



## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Lisa Gilbert-Smith Selected as Interim Principal for Newton North High School in the 2026-2027 School Year

**Newton, MA – June 2026** — Newton Public Schools is happy to announce that Lisa Gilbert-Smith, M.Ed., currently Director of the METCO Program, has been selected as the Interim Principal of Newton North High School for the 2026-2027 school year following the departure of Newton North principal, Dr. Henry Turner. Gilbert-Smith brings a rare combination of deep instructional expertise, proven turnaround leadership, and a decades-long commitment to educational equity.

With more than 30 years of experience, Gilbert-Smith has served as a teacher, counselor, administrator, and principal in Boston, Brookline and Newton school districts. Since 2019, Gilbert-Smith has led Newton's METCO program, overseeing services across 21 schools. Her work includes supervising staff, guiding anti-racism and cultural proficiency efforts, managing the district budget for METCO, and strengthening partnerships with Boston families. Her leadership has been marked by strategic planning, operational excellence, and a steady focus on student belonging and achievement.



Her prior roles demonstrate a consistent record of school improvement and organizational leadership. In her role as the headmaster both the Dearborn STEM Academy and the Another Course to College Program, Gilbert-Smith was successful in increasing the graduation rates from 74% to 94%, expanded inclusive learning environments, strengthened community partnerships, and built a culture of high academic expectations in her 9 years as principal of these schools. Additionally, as the dean of students for Brookline High School, Gilbert-Smith supported the academic and social-emotional needs of 1,000 students and served as a key member of senior school leadership. For the past several years in Newton, Gilbert-Smith has been successful in creating a districtwide literacy program for METCO students pairing younger students with older students to promote literacy and enhance relationship-building across the grade levels.

Last year, Gilbert-Smith completed Influence 100, a two-year superintendent preparation fellowship through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Influence 100 has been a highly successful program in diversifying the assistant superintendent and superintendent roles in districts across the state. As the fifth Influence 100 Fellow and superintendent intern to partner with Dr. Anna Nolin, Gilbert-Smith joins a distinguished group that includes outgoing Newton principals Henry Turner and Tamara Stras. As a METCO director, Gilbert-Smith has served as Treasurer for the METCO Director's Association (MDA) for 4 years and coached and mentored new directors.

A Boston Public Schools alum, Gilbert-Smith holds a Master of Education in Education Administration from Harvard University and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Boston University, grounding her leadership in both practical experience and strong academic preparation.

Across all roles, Gilbert-Smith has demonstrated exceptional skill in managing complex school operations, supporting diverse learners, building strong staff teams, and fostering inclusive school cultures. The Newton North community can expect Gilbert-Smith to bring a strong focus on student well-being and belonging, clear, consistent communication with families, and a collaborative approach to problem-solving throughout the 2026-2027 school year.

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**About Newton Public Schools:** *Newton Public Schools is dedicated to fostering academic excellence, social-emotional growth, and a strong sense of community. Serving more than 11,000 students across 22 schools, including 24 special education programs, a Career/Vocational Technical High School, and a vibrant range of student clubs, international exchanges, and athletic opportunities. NPS is a district of choice for families, recognized for its inclusive practices and innovative programs that prepare students to thrive in a diverse and dynamic world.*

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