

Summer 2025

Higashi Highlights



www.bostonhigashi.org

*Helping children with autism
exceed expectations since 1987*

(781) 961-0800

Program Director's Perspective



Dr. John Maina

Highlights

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A Memorable Summer At Higashi

This summer has been an incredible journey filled with celebration, talent, and community spirit! On June 12, 2025, we proudly celebrated the graduation of our remarkable Class of 2025 from the Emergence Program. It was an inspiring event that showcased students who have overcome challenges with resilience and determination. Their success testifies to the dedication of our students and staff, and we are excited to see what the future holds for these young graduates. We also value ongoing growth opportunities through our Continuing Adult Education Program (CAEP), which helps alumni stay connected with the school and continue gaining relevant knowledge and skills.

July was a lively month for us with the Higashi International Festival, full of color and entertainment! The event was a sensory feast. Parents, students, and guests enjoyed mesmerizing traditional Japanese dance, beautiful kimono displays, and electrifying performances by acrobat Samwel Kinyua and lively Kenyan dances led by Elizabeth and Janet. It was a day filled with joy, cultural pride, and unforgettable memories!

Early August also brought us Siblings Day, a special occasion where brothers and sisters connected through fun games and shared laughter. It's always wonderful to see these bonds grow stronger!

Our parents continued to share quality time at our Family Swim sessions at the Residence. This allows students and families to engage in relaxing and fun aquatic activities. These moments help strengthen our school community.

We are incredibly proud of our dedicated staff, who consistently go above and beyond to create an enriching learning environment. In August, we celebrated their hard work with a special awards event in the gymnasium, where staff received well-deserved recognition and thunderous applause. Their commitment drives our school's success, and we look forward to even greater achievements ahead!

Finally, our talented Higashi Jazz Band has been making waves and representing our school with pride! Their performances at Fenway Park and the 4th of July parade in Randolph have truly put our school on the map. We couldn't be prouder of our students and staff for showcasing their talent and school spirit to the wider community.

Here's to a fantastic fall filled with growth, celebration, and community! We are excited for what the new school year will bring.

Summer Fun

What a summer at Boston Higashi School! The school year wrapped up with a fantastic final week of celebrations. Students moved up to their new divisions, enjoyed cookouts, and soaked up every last bit of summer fun.

One of the highlights of the summer was the Boston Higashi Jazz Band's incredible performance at Fenway Park. The band, wearing matching rain jackets generously donated by Thomas Bernard's parents, Shirley and Paul, along with Red Sox T-shirts, performed the National Anthem in front of a crowd of over 30,000 people. The Red Sox T-shirts were even personalized by OHS teachers and students who helped print "Boston Higashi Jazz Band" on the back. It was a monumental achievement for the Jazz Band and a day of unforgettable memories for everyone involved.

As summer comes to a close, we hope all our families have had a restful and fun-filled break. We can't wait to welcome everyone back for the start of the new school year and another year of adventure!





A Summer of Growth and Connection

They say summer is a time for growing, and we believe it's true in every sense of the word. The longer, warmer days invite us outside, encouraging more activity and adventure. From making sandcastles to enjoying ice cream, it's a season for exploring and creating lasting memories. We remember those carefree childhood summers spent outside with friends until the streetlights came on, a simple rule that defined our days.



At the Higashi Residence, we embraced the spirit of the season with a packed schedule of activities. Our students went on incredible journeys—boarding historic navy vessels at Battleship Cove, exploring natural history at Harvard, and discovering a different kind of history at Roger Williams Park Zoo and Planetarium. We shared ice cream on the hottest days at Peaceful Meadows and opened our doors for special events like Family Swim Nights. We even extended this invitation to day and residential students' families on the weekends, strengthening our community bonds.



