very passionate and convincing."

To take the job, Adams had to move from her home in California, where her husband still lives while the couple waits for the real estate market to improve so they can either sell or lease their home. And she had to move even further away from the place where she was raised — Maui, Hawaii.

Adams is the daughter of immigrants from the Philippines who worked on plantations in Hawaii. When she grew up, she left home to attend Loyola University in Chicago.



Barbara Adams

inspiration in the students who kept coming to school and trying to do well, despite all the odds against them.

Through those years, Adams worked her way up the ranks, going from teacher to the principal of a small school, and eventually into a central office position. When she was promoted, she found she missed being around the students.

She still tries to make time for visiting schools so she can be around children again.

"I really enjoy that part of it," she said. "I need to do far more of it."

Adams first came to Boston in 2003 to work on her doctorate at Harvard University. She is currently working on

her dissertation, which is about how principals and teachers handle leadership within their schools.

She is living in the heart of the city, and because she left her car at home, is learning her way around on the T. Though she enjoys being closer to her grown daughter, who lives in New York City, Adams admits that the climate does take some getting used to.

"I can't believe it can get this cold," she said. Despite the weather, Adams is happy in her new home. "Boston's a great city to live in," she says.

It's also a great place to be an educator, according to Adams. She's found an unusual amount of support for the school system among the community, with various foundations and business leaders taking an active role in helping the district.

"The commitment of this community is actually quite amazing to me. It's unlike any other, really, that I've seen," she said. "You've got a community that tries very hard to wrap its arms around schools."

Yet there are still many challenges facing Adams in her new position. She's determined to make gains in literacy, ensuring that all children are reading by the third grade. She also wants to see more English language learners performing at the highest levels.

"We are so fortunate to have Barbara Adams leading our academic team," said Dr. Johnson. "I am confident she will help take us to the next level of excellence."

"We are so fortunate to have Barbara Adams leading our academic team," said Dr. Johnson. "I am confident she will help take us to the next level of excellence."



Boston **DIRECTORY** School

Early Learning Centers

**Baldwin Early Learning Center**

Graciela Hopkins, Principal  
121 Corey Road, Brighton 02135  
617-635-8409

**East Boston Early Education Center**

Olga Frechon, Principal  
135 Gove Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-6456

**East Zone Early Learning Center**

Corrinna Horton, Principal  
370 Columbia Road, Dorchester 02125  
617-635-8604

**Ellison/Parks Early Education School**

Nora Toney, Principal  
108 Babson Street, Mattapan 02126  
617-635-7680

**Haynes Early Education Center**

Valerie Gumes, Principal  
263 Blue Hill Avenue, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-6446

**West Zone Early Learning Center**

Eunice da Silva Fernandes, Principal  
200 Heath Street, Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-8275

Elementary Schools

**Adams Elementary School**

Margarita Ruiz, Principal  
165 Webster Street, E. Boston 02128  
617-635-8383

**Agassiz Elementary School**

Maria Cordon, Principal  
20 Child Street, Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-8198

**Alighieri Elementary School**

Anthony Valdez, Principal  
37 Gove Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-8529

**Bates Elementary School**

Kelly Hung, Principal  
426 Beech Street, Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8064

**Beethoven Elementary School**

Eileen Nash, Principal  
5125 Washington St., W.Roxbury 02132  
617-635-8149

**Blackstone Elementary School**

Mildred Ruiz-Allen, Principal  
380 Shawmut Avenue, Boston 02118  
617-635-8471

**Bradley Elementary School**

Anne Kelly, Principal  
110 Beachview Road, E. Boston 02128  
617-635-8422

**Channing Elementary School**

Deborah Dancy, Principal  
35 Sunnyside Street, Hyde Park 02136  
617-635-8722

**Chittick Elementary School**

Michelle Burnett-Herndon, Principal  
154 Ruskindale Road, Mattapan 02126  
617-635-8652

**Clap Elementary School**

Mary Tormey-Hamilton, Principal  
35 Harvest Street, Dorchester 02125  
617-635-8672

**Condon Elementary School**

Ann Garofalo, Principal  
200 D Street, South Boston 02127  
617-635-8608

**Conley Elementary School**

Kathleen Armstrong, Principal  
450 Poplar Street, Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8099

**Dever Elementary School**

Vivian Swoboda, Principal  
325 Mt. Vernon St., Dorchester 02125  
617-635-8694

**Dickerman Elementary School**

Jessica Bolt, Principal  
206 Magnolia Street, Dorchester 02121  
617-635-8253

**Ellis Elementary School**

Carlos Gibb, Principal  
302 Walnut Avenue, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8257

