



# NEW HEIGHTS CHARTER SCHOOL OF BROCKTON



August 6, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I want to begin by thanking you for choosing and trusting us to educate your child. Our mission to prepare every child for college is bold, but we know that it is achievable! Over the past few months, we have recruited some of the best talent in the nation to fill our vacant staff positions, and we are ready and eager to begin the important work of preparing our students for college and beyond.

It is very important to note that we have pushed our “start date” back to **Monday, August 28<sup>th</sup>**. We have decided to schedule additional professional development opportunities for our staff for the week of August 21<sup>st</sup>. Sorry for any inconvenience that this may cause, but we believe the additional training will enhance your child’s experience in his/her classrooms. To allow for a smooth transition for students, the first two days of school will be focused on school culture, setting expectations and community building. Please note that **Monday, 8/28 & Tuesday, 8/29 will be half days** for all students with a dismissal time of 1:00pm.

As all of you know, public schools across Massachusetts suffered substantial budget cuts for this year. Because our funding is based on the per pupil tuitions rates of our sending districts (Brockton, Randolph, and Taunton), we lost over \$400,000 in projected revenue for this upcoming school year. When you have a mission statement like ours, we cannot afford to make any cuts that impact our curriculum and instruction in any way. We promise, as school leaders, that the budget cuts will not lead to the removal of one less teacher or support staff position from our budget. In order to accomplish this goal, we have had to make a few difficult decisions that will impact some of the additional supports that we were able to provide free of charge last year.

### **After-school Programming**

Last year, our after-school program ran from 4:00 to 5:00, and we provided free tutoring, snacks, and transportation for all participants. Approximately 150 students took advantage of our programming on a daily basis, but it cost us over \$200,000 to maintain. Knowing that we wouldn’t be able to afford this in our 2017- 2018 school budget, we began looking at what other schools were doing to offset these costs. We learned that other charter schools run after-school programs from the end of the school day until 6:00pm. Although the costs vary, most charge between \$20 - \$30 per day. We believe that we can run a “cost neutral” (we don’t need to make a profit) program for \$10 per day, but this will require all parents/guardians to pick their children up from the school by 6:00pm. By charging a fee of \$10 per day for after-school programming, we believe that we can provide quality programming at an affordable price. We will provide additional information regarding after-school programming in early September.

### **Transportation for Randolph Students**

All regional charter schools charge families to transport children to and from school. Some subsidizes the fee, but most charge families the actual cost of the transportation. Because NHCSB is located in Brockton, Brockton Public Schools is required to transport all Brockton students to and from school at no cost to NHCSB. We made the decision last year to also provide free transportation to our Taunton and Randolph students despite having to pay \$400 per day for each bus.

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## **New Heights Charter School of Brockton**

1690 Main Street

Brockton, MA 02301

**Main Office:** 508-857-4633

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This year, 58 children from Randolph have signed up to attend NHCSB. This means that NHCSB would have to order two buses at a cost of \$400 per day for 184 days. In short, it would cost us approximately \$147,000 to repeat the transportation service we provided last year.

If we were to take the approach of asking families to pay for the buses, each Randolph family would be asked to pay \$2,500 each year. Neither of these choices is favorable to the school or to our Randolph families, so we have explored a third option.

We met with officials from the Brockton Area Transit (BAT) Bus Company last week, and they were able to offer a reduced monthly rate of \$61 per student. This would reduce costs from \$147,000 to under \$40,000. They understand that they will have to add another bus to the route, but they believe that they will be able to keep the same stops that are already established. The one concern that we need to raise is that the BAT Bus Company is open to the public and will be transporting other people who choose to get on the buses. It is a common practice for students to take public transportation to and from school in larger districts like Boston Public Schools, but we are aware that this might cause some concern amongst our Randolph parents.

We would like to host a meeting with BAT Bus Company officials and Randolph families to further discuss this matter. We may be able to do a combination of the traditional school bus and the BAT Bus Company if parents are willing to pay, but we don't want to make that type of decision without hearing directly from families. The meeting will take place at NHCSB from **6:00 to 7:00 on Tuesday, August 8<sup>th</sup>**. Please attend so that your voice is heard so we can make an informed decision.

## **School Hours**

The school hours for the 2017-2018 school year have been modified in response to the schedule available by the Brockton busing. Students are expected to be in their homeroom no later than 7:40am. Students arriving after 7:40 will be considered tardy. Dismissal time Monday – Thursday for all students is 4:00pm. Friday dismissal will continue to be 1:00pm except where otherwise noted on the school calendar.

## **School Uniform**

This year, parents will have the option of purchasing uniforms from L & M or through a new vendor named HDX. Both companies have comparable prices, but some parents expressed a desire to purchase from another company. For the most part, our uniform hasn't changed much. We are no longer allowing sweatshirts, hooded tops or sweatpants, so please read the policy closely. We have enclosed a flyer along with an HDX order form. Upon completion you can bring the order form with payment to the school, or you can order the clothing online. You can find the link to the website and our uniform guidelines on our new school website under "announcements"! We do have sample sizes at the school, so please visit us between **9:00-3:00 starting August 15**. Please keep in mind that it takes approximately 2 weeks for your order to come in.

## **Student Summer Reading**

All students will be expected to turn in their completed summer reading assignment when they return to school. Please make sure that your child begins the school year with a strong grade by completing his or her required reading. Reading assignments can be found on our new website under "announcements."

## **Student School Supplies**

During the first week of school, each teacher will inform students of the list of supplies necessary to ensure success in the classroom. However, during the few days of school students should arrive with a backpack, pencils, pens, folders and a notebook.

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**Bussing Information**

Bus routes for Brockton, Randolph and Taunton will be posted to the school website by **Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup>**. If there are any questions, please call the main office and ask to speak to Tiara Washington.

**Students and families - Walk Thru**

We have had several requests from parents to tour the building prior to the start of the school year. As a result, we will open our doors to all students and families on **August 24<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-8:00pm.**

Enclosed in this e-mail, you will also find the 2017-2018 school year academic calendar.

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed information please contact **Melissa Jean at (508) 857-4633 or [info@nhcsb.org](mailto:info@nhcsb.org)**.

Sincerely,

Janice Manning  
Head of School  
New Heights Charter School of Brockton

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