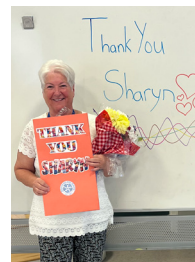
Our commitment to community extended beyond our walls. Our students participated in the annual Fishing with a Mission event, supporting Autism Awareness. Meanwhile, our Middle School students enjoyed fishing, bouncy houses, and boat rides on the lake. We also celebrated our graduating students, who marked the end of their Higashi careers with special outings to popular restaurants like The Cheesecake Factory, Pizzeria Uno, and Olive Garden. And, of course, no summer is complete without a trip to the movies to see blockbusters like "Superman" and "Jurassic World."

This summer, the most impactful thing we witnessed was the growing connection between our divisions and our students' families. The more we shared these moments together, the more our teachers wanted to continue building this bond. We've learned that our time together, as one big family, is what we cherish most.

With only a few summer days left, the team at the Higashi Residence wishes you a wonderful end to the season. We truly loved spending this summer as a family and look forward to carrying this spirit into the new school year.



We'd also like to extend a heartfelt thanks to Sharyn for her 10 years of service as one of our Residential Receptionists. Her warm and welcoming presence and her kindness has meant so much to everyone who walked through our doors. We wish her all the best in retirement!



Emergence Program Bike Race

The Emergence Program Bike Race is always a highlight of our school year, and this year's event did not disappoint! Despite the looming threat of rain, the weather held off, leaving us with some great tailwinds that our students used to fly down the course. It was a day of fierce competition and joyous laughter.

This year's race included a new element of excitement as parents joined the competition in a truly heated battle. The stakes were high, and in a particularly memorable moment, one parent veered off course but was quickly "rescued" by a quick-thinking teacher.

For the third year in a row, the students in D Class took home the win, showcasing their incredible speed and determination. The friendly rivalry between staff teams was also on full display, with the younger staff once again showing the veterans how it's done. The energy and excitement of the day were truly contagious. We're already looking forward to next year's race to see if D Class can keep their winning streak alive and if the veteran staff will finally get their revenge!



International Festival

Beauty of Community





The 2nd annual Higashi International Festival was a resounding success, once again bringing the entire community together for a truly memorable celebration of global cultures. With the weather providing a picture-perfect backdrop, a relaxed and joyful atmosphere settled over the campus, encouraging students and families to fully immerse themselves in the experience.

This year's festival transformed the school grounds into a vibrant, global village. Attendees were equipped with special passports, and their journey around the world began as they moved from one country display to the next, collecting a stamp at each stop. Each display was a unique window into a different culture, meticulously crafted by students to showcase the rich traditions, history, and customs of various nations.

The air buzzed with excitement as participants explored the myriad of offerings. Engaging games challenged both mind and body, while the rhythm of vibrant music filled the spaces between the exhibits. Children's faces lit up as they participated in hands-on activities, from trying their hand at traditional crafts to playing different instruments.

The event was more than just a day of fun; it was a testament to the school's commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive community. It provided a powerful opportunity for students to share their heritage and for everyone to gain a deeper appreciation for the world's rich tapestry of cultures. The festival beautifully highlighted how, despite our differences, we can all come together to celebrate, learn, and grow as a global community.