**Emerson Elementary School**

C. Sura O'Mard-Gentle, Principal  
6 Shirley Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8507

**Everett Elementary School**

Nicole Mack, Principal  
71 Pleasant Street, Dorchester 02125  
617-635-8779

**Farragut Elementary School**

Rosemary Harmon, Principal  
10 Fenwood Road, Boston 02115  
617-635-8450

**Fifield Elementary School**

Craig Lankhorst, Principal  
25 Dunbar Avenue, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8618

**Gardner Pilot Academy**

Erica Herman, Principal  
30 Athol Street, Allston 02134  
617-635-8365

**Garfield Elementary School**

Louise Kuhlman, Principal  
95 Beechcroft Street, Brighton 02135  
617-635-8351

**Elihu Greenwood Elementary School**

Ida Weldon, Principal  
612 Metropolitan Ave., Hyde Park 02136  
617-635-8665

**Grew Elementary School**

Ronald Jackson, Principal  
40 Gordon Avenue, Hyde Park 02136  
617-635-8715

**Guild Elementary School**

Simon Ho, Principal  
195 Leyden Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-8523

**Hale Elementary School**

Sandra Mitchell-Woods, Principal  
51 Cedar Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8205

**Haley Elementary School**

Ross Wilson, Principal  
570 American Legion Highway,  
Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8169

**Hamilton Elementary School**

Yolanda Burnett, Principal  
198 Strathmore Road, Brighton 02135  
617-635-8388

**Harvard/Kent Elementary School**

Richard Martin, Principal  
50 Bunker Hill St., Charlestown 02129  
617-635-8358

**Hennigan Elementary School**

Eleanor Kearse-Perry, Principal  
200 Heath Street, Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-8264

**Higginson Elementary School**

Joy Salesman-Oliver, Principal  
160 Harrishof Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8247

**Holland Elementary School**

Michele O'Connell, Principal  
85 Olney Street, Dorchester 02121  
617-635-8832

**Holmes Elementary School**

Catherine Constant, Principal  
40 School Street, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8681

**John F. Kennedy Elementary School**

Eileen Morales, Principal  
7 Bolster Street, Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-8127

**P.J. Kennedy Elementary School**

Marice Diakite, Principal  
343 Saratoga St., East Boston 02128  
617-635-8466

**Kenny Elementary School**

Suzanne Federspiel, Principal  
19 Oakton Avenue, Dorchester 02122  
617-635-8789

**Lee Academy**

Genteen Lacet Jean-Michel, Principal  
155 Talbot Avenue, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-6619

**Lee Elementary School**

Kimberly E. Curtis, Principal  
155 Talbot Avenue, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8687

**Manning Elementary School**

Sara Stone, Acting Principal  
130 Louders Lane, Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-8102

**Marshall Elementary School**

Teresa Harvey-Jackson, Principal  
35 Westville Street, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8810

**Mason Elementary School**

Harolyn Bowden, Principal  
150 Norfolk Avenue, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8405

**Mather Elementary School**

Emily Cox, Principal  
1 Parish Street, Dorchester 02122  
617-635-8757

**Mattahunt Elementary School**

Gloria Woods, Principal  
100 Hebron Street, Mattapan 02126  
617-635-8792

**McKinley Elementary School**

Christine Stella, Program Director  
90 Warren Avenue, Boston 02116  
617-635-9978

**Mendell Elementary School**

Karen Cahill, Principal  
164 School Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8234

**Mozart Elementary School**

James Brewer, Principal  
236 Beech Street, Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8082

**O'Donnell Elementary School**

Robert Martin, Principal  
33 Trenton Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-845

**O'Hearn Elementary School**

William Henderson, Principal  
1669 Dorchester Ave., Dorchester 02122  
617-635-8725

**Ohrenberger Elementary School**

Stephen Zrike, Jr., Principal  
175 West Boundary Road,  
West Roxbury 02132  
617-635-8157

**Otis Elementary School**

Leo Flanagan, Jr., Principal  
218 Marion Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-8372

**Perkins Elementary School**

Barney Brawer, Principal  
50 Burke Street, South Boston 02127  
617-635-8601

**Philbrick Elementary School**

Laurie Carr, Acting Principal  
40 Philbrick Street, Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8069

**Quincy Elementary School**

Suzanne Lee, Principal  
885 Washington Street, Boston 02111  
617-635-8497

**Russell Elementary School**

Tamara Blake, Principal  
750 Columbia Road, Dorchester 02125  
617-635-8803

**Shaw Elementary School**

Maudlin Wright, Principal  
429 Norfolk Street, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8719

