

Dear Eliot Innovation School Community,

Just weeks ago, I stood before our faculty and spoke about our "why" - the collective purpose that has driven our incredible journey of transformation to the thriving, innovative community we are today. I shared how my own children, now 23 and 25, became the amazing humans they are because of this Eliot community. I spoke about our shared commitment to never giving up on any child and never settling for anything less than excellence.

Today, I write to you with that same spirit of purpose, gratitude, and unwavering belief in our community's strength.

After 18 years as Principal of the Eliot Innovation School and 34 years as an educator in the Boston Public Schools, I am writing to share that I will be retiring in June at the end of the school year. This decision comes not from weariness, but from witnessing how truly amazing the Eliot has become. We have never been in a stronger position for continued success and growth.

Eighteen years ago, our faculty, families and community said, "We see something different here. We see potential that others overlook." I had the extraordinary privilege of being part of that transformation, of watching skeptics become believers, and of witnessing what happens when a community commits to excellence and refuses to accept limitations.

Together, we didn't just transform a school - we created something extraordinary: a place where every student across all 11 grade levels experiences a joyful, heartfelt, responsive, connected learning journey; a community where innovation isn't just encouraged, it's expected; a school where families aren't just welcomed, they're true partners; and an environment where staff are empowered to be their most creative and effective selves.

Our "why" isn't dependent on any one person - it lives in every classroom, every family conversation, every student achievement, and every innovative solution we create together. The foundation we've built is solid, our community is strong, and our trajectory is clear. You have built something that will continue to thrive and grow, something that will reach even greater heights in the years ahead.

Serving as your principal has been the honor of my professional life. But more than that, this community became my family's story. My children didn't just attend school here - they were shaped by your dedication, challenged by your high expectations, and loved by your care. Every family who has trusted us with their children, every educator who has poured their heart into this work, every student who has walked these halls - you have all been part of writing a story that proves what's possible when we believe in each other.

None of our achievements would have been possible without our incredible staff who see potential in every child and never stop innovating, our dedicated families who trust us with their most precious gifts and partner with us in every success, our amazing students who prove every day that high expectations paired with strong support create extraordinary results, and our North

End community and powerful partners who have invested in our vision and celebrated our growth.

I am confident this transition will be seamless because our "why" remains constant, our systems are strong, and our community is deeply committed to continued excellence. Our future leaders will continue to be part of our successful school and will embrace our thriving ecosystem of innovation, care, and high achievement.

Our goal is to have leadership in place before the end of the calendar year, allowing them to participate fully in critical planning for budget, enrollment, staffing, and the continued joy and acceleration of student learning. Our Governing Board will conduct the required comprehensive search, including our outstanding internal candidates who have been integral to our success.

While I will step away from the role, I will never step away from the Eliot family. This community is woven into who I am - it shaped my children, defined my career, and gave me purpose beyond anything I could have imagined. I look forward to finding new ways to support and celebrate the continued success of our school in the years ahead.

Years ago, we started a chant that became our rallying cry: "What is the BEST school in Boston?" And for 18 years, our answer has never wavered: "ELIOT!" We didn't just keep that promise - we exceeded it. Together we created a model of what public education can be when a community commits to seeing the brilliance in every child.

As I prepare to close this chapter of my journey, I do so with immense pride in what we've accomplished and absolute confidence in what lies ahead. Our "why" continues. Our community remains united. Our commitment to excellence is unwavering.

The best truly is yet to come and I will be cheering us on in every way I can - near and far!

Thank you for trusting me with the privilege of leading this incredible school for nearly two decades. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your children's stories. Thank you for proving, every single day, that when we stay true to our why, there is no limit to what we can achieve.

It has been the joy and honor of my lifetime to serve alongside you.

With profound gratitude, enduring pride, and excitement for our future,

Principal Traci