Graduation



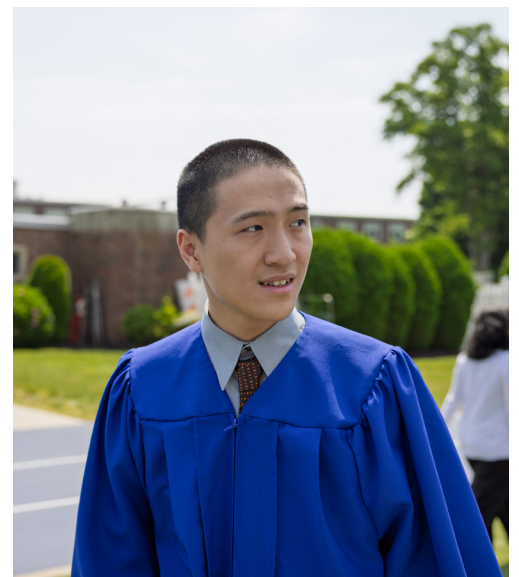
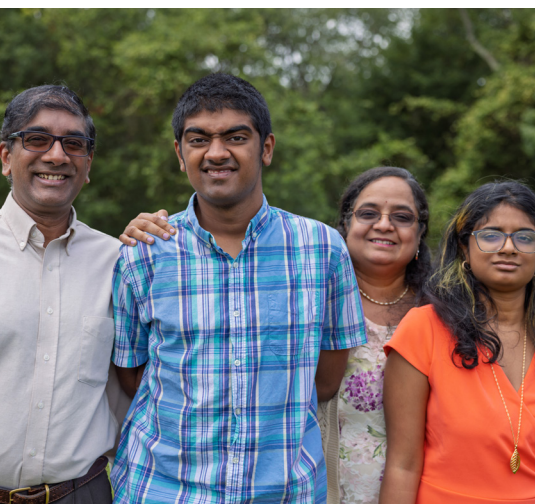
What began as a new way to celebrate our graduates has quickly blossomed into a beloved tradition. Holding the graduation ceremony on our campus has become a cornerstone event that everyone eagerly anticipates, marking the bittersweet end of our students' time with us.

We are so proud to celebrate our students in this special way, and it's always a joy to see them dressed in their blue caps and gowns. The ceremony is an incredible opportunity to reflect on

the unique journey each student and their family has taken. Watching our graduates cross the bridge, transitioning from students to alumni, is a moment that will be remembered forever.

A favorite part for our staff is listening to parents and family members share their experiences with Higashi after the ceremony. It's a powerful reminder that while the journey may have had its challenges, the lasting memories of their time with us are overwhelmingly positive.

This tradition has truly cemented its place in our school's history. It's more than just a ceremony; it's a profound ritual that honors the dedication of our students, the unwavering support of their families, and the hard work of our staff. Each year, as we celebrate this milestone, we are reminded of the incredible community we have built together and the lasting impact Higashi has on the lives of those we serve.





Stars & Stripes

The annual Stars and Stripes vacation program was a huge success this year, filled with fun and patriotic cheer! The beautiful weather was perfect for enjoying all sorts of outdoor activities, especially water play. A massive slip-and-slide was set up on the front hill, giving everyone a chance to cool off and have a blast.

The students also spent a lot of time on the back field, where spirited soccer games became a daily highlight. Working on passing and scoring goals, it was full of excitement!

At the farm, students enjoyed a special treat, making their own refreshing lavender lemonade. And to celebrate the Fourth of July, art classes became a creative hub where students designed their own unique flags, which were proudly displayed in a festive parade.



Summer Sizzler

The Summer Sizzler vacation program was the perfect way to wrap up the season! Both staff and students were ready to cool down before the new school year began, and the week's activities were planned with that in mind.

Students enjoyed a mix of relaxing and active pursuits, from working on puzzles in the cool quiet of the library to playing lively lawn games on the back field. Of course, water play was a huge hit, as always, giving everyone a refreshing way to beat the heat.

A new activity in art class quickly became a fan favorite. Students collected and decorated plastic bottles to transform into water-powered rockets. By the end of the week, everyone gathered on the front lawn to watch their creations launch. It was a thrill to see the colorful bottles soar high above the trees!





BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL
800 North Main Street
Randolph, MA 02368

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Upcoming Events

Events

9.2 **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

10.16 **ANNUAL GALA**

6pm - 9pm

10.10 **OPEN HOUSE**

10:30am - 12pm

10.18 **SPORTS DAY**
8:30AM - 1:30PM

Time to Play

Returning to Granite Links once again, we're so excited to invite you to a fun-filled celebration of play and the construction of a new playground on our Randolph campus!

For over ten years, our community's generous support has funded a number of life-altering projects for our students. We've celebrated vocational education at our "Classroom to Careers" Gala and a new Health Center at our "Where Healing and Compassion Come Together" Gala, among others. Your unwavering support has created a world of opportunity for children and young adults with autism.

11th Annual Gala
October 16, 2025
Granite Links



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