

Summer 2022

Higashi Highlights

Renew



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*Helping children with autism
exceed expectations since 1987*

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The Principal's Perspective



Deborah Donovan

Highlights

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"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day. You shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

We have arrived at the official end of the 2021-2022 school year. There is so much to say about how we spent our days, weeks, months and seasons together. Despite the continuation of COVID, we found ways to keep life and learning going for our students and ourselves. We evolved from resisting the new normal to creating the next normal ensuring that there were elements of fun and moments of awe, wonder and joy to savor and power us forward.

The campus improvements and enhancements continue and there is great excitement about what is to come. The basement of the DeSales building has been transformed to resemble a town street. Artist Bodhi Kolwaite created a spectacular mural that augments both the functions and feelings of this newly designed hallway with entrances to refurbished art and music rooms. The Higashi Jazz Club is ready for performances that will surely bring concerts for the soul. There is a snack bar that will be student run as an on campus job site. The Culinary Arts Kitchen and Dining room accommodate all our budding chefs and their dinner guests. Higashi Main Street will be a happening place! Our second floor classrooms are all being renovated and modernized. The Younger High School Division has been relocated to the former Emergence Program wing in the Cushing building. This temporary location has worked out well but the division is looking forward to returning to new, stylish classrooms at some point this fall. The Emergence Program will continue at the Holbrook location. This gives students the opportunity to "commute" using a large bus and not a van.

All the outside spaces on campus property are well used. Students really enjoy the additions of the new track and athletic field. Given the lack of substantial rain and high heat the artificial turf is the only green grass around. The putting green and the basketball court are improving hand-eye coordination, motor planning and sportsmanship. As the score points keep growing so does confidence and bragging rights. The outdoor classroom and tepee make great spots to enjoy a book from the outdoor library. If you are looking for a quiet spot for contemplation the Allie Mae Garden at the end of the Brady Building offers a peaceful respite.

Even though COVID forced us to live in survival mode, our commitment to excellence and continuing to offer the best to our students never faltered. Our teachers continued to attend professional development classes and seminars and our curriculums are always under review and revision. We have so many different learning styles and student interests to accommodate. It takes a lot of research and collaboration to explore and implement new ideas.

The theme for the new school year is THRIVE. We have set the stage to reap the benefits from all our efforts and the lessons we have learned from the last couple of years. We are more than ready to live our best lives once again. Thank you to one and all for your continued support for the mission of our school and all members of our ever growing Higashi family. Together we will indeed THRIVE

Curriculum Corner

When thinking about the year in review, one thought keeps coming to mind: this year has FLOWN by! 2021-22 certainly challenged us in ways both expected and unexpected, but our students demonstrated their amazing flexibility through it all. This year we focused heavily on social-emotional learning through weekly SEL lessons, our use of the Zones of Regulation curriculum, and even our fiction choices in Language Arts. Back this year were more hands-on math activities as well, which were on pause during the early days of COVID instruction due to the sharing of materials. This spring, our new outdoor classroom space and tepee brought an element of excitement as students began to learn outdoors in new and creative ways. And we're looking forward to this winter, when construction on the 2nd floor of our DeSales building will bring a new "Science Lab" space for class experiments! As we close out this school year, our teachers are already gearing up for the excitement the new school year brings: fresh faces in their classrooms, fresh bulletin boards in the hallways, and another opportunity to help our students THRIVE.





A Hot but Fun Filled Summer at the Residence

Indeed summer of 2022 has had numerous heat waves making our afternoons unbearably hot. Despite the searing heat, the Boston Higashi Residence continued to be a fun-filled home away from home for all of our students. The residential curriculum is set in such a way that every minute of the day is accounted for either engaging in fun and educational activities, or performing numerous activities of daily living.

For the first time since the advent of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the Boston Higashi Residence began easing back to the earlier rhythm of school life. Our students have been going to the community for weekend trips, swimming in the school pool, participating in summer grilling for dinner, as well as practicing soccer, basketball, rollerblading, music, and a myriad of summer field games.

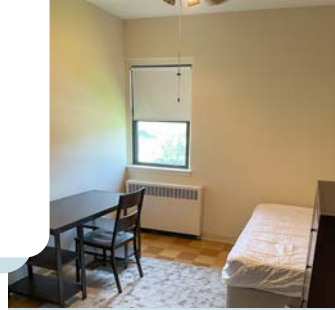
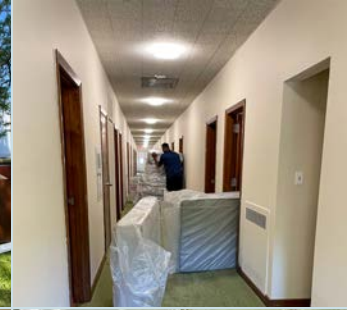
On Saturday, July 23, the residence welcomed parents and siblings for a modified 2022 Family Day, an event that all our students and teachers look forward to in order to showcase what they have learned over the year. Though this year's event was shortened and had fewer activities, it was a great way to bond with parents and siblings, especially because some of our teachers and parents had not had an opportunity to meet face to face since 2020! We look forward to many more opportunities in the future for more open houses.



School Donations

Just Call Bob!

Bob's Discount Furniture comes through yet again! Once every calendar year we give Bob's a call to help us with much needed furniture. For several years, they have furnished living and dining rooms in the Brady Building. A few years ago they completely furnished the third floor of the Maginnes Building that houses 14 of our International staff. This year came the biggest and most critical donation ever. With the soon-to-be arrival of 22 future staff members from Kenya, Bob's donated 22 beds, desks, chairs, mattresses and box springs, and area rugs for their new home at the former St. Joseph's Convent in Holbrook, right next door to our Emergence Program. So if you are ever out looking for furniture, please give some thought to shopping at our good friend Bob's.



