

## From the Headmaster

Dear Parents, Caregivers, Students, and Friends,

I struggle with thinking about students as numbers. Yet we have a school-wide goal this year that involves using data to help examine and better understand how our practices promote equity and access for all of our students.

Why data? We are educators in a climate where student achievement is being reduced by No Child Left Behind law to scores on standardized tests. As a Pilot School we must prove continuously how our pedagogy and practices are positively influencing the outcomes of our students in ways that standardized tests could never represent. We all have anecdotal “warm and fuzzy” data that support our conviction that our practices help students achieve. However, in a time when that achievement is measured by numeric scores, we are pushed to find ways to “quantify” how we succeed. Thoughtful educators struggle with the notion of students as data. We do not want our practices to be reduced to simple math, to a mean, median or mode. How can the complex conversations that influence students’ attitudes be reduced to a percent or ratio?

Quantitative approaches to teaching seem contrary to our priority of personalizing students’ educational experience. Yet, we still have to deal with the importance of trends and patterns among our students, and these are exhibited in outcome data.

In conversation with my faculty and staff about using data to examine student achievement, especially in our young men of color, I knew one thing for sure: If I began by presenting graphs and charts with percentages and numbers, I would lose half of them right away. So I used stories of actual male students as a springboard for our conversation. The conversations were rich in teacher perceptions and inquiry about the individual challenges and successes of each young man. I was struck most by many assumptions about one young man with many family challenges who supposedly was “failing” in school. That young man managed to achieve honor roll despite all of his challenges. How could we shift our conversations? How could we focus more on the “data” about resiliency that enable young men of color with tremendous social disadvantages to rise above the “norm” and achieve. What makes the difference?

The next activity was based strictly on data. The faculty seemed more open to being thoughtful when examining generic numeric data. Why? Two reasons: They had experienced a more personalized context of the numbers, and they knew the students who were represented in that data. The faculty was moved to view the numeric data as symbolic representations of our successes and struggles with students.

Our conversations rose to another challenge level of balancing the need to teach our students to “jump through the hoops” with teaching them to be critical thinkers with a passion for life long-learning. Where is the tipping point? How much should our work focus on MCAS and SAT prep? Which practices make measurable and positive impacts on the outcomes of our students? Is it about content delivery or about relationships?

As Einstein stated, “Not everything that counts can be measured. Not everything that can be measured counts.” The answer is that there is no finite answer. Our work as educators is always a work in progress where we can be successful only if we keep our practices; mission and vision student centered both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Sincerely,



Carmen Torres

## BAA Artist-Teacher Fellowships

Boston Arts Academy is the recipient of a prestigious three-year grant from the Surdna Foundation that will award two Boston Arts Academy arts fellowships to pursue their own artistic endeavors for a portion of the 2007-2008 academic year. The BAA Artist-Teacher Fellowships will provide support for two teaching artists for up to 20 days during the next school year. Beth Balliro, Visual Arts teacher and Allyssa Jones, Music teacher are the recipients of the 2007-2008 Artist-Teacher Fellowship. Ms. Balliro will challenge her fine arts training through investigations of the color and perspective traditions of Indian painting. Ms. Jones will create a multi-movement song cycle exploring the fusion of eastern music and jazz traditions. Work created during the fellowship will be shared with the wider school community.

## Allan Rohan Crite

The Boston Arts Academy/Fenway High School Library is hosting a small, retrospective exhibit on Allan Rohan Crite, known as the "Dean of African-American Artists in the Northeast" who passed away on September 6.

This exhibit runs through November so please feel free to stop by the library to learn about one of Boston's most well-loved residents.

## Christian A. Herter Scholarship

Two recipients of the Christian A. Herter Scholarship: Dawn Salmons and Tyshaunda Hasberry. This scholarship covers one half of unmet financial aid need for the first two years of college for any recipient. There were only 25 scholarships granted for the entire Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The following students are to be congratulated for very strong applications: Antonio Barbosa, Maria Cabral, Renee Marrone, Daisy Melgar, Sheldon Costa, Kiara Thomas, Jennifer Manzanillo, Zakiyyah Sutton, and Christina Rodriguez.