**Stone Elementary School**

Patricia Niles-Randolph, Principal  
22 Regina Road, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8773

**Sumner Elementary School**

Lourdes Santiago, Principal  
15 Basile Street, Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8131

**Taylor Elementary School**

Elie Jean-Louis, Principal  
1060 Morton Street, Mattapan 02126  
617-635-8731

**Trotter Elementary School**

Mairead Nolan, Principal  
135 Humboldt Ave., Dorchester 02121  
617-635-8225

**Tynan Elementary School**

Carlene Shavis, Principal  
650 E. Fourth Street, S. Boston 02127  
617-635-8641

**Winship Elementary School**

Antonio Barbosa, Principal  
54 Dighton Street, Brighton 02135  
617-635-8399

**Winthrop Elementary School**

Emily Shamieh, Principal  
35 Brookford Street, Dorchester 02125  
617-635-8379

K-12 Schools

**Carter Development Center**

Marianne Kopaczynski, Principal  
396 Northampton St., Boston 02118  
617-635-9832

**Counseling & Intervention Center**

Stephen Squillante, Program Director  
515 Hyde Park Ave., Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8123

**Horace Mann School for the Deaf**

Jeremiah Ford, Principal  
40 Armington Street, Allston 02134  
617-635-8534

**McKinley Schools**

Bonnie Miller, Headmaster  
90 Warren Avenue, Boston 02116  
617-635-9976

K-8 Schools

**Curley K-8 School**

Jeffrey Slater, Co-Principal (Upper)  
Mirna Vega-Wilson, Co-Principal (Lower)  
493 Centre St., Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-8176

**Eliot K-8 School**

Traci Walker Griffith, Principal  
16 Charter Street, Boston 02113  
617-635-8545

**Sarah Greenwood K-8 School**

Isabel Mendez, Principal  
189 Glenway Street, Dorchester 02121  
617-635-8710

**Hernández K-8 School**

Margarita Muñoz, Principal  
61 School Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8187

**Hurley K-8 School**

Marjorie Soto, Principal  
70 Worcester Street, Boston 02118  
617-635-8489



Boston **DIRECTORY** School

**Jackson/Mann K-8 School**

Joanne Russell, Principal  
40 Armington Street, Allston 02134  
617-635-8532

**Kilmer K-8 School**

Jerome Doherty, Principal  
35 Baker St. (grade K-3)  
140 Russett Road (grade 4-7)  
West Roxbury 02132  
617-635-8060/ 617-635-6855

**Lyndon K-8 School**

Sherry Brooks-Roberts and Kate Johnson, Management Team  
20 Mt. Vernon St., W. Roxbury 02132  
617-635-6824

**Lyon K-8 School**

Deborah Rooney, Principal  
50 Beechcroft Street, Brighton 02135  
617-635-7945

**McKay K-8 School**

Marco Curnen, Principal  
122 Cottage Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-8510

**Mission Hill K-8 School**

Ayla Gavins, Principal  
67 Alleghany Street, Roxbury 02120  
617-635-6384

**Murphy K-8 School**

Vera Johnson, Principal  
1 Worrell Street, Dorchester 02122  
617-635-8781

**Orchard Gardens K-8 School**

Norman Townsend, Principal  
906 Albany Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-1660

**Perry K-8 School**

Mary Jane Dotson, Principal  
745 E. Seventh St., S. Boston 02127  
617-635-8840

**Roosevelt K-8 School**

Emily Glasgow, Principal  
30 Millstone Road (grade K1-1)  
95 Needham Road (grade 2-8)  
Hyde Park 02136 617-635-8676

**Tobin K-8 School**

Cheryl Watson-Harris, Principal  
40 Smith Street, Roxbury 02120  
617-635-8393

**Warren/Prescott K-8 School**

Domenic Amara, Principal  
50 School Street, Charlestown 02129  
617-635-8346

**Young Achievers Science & Math K-8 School**

Virginia Chalmers, Principal  
25 Walk Hill St., Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-6804

Middle Schools

**Dearborn Middle School**

Carroll Blake, Acting Principal  
35 Greenville Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8412

**Edison Middle School**

Mary Driscoll, Principal  
60 Glenmont Road, Brighton 02135  
617-635-8436

**Edwards Middle School**

Jeffrey Riley, Principal  
28 Walker Street, Charlestown 02129  
617-635-8516

**Frederick Pilot Middle School**

Debra Socia, Principal  
270 Columbia Road, Dorchester 02121  
617-635-1650

**Gavin Middle School**

Alexander Mathews, Principal  
215 Dorchester St., S. Boston 02127  
617-635-8817

