

Dear esteemed colleagues and fellow residents of Brookline:

As a near-lifelong Brookline resident and K-12 graduate of the Public Schools of Brookline, I am deeply committed to continue serving the town I've called home since pre-school. I grew up in Coolidge Corner, graduated from what is now known as the Florida Ruffin Ridley School, and then graduated from Brookline High School (Class of 2000). After graduating from Brandeis University and Boston University School of Law, I became a child welfare attorney at the trial and appellate levels. I specialize in child protection and parental rights cases, where I advocate on behalf of primarily indigent parents and children in a broad spectrum of areas, including abuse and neglect, housing, substance use treatment, domestic violence, mental health, and public education.

I benefitted greatly from the excellent public schools and services that Brookline supports. As a result, I have a sustained commitment to this community that has given me so much. I am serving my tenth year as a Town Meeting Member representing Precinct 15. I am also in my second year as Chair of the School Committee, and sixth year overall on School Committee. In this capacity, I have served on the following:

- Brookline Fiscal Advisory Committee
- Town-School Partnership Committee
- Chair of the Policy subcommittee of the School Committee for the last four years
- Land Bank Study Committee
- Select Board Climate Action Committee
- Naming Committee
- Capital, Finance, and Negotiations subcommittees of the School Committee

Importantly, during my time on the Negotiations subcommittee, we have successfully reached multiple collective-bargaining agreements with the Brookline Educators Union and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). I did not shy away from tough decisions. I led by listening to diverse stakeholders and negotiating compromises. The school budget is the largest of our municipal departments accounting for approximately 60% of the overall town budget. I have worked diligently to keep costs down while meeting the needs of our schools and our commitment to the environment.

I now rent with my wife and 7-month-old son in Precinct 15. We are located near my parents who also live in Precinct 15, and like so many other older adults in this community hope to age in place. As I look toward continued service to this community that I love, I will lead by listening and making thoughtful decisions that unite rather than divide. I am running for Select Board because I am a unifier whose leadership experience, deep Brookline roots, professional background, pragmatic creativity, temperament, and record of bringing diverse communities together through difficult circumstances put me in a strong position to address our challenges head-on and to unlock exciting opportunities.

My priorities include the following:

1. **Affordability.** Too many people are compelled to make significant sacrifices to stay in Brookline. Our seniors, younger generations just starting out, and many families who like me have called Brookline home for years are all affected by tax increases, whether they are renters or

homeowners. In a community that values excellent public schools, high-quality town services, and diversity, Brookline will need to find ways to generate more revenue without overly taxing our residents. This is not only an economic priority, but a housing priority, and a racial justice and equity priority. Growing the proverbial pie through well-planned mixed-use economic development and housing production (with a significant affordability component) will be essential to expanding our tax base in a sustainable manner that can support the level of services we expect and deserve. This will also help make Brookline the welcoming, socioeconomically and racially diverse vibrant community that we want it to be, where our town and public safety workers can live and thrive, seniors like my parents can comfortably age in place, and historically marginalized communities can flourish.

2. **Climate Sustainability.** Brookline should continue to be at the forefront of innovative climate crisis initiatives that serve as examples for other communities to emulate and follow. As a first-time recent father, I worry about what kind of world my son will grow up in if we do not take the lead in combatting climate change as a municipality, state, and country. As Chair of the School Committee and Chair of the Policy Subcommittee of the schools, I helped draft and lead the passage of a Sustainability Policy for the Public Schools of Brookline that includes action plans in six major categories: (1) education and engagement, (2) energy-efficient high-performance buildings, (3) outdoor spaces, (4) food services, (5) waste, and (6) transportation. I also helped create a Sustainability Task Force comprised of many stakeholders, including Town Meeting Members, educators, students, town residents, and sustainability professionals. The Task Force is actively pursuing zero-emission buildings, low EUI levels, elimination of PFAS, Zero Waste, improved safety and infrastructure for zero-emission vehicles including bicycles, and grounds maintenance following best practices in organic management and Integrated Pest Management.
3. **Enhancing our recreational and learning experiences.** In addition to preserving and enhancing our public green spaces and other town properties, let's explore the many private amenities already existing within our borders (and just beyond), including on the campuses of Boston University, Boston College (Pine Manor), and Hellenic College, and at private elementary and secondary schools. From acres of playing fields and tennis courts to conference centers and maker spaces to gymnasiums and observatories, Brookline already boasts a plethora of amenities. I want to make them equitably accessible to all of our residents.

Beyond my three main priority areas stated above, goals include: (1) economic vitality, (2) excellent public safety and services, (3) senior-friendly initiatives, (4) excellent public schools, (5) a welcoming, just, accessible, racially and economically diverse, vibrant community that responds to crises with cultural sensitivity, (6) government transparency, (7) strong community engagement, and (8) civic pride.

The challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for Brookline necessitate tactful, experienced leadership and vision from someone familiar with the day-to-day work, people, structure, and function of high-level municipal governance. As Chair of the School Committee, I have that experience and will be ready on day one of my Select Board term.

With gratitude,

David A. Pearlman

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