



PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02186

MARY C. GORMLEY
Superintendent of Schools
(617)-696-4808/09

JOHN P. PHELAN
Assistant Superintendent
For Curriculum & Personnel
(617)-696-4811/12

To: Milton Public Schools Parents, Guardians & Staff
From: Mary C. Gormley, Superintendent of Schools
Re: E-Update, June 4, 2009

From the Office of the Superintendent

"We shape our buildings. Afterwards our buildings shape us." – Winston Churchill

As many of you know, the class of 2009 celebrated their commencement on Sunday. Congratulations to each of our graduates and their families. I want to share with you another significant event which took place at that ceremony.

It was my honor as Superintendent of the Milton Public Schools to participate in a Naming Ceremony to honor four individuals who have helped to shape the Milton Public Schools over the past decade.

Together with the Copeland Family Foundation and the Milton School Committee, we recognized the following individuals by dedicating spaces in our schools in their honor:

Senator Brian A. Joyce Auditorium at Pierce Middle School
Dr. Mary Grassa O'Neill Library at Milton High School
John F. Riordan Weight Room at Milton High School
Charles C. Winchester Auditorium at Milton High School

I told our graduating seniors that each of these individuals represent four characteristics that can help our students to build a more rewarding life. Senator Joyce represents community service; Dr. O'Neill embodies lifelong learning; John Riordan is an example of "do what you love, and love what you do;" and our final honoree, Charles Winchester, characterizes integrity.

Please read below for more information about these outstanding individuals and their contributions to the Milton Public Schools.

Sen. Brian A. Joyce

Massachusetts State Senator Brian A. Joyce is not only a Milton High School alumnus; he is a strong advocate for our town and our schools. At a time when our public school buildings were crumbling, after two local tax override votes had failed, and the high school's accreditation was threatened due to the building's poor conditions, Senator Joyce championed a change in state law that resulted in public school buildings being built and repaired throughout the state. As a result, the Town of Milton received over \$100 million from the state to build our six beautiful schools

Since that time, Senator Joyce has risen to a leadership position in the Massachusetts Senate and continues to be a strong advocate for public education. Currently, Senator Joyce serves as the Chairman of the State Administration and Regulatory Oversight Committee and Vice-Chair of the Housing Committee. He is also a member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, Financial Services, Public Safety and Homeland Security, Public Service and Federal Stimulus Oversight Committees.

25 Gile Road, Milton, Massachusetts 02186

Senator Joyce is involved with a number of charitable and civic associations and serves as the Director of Milton Fuller Village, Yawkey House of Possibilities, Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the Milton Town Club. He also coaches the Milton National Little League summer baseball team.

Senator Joyce and his wife Mary live in Milton with their five children.

We are very pleased to acknowledge Senator Joyce's efforts on our behalf by naming the Pierce Middle School auditorium the Senator Brian A. Joyce Auditorium.

Mary Grassa O'Neill

A wonderful example of lifelong learning has been made by Dr. Mary Grassa O'Neill. From her student days at St. Ann's Grammar School in Dorchester to her role as secretary of education and superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Boston, with leadership positions in the Boston Public Schools, Harvard University and of course, right here in Milton, Dr. Mary Grassa O'Neill is a role model for lifelong learning.

Dr. O'Neill served as superintendent of the Milton Public Schools from 1993 to 2003. Although she left this position six years ago, her presence can still be felt throughout the school system.

Mary Grassa O'Neill's goal in Milton was improved academic achievement. To this end, Dr. O'Neill instituted an innovative writing program for all students and quadrupled the number of Milton High School students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses. Dr. O'Neill worked diligently to bring talented administrators, teachers and staff into our schools, many of whom have remained here. She succeeded in significantly increasing diversity in leadership, faculty and staff positions. She was a founding member of the Milton Foundation for Education, which has raised millions of dollars over the past decade to enhance and enrich curriculum offerings in our schools.

Dr. O'Neill also oversaw the start of the town's massive school building project, which began in 1998 and impacted all six of Milton's public schools. Dr. O'Neill was intricately involved with all aspects of the project in order to ensure the new buildings would support the educational needs of Milton for future generations.

Mary Grassa O'Neill resides in Milton with her husband, Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. and their two sons.

For her accomplishments in education and for her devotion to lifelong learning, we have named the Milton High School library the Dr. Mary Grassa O'Neill Library in her honor.

John F. Riordan

John Riordan has probably spent more time in the Milton High School gymnasiums than any other person in recent memory. As a physical education teacher for 29 years, he personally taught thousands of Milton High students. As a coach of both track and football, he made contact with thousands more. And as a long-time supporter of town athletics, John and Pam Riordan have been fixtures at hundreds of games, tournaments and championships in town.

At commencement, I reminded our seniors that we encourage them to succeed in life, but we also want them to enjoy themselves along the way. You cannot imagine what a gift it is for me to wake up every morning and go to a job that I love. I wish the same for them.

John Riordan clearly embraced the concept of "do what you love and love what you do." He stepped through the doors of Milton High School in 1973 and did not leave until his retirement in 2004

Mr. Riordan was the strength and conditioning coach during the winter, spring and summer seasons, not only for football players, but for athletes of all sports. From 1990 to 2003, John Riordan was head coach of the high school football team.

He and his wife, Pamela, moved to Milton in 1979 and have remained in our community since that time.

During the construction of the new Milton High School, John Riordan was consulted with the planning and designing of the weight room, which is available to our student athletes for training.

For all he has done for the students and athletes of Milton High School, it is our pleasure to name that space the John Riordan Weight Room.

Charles C. Winchester

There are few individuals in Milton who have as long or as diverse a record of public service as Mr. Charles Winchester.

Only a few years after moving to Milton in 1965, Mr. Winchester was initially approached by a friend who asked him to get involved with the Glover PTO. Thus began more than four decades of committees, meetings, correspondence, elections and service to our town.

On Sunday, we honored Mr. Winchester for his work on the School Building Committee. For more than a decade, Mr. Winchester chaired this committee, on which more than 25 people have served.

He has worked tirelessly to give the children of Milton beautiful, safe, state-of-the-art schools in which to learn.

We are so grateful to Mr. Winchester and his family, for the thousands of hours, the effort, the commitment and the integrity he brought to this position for eleven years. He has been called “a guiding light,” and “a constant force,” by his colleagues on the School Building Committee. Ask anyone who has worked with Mr. Winchester about his leadership and they all will comment on his reassuring manner, calming presence and integrity.

In the storm that surrounded the school building project at times, Mr. Winchester was called “the ballast in the hull.” One committee member remarked that “that the ship was not going to tip over because Charlie was there.” He embodies the virtue of integrity.

Mr. Winchester and his wife, Janet, sent all of their six children to the Milton Public Schools. They still reside in Milton and are the proud grandparents of seven grandchildren.

In appreciation for all that he has done for the schoolchildren of Milton, we have named the Milton High School Auditorium the Charles C. Winchester Auditorium in his honor.