Perfect Summer for that new set of Shades!

We recently met some new friends just minutes away from our campus in Randolph. For over 40 years, Randolph Engineering has provided the US Military with the world's best Aviator Sunglasses, now they are doing the same for us. Through the tremendous kindness and generosity of CEO, Peter Waszkiewicz, Randolph Engineering has donated 100 pairs of Aviator glasses valued up to \$300 each. Our HR department has been raffling off 2 pairs a day generating lots of excitement and enthusiasm from all. With COVID still hanging around and day after day of unbearable heat, this donation has been a godsend! Thank you Peter!

“Where the Magic Happens”

2022 HIGASHI GALA

10.13.22

GRANITE LINKS GOLF CLUB
QUINCY, MA

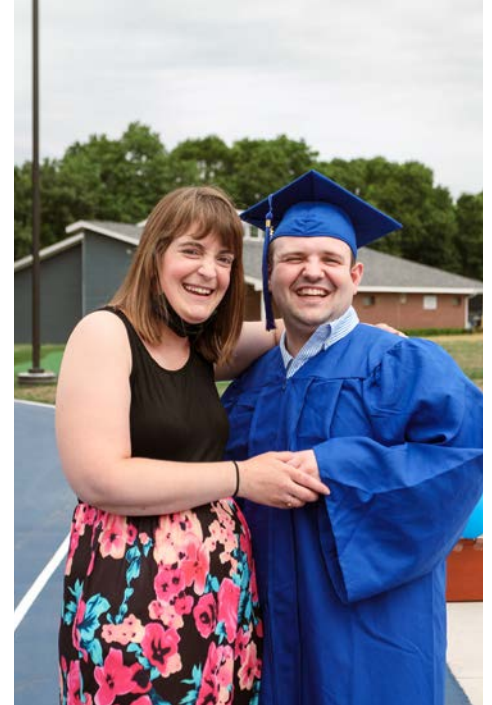
Annual Celebration





Despite all uncertainties that this year has given us, there was one thing we knew for sure would happen in June and that was our Annual Celebration! Students begin asking about their performances as soon as the year begins in January. With the high level of excitement around the event, it was sure to be a fun one! Though as the day grew closer, it became clear that we'd have to make some modified changes for the safety of everyone involved. This included the exclusion of family members in the audience. Plan B was underway! A film crew was hired and excitement levels grew once again in the halls of Higashi. Everyone geared up for rehearsal day and what a day it was! Each division came out to perform their musical acts and each division continued to send chills of excitement to the few staff audience members in attendance. Students left us all thinking, how are they going to top this? With only one rehearsal under their belts, students were ready to put on the show of their lives! Cameras were rolling and the show went on despite some last minute modifications. None of that mattered for the students and staff as they stood out there in the gym putting everything they had into that moment. We look forward to the day when we can again share these special moments in time with family and friends. Shows like our Annual Celebration are nothing short of spectacular in every way.

Graduation Ceremony



Love Can Build A Bridge

Graduation Day brought blue skies, bright sun, broad smiles, and bittersweet sentiments for all eleven members of Class of 2022 and their families. It was a breathtaking moment to see each of these graduates wearing the traditional blue caps and gowns rise to receive their Boston Higashi School diplomas. There were loud cheers of applause mixed with tears of joy with the clear realization that these

boys are now young men.

At the conclusion of the ceremony the graduates took a ceremonial walk across a special bridge symbolizing their transition to adult life. A festive luncheon followed. Parents and family members shared their reflections and gratitude to all staff at Higashi for helping their children reach this milestone. "When we stand together we can do anything!"

2022 GRADUATES



Special Olympics



We are so excited about our recent partnership with the Special Olympics! For 6 weeks, every Saturday students at Higashi have the opportunity to work with Unified Skills Center to train like an olympic athlete in Soccer and Football! With incredible volunteers from Higashi staff and families, students are able to experience new levels of sports training and competition!

This program is intended to introduce to our students what it might look like to train and become an Olympic athlete in the two chosen sports. Students arrive and begin exercising right away before the Unified Skills Center volunteers explain the rules of the day. Pictured in the photos are activities for Football. The incredible volunteers help to teach students how to hold and throw footballs. To their surprise, many of our students are familiar with the activities as they are similar to the games played at Sports Day!

Thank you so much to the Higashi staff and family members that show up on Saturday mornings to volunteer for this incredible new opportunity!



Bon Dance

WASHO! WASHO! WASHO!

Bon Dance has always been a long standing fan favorite amongst students, staff and families. With a few modifications, our event was a bit different looking this year but the one aspect that had us most excited was the inclusion of family members again!

It was such an amazing day filled with smiles, laughs and hugs from family members that we've eagerly awaited to welcome back in person. The weather could not have been more perfect for an incredible experience. The happiness of students was infectious as they were teaching their parents the traditional dances for the event.

Art projects and games held by each division were met with great joy. It's always a fun filled time when we get families involved with the ongoings of Higashi events. Of course the day wouldn't be complete without a special treat in the form of ice cream! It was hard to tell which students liked more, seeing family again or getting ice cream! Needless to say the event was incredibly enjoyable for many reasons.





BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL
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Upcoming Events

Events

9.6 **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

9.28 **PARENT NIGHT**

10.7 **OPEN HOUSE**

10am - 12pm

10.13 **ANNUAL GALA**

7pm - 9pm

10.15 **SPORTS DAY**

8:30am - 1:30pm

10.19 **RES PARENT NIGHT**



Our music and art hallways have been getting a major upgrade this past year! Check out this sneak peak of one of the murals painted by Bodhi Kolwaite.