**Harbor School**

Amy Marx, Principal  
11 Charles St., Dorchester 02122  
617-635-6365

**Irving Middle School**

James Watson, Principal  
105 Cummins Highway, Roslindale 02131  
617-635-8072

**King Middle School**

Ruby Ababio-Fernandez, Principal  
100 Maxwell Ave., Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8212

**Lewenberg Middle School**

Andy Tuite, Principal  
20 Outlook Road, Mattapan 02126  
617-635-8623

**Lewis Middle School**

Ronald Spratling, Principal  
131 Walnut Avenue, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8137

**McCormack Middle School**

DaQuall Graham, Principal  
315 Mt. Vernon St., Dorchester 02125  
617-635-8657

**McKinley Middle School**

Joseph Brown, Program Director  
50 St. Mary Street, Boston 02215  
617-635-9853

**Middle School Academy**

Yvonne Vest, Program Director  
2 McLellan Street, Dorchester 02121  
617-635-1534

**Mildred Ave. Middle School**

Kris Taylor, Principal  
5 Mildred Avenue, Mattapan 02126  
617-635-1642

**Rogers Middle School**

Andrew Bott, Principal  
15 Everett Street, Hyde Park 02136  
617-635-8700

**Timilty Middle School**

Valeria Lowe-Barehmi, Principal  
205 Roxbury Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-8109

**Umana Middle School Academy**

José Salgado, Principal  
312 Border Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-8481

Investing in students



Emerson School student Janice Alves hugs David Ware of Fidelity Investments, which donated school supplies to Emerson students.

**Wilson Middle School**

Claudette Mulligan-Gates, Principal  
18 Croftland Ave., Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8827

Grade 6-12 Schools

**Boston Latin Academy**

Maria Garcia-Aaronson, Headmaster  
205 Townsend St., Dorchester 02121  
617-635-9957

**Boston Latin School**

Lynne Mooney Teta, Headmaster  
78 Avenue Louis Pasteur, Boston 02115  
617-635-8895

**O'Bryant School of Math & Science**

Joel Stembridge, Headmaster  
55 Malcolm X Blvd., Roxbury 02120  
617-635-9932

**Quincy Upper School**

Bak Fun Wong, Headmaster  
20 Church St (grade 6)  
900 Washington St. (grade 7-8)  
152 Arlington St. (grade 9-12)  
Boston 02116  
617-635-8940

High Schools

**Academy of Public Service**

Rudolph Weekes, Headmaster  
9 Peacevale Road, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-8910

**Another Course to College**

Rachel Skerritt, Headmaster  
20 Warren Street, Brighton 02135  
617-635-8865

**Boston Adult Technical Academy**

Sheila Azores, Headmaster  
75 Malcolm X Blvd., Roxbury 02120  
617-635-1542

**Boston Arts Academy**

Linda Nathan, Co-Headmaster  
Carmen Torres, Co-Headmaster  
174 Ipswich St., Boston 02215  
617-635-6470

**Boston Community Leadership Academy**

Nicole Bahnam, Headmaster  
20 Warren Street, Brighton 02135  
617-635-8937

**Boston Day & Evening Academy**

Beatriz Zapater, Co-Headmaster  
Caren Cowan, Co-Headmaster  
20 Kearsarge Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-6789

**Boston International High School**

Oscar Santos, Headmaster  
25 Glen Road, Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-9373

**Brighton High School**

Toby Romer, Headmaster  
25 Warren Street, Brighton 02135  
617-635-9873

**Brook Farm Business & Service Career Academy**

Edmund Donnelly, Headmaster  
1205 V.F.W. Parkway, W.Roxbury 02132  
617-635-6956

**Burke High School**

Carol Bradley Moore, Headmaster  
60 Washington St., Dorchester 02121  
617-635-9837

**Charlestown High School**

Margaret Ranny Bledsoe, Headmaster  
240 Medford St., Charlestown 02129  
617-635-9914

**Community Academy**

Linda McIntyre, Headmaster  
76 Shirley Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-7734

**Community Academy of Science and Health**

Linda Cabral, Headmaster  
655 Metropolitan Ave., Hyde Park 02136  
617-635-8950

**Community Transition School**

Habiba Davis, Director  
7 Palmer Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-1295

**East Boston High School**

Michael Rubin, Headmaster  
86 White Street, East Boston 02128  
617-635-9896

**Engineering School**

Mweusi Willingham, Headmaster  
655 Metropolitan Ave., Hyde Park 02136  
617-635-6425

