



Bancroft School  
110 Shore Drive  
Worcester, MA 01605

The Bancroft School Parent Faculty Association (PFA)

Date: 03/05/2026

Time: 8 AM

Location: Bancroft School Dining Hall

**Meeting Date:** March 5, 2026

**Members in attendance:**

Peter Forbes, Bobbie Forbes, Christen Amenta, Stacey Auger, Angelo Longo, Paul Foose, Blair Mattina, Stephanie Terrill, Kate Parvin, Ezri Silverberg, Tania Zieja, Nick Zieja, Amy Bauer, Koleen Louis. Sade Foose. Sue Stone. Kate Morrison, Kim Santana, Julie Shepherd, Laura Mello, Natalia Pavlova, Leah Reich, Justin Wang, Thanh Nguyen

**I. Refreshments and Social:**

Bancroft families and school staff had time to mingle and enjoy light refreshments before the meeting started.

**II. Welcome from Stephanie Luebbers, Head of School:**

Ms. Luebbers shared that this season is a busy and exciting time of year for our students – Varsity Basketball Teams in the playoffs, Robodog and Speech Team competitions, the school musical, Bark for Books in the Lower School, Snow Day festivities in the Middle School, and an All-School Bulldog Bonding event.

**III. Welcome from PFA President:**

Mrs. Vuona reiterated that this spring brings energy and enthusiasm as we move into the final few months. March is Women’s History Month, and it’s important to highlight our roots and celebrate that the Parent Teacher Association was founded 125 years ago in DC by 2,000 women for the greater good.

Mrs. Vuona shared updates from Division Liaisons:

- Upper School – January and February were busy months, with four events: Student Breakfast, Faculty Appreciation Breakfast, Bowling Bonanza Parent Social, and Valentine’s Day Hot Chocolate.
- Middle School – students celebrated an in-school “snow day” in February with movies, games, snacks, and lots of fun activities.
- Lower School – students welcomed therapy dogs onto campus for a “Bark for Books” event in February.

#### All School Upcoming PFA Events:

- Alice: The Musical has four performances this week, March 5 - 7. The Saturday matinee is designed for our youngest patrons and will feature PFA-sponsored snacks and meet-and-greets with the cast.
- Parent/Guardian Social on Thursday, April 16. This evening event will bring our parent/guardian community together on campus for a celebratory evening with the theme of 'Future'.
- City-Wide Earth Day Clean Up on Saturday, April 18. Volunteers are needed to clean up the Shore Drive and Indian Lake area.
- PFA Meeting on Thursday, May 7. PFA will be joined again by author and educator Wendy O'Leary for a presentation on joy in parenting.
- Backyard Bash will be held on Friday, May 29. This outdoor event is open to everyone and promises to be a fun way to close out the school year.

#### **IV. Introduction of Bancroft School Counseling Department:**

Bancroft welcomes new staff to the school Counseling Department, Erin Coyne, Bancroft LS and MS Counselor, and Sara Pinkham, Bancroft US Counselor.

#### **V. Guest Speaker, *Julie Hwayoung Shepherd, M.A., M.S.Ed., LPC:***

Mrs. Vouna welcomed Ms. Julie Hwayoung Shepard. Ms. Shepard is a Bancroft parent and faculty spouse. She is a licensed therapist with more than 20 years of experience working with adults and families and serves as the Assistant Commissioner for Mental Health Services at the MA Department of Mental Health (DMH).

Ms. Shepard shared a presentation about the MA Department of Mental Health and its Behavioral Health Helpline. Key highlights include:

- DMH has five regions across the state. Its 3,300 staff serve 29,000 residents annually (26,000 adults; 3,000 children, youth, and families).
- DMH operates the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Helpline (BHHL).  
masshelpline.com  
(833) 773-2445 (call or text)  
988 is the national suicide and crisis helpline
- The BHHL is free and open 24/7. It provides connections to services and resources for mental health, substance abuse, and community support (food assistance, transportation, childcare, health care, etc.) for MA residents and can be accessed online or by phone and text. Interpreter services are available in 200 languages.

- BHHL connects patients to outpatient counselors who help them find a provider that's right for them and provide a "warm hand-off" to the provider. BHHL will also follow up with the patient 7-10 days later to see how things are going. When recommended, BHHL can refer to urgent and emergency care resources, including Community Behavioral Health Centers (30 sites across the state, including Community Health Link in Worcester), Mobile Crisis Teams, Community Crisis Stabilization Teams, Behavioral Health Urgent Care Centers (83 across the state), and medical providers. BHHL staff will direct patrons to the urgent care resource.

- The BHHL is widely used by MA residents, particularly by adults 26-44 years old. The average wait time is 20 seconds, and the average call length is 28 minutes. 82% of BHHL users interact by phone; 10% by text; 8% by live chat. 86% of BHHL users require assistance accessing outpatient therapist resources; 11% require assistance accessing urgent behavioral health care; and 3% require assistance accessing emergency behavioral health care.

Ms. Shepard recently made a presentation to Bancroft Upper School students about the BHHL and its services.

Meeting minutes provided by Mrs. Stacey Auger and respectfully prepared and submitted by Mrs. Zaina Rivett.