**English High School**

Jose Duarte, Headmaster  
144 McBride St., Jamaica Plain 02130  
617-635-8979

**Excel High School**

Ligia Noriega, Headmaster  
95 G St., 2nd floor, S. Boston 02127  
617-635-9870

**Fenway High School**

Peggy Kemp, Headmaster  
174 Ipswich Street, Boston 02215  
617-635-9911

**Greater Egleston Community High**

Julie Coles, Headmaster  
80 School Street, Roxbury 02119  
617-635-6429

**Health Careers Academy**

Caren Walker, Headmaster  
110 The Fenway, Boston 02115  
617-373-8576

**Madison Park High School**

Charles McAfee, Headmaster  
75 Malcolm X Blvd, Roxbury 02120  
617-635-8970

**McKinley Preparatory High School**

Joseph Brown, Program Director  
97 Peterborough Street, Boston 02215  
617-635-9907

**McKinley South End Academy**

Christine Stella, Program Director  
90 Warren Avenue, Boston 02116  
617-635-9976

**Media Communications Technology High School**

Sung-Joon Pai, Headmaster  
1205 V.F.W. Parkway, W. Roxbury 02132  
617-635-8935

**Monument High School**

Nadia Cyprien, Acting Headmaster  
95 G St., 1st floor, South Boston 02127  
617-635-9865

**New Mission High School**

Naia L. Wilson, Headmaster  
67 Alleghany Street, Roxbury 02120  
617-635-6437

**Noonan Business Academy**

Kwesi Moody, Headmaster  
9 Peacevale Road, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-9730

**Odyssey High School**

Virginia Ordway-Macrina, Headmaster  
95 G St., 3rd floor, S. Boston 02127  
617-635-9860

**Parkway Academy of Technology and Health**

Pamela Hilton, Headmaster  
1205 V.F.W. Parkway, W.Roxbury 02132  
617-635-6732

**Snowden International School**

Gloria Coulter, Headmaster  
150 Newbury Street, Boston 02116  
617-635-9989

**Social Justice Academy**

Winston Cox, Headmaster  
655 Metropolitan Ave., Hyde Park 02136  
617-635-6960

**TechBoston Academy**

Mary Skipper, Chief Education Officer  
9 Peacevale Road, Dorchester 02124  
617-635-1615

**Urban Science Academy**

Rasheed Hakim Meadows, Headmaster  
1205 V.F.W. Parkway, W.Roxbury 02132  
617-635-8930



# SPORTS

THE BOSTON EDUCATOR

## Coach wins lasting praise

### Sybertz honored for 30-year career marked by excellence

BY RICH FAHEY

Leo Sybertz was anxious to get his message out to the many friends, former students, players, teaching colleagues and administrators who turned out to honor him at the halftime of the Latin Academy-West Roxbury High football game at White Stadium.

"I never got a chance to speak on the mike that day. If I had, this is what I would have said. 'I love you all, I thank you all and may the good Lord bless you all.'"

Sybertz has always measured his success as a football coach not in the number of players he sent to college programs or the NFL, but by the number of future cops, firemen, and teachers who came through the program.

He started his coaching career at Roslindale High and then took over the football program at West Roxbury when the school opened

in 1976.

The former West Roxbury High teacher spent 31 years as the school's football coach. He also coached baseball, first as assistant and then as head coach for eight years.

Sybertz and his teams set standards for excellence during his tenure as football coach at the school, including: 13 league championships; 10 Super Bowl appearances, with five victories; undefeated teams in 1983, 1987, 1988 and 1995; and winning streaks of 22 games and 16 games (twice). He won 202 games along the way, all despite having only two paid assistant coaches.

At the White Stadium ceremonies, Sybertz received citations from the School Committee, the Governor's Council, and the Boston City Council, and there was an award presentation from the BPS athletic department.

During Sybertz's long tenure, two teams stood out

from the rest, one despite its lack of success.

In 1977, the second year of the school's existence, he had a squad of 21-22 players that was small in stature and not very fast. The team finished 1-9, but Sybertz said the group got all it could out of its talent and then some.

"We gave up only 12 points per game," he said. "We didn't have athletes, but the kids played their hearts out every game and everyone showed up to practice on Monday. We lost to a good Malden Catholic team 12-8 in a game we should have won and were beaten 8-0 on Thanksgiving by Hyde Park, a team that was 40 points better than us."

He also praised the 1983 undefeated team, which he said wasn't the most talented, but came to play every week.

Two of his players have gone

See SYBERTZ Page 12



Officials Chris Clemente, Gerry Morrissey, Angelo Scaccia and Ed Shanahan wish Leo Sybertz well at the ceremony honoring him. PHOTO: PAULA MULLER