## Anne Clark wins Milken Educator Award!

In a special assembly on October 9th, BAA's Anne Clark (Humanities Teacher, Curriculum Coordinator and Special Education Coordinator) was surprised with the national Milken Educator Award. This \$25,000 cash prize was awarded to 80 outstanding educators around the country. For more information about the Milken Educator Awards, please visit their website: [www.mffk.org](http://www.mffk.org).



From L to R: Deborah Walker of the Massachusetts Department of Education; Jeffrey Nellhaus, Acting Commissioner of Education, Massachusetts Department of Education; Anne Clark, Humanities and Special Education Teacher at Boston Arts Academy; Dr. Jane Foley of the Milken Family Foundation; and the Honorable Mayor Thomas Menino.

**Co-Headmaster** Linda Nathan  
**Co-Headmaster** Carmen Torres  
**Artistic Dean** Fernadina Chan  
**Ex. Dir. BAA Foundation** Rick Tagliaferri  
**Communications Director** Helen Russell  
**Editing & Layout:** Dani Coleman  
**Photography:** Phyllis Bretholtz  
Helen Russell

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**BOSTON ARTS ACADEMY** is a collaborative project between the Boston Public Schools and the ProArts Consortium, an association of six internationally known institutions of higher learning. Each specializes in the visual arts, performing arts and architecture:

Berklee College of Music  
Boston Architectural Center  
The Boston Conservatory  
Emerson College  
Massachusetts College of Art  
The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

### BOSTON ARTS ACADEMY

A Boston Public Pilot School  
Michael G. Contompassis, Superintendent

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## Fall Off the Wall Ball

It's singing, it's dancing, it's a fashion show extraordinaire!

Don't miss this year's Fall Off the Wall Ball. Sponsored by student government, it's a social event open to all BAA students.

Come to the Ball—November 16. Ask your advisor for details.

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[www.bostonartsacademy.org](http://www.bostonartsacademy.org)



## South African printmaker artist-in-residence



Artist in Residence, Molefe Thwala from Johannesburg works with sophomore VA students during his visit to BAA. Co-Headmaster Linda Nathan met Molefe at Artist Proof Studios while traveling in Africa in June as part of her Barr Fellowship.

## Parent/Caregiver News

Grades are ready for first term. Family Narrative Conferences will be held on Tuesday, November 20th from 1:30 to 8:00 pm. All parents/caregivers and students, grades 9-12, are required to attend. This is an opportunity for parent/caregivers, students, and the student's advisor to discuss the student's progress. Your child's advisor will call to schedule a time for you to come in. Please be on time and if you must cancel for an emergency notify the school or your child's advisor directly so staff will not be kept waiting for you. Please call Family Advocate Luz Maldonado at 617-635-6470, ext. 102 with questions or concerns.

### Special Student Schedule for November

November 5, 2007 Professional Day: No School for Students  
November 12, 2007 Veteran's Day: No School  
November 13, 2007 Professional Day: No School for Students - Off Campus Assignment  
November 20, 2007 Early Dismissal at 12:30 pm: Family Conferences 1:30 – 8 pm  
November 21, 2007 Early Dismissal before 12:00 pm from Mass College of Art Assembly

## Student Government 2007-08

### Executive Board

President: Zakiyyah Sutton  
Vice President: Sebastien Charmant  
Treasurer: Karina Arias  
Secretary: Elyas Harris

### Class Representatives \*

Grade 10: Queon Wiggins  
Grade 11: Julian Arroyo & Jay Cottle  
Grade 12: Nathan Stockwell & Deysi Melgar

### Arts Senators \*

Visual Arts: Yamira Serret  
Theatre: Kervin Germain & Renee Marrone  
Music: Emily Melo & Mariano Neris  
Dance: Celine Berthaud

\*Freshmen representatives will be announced in December.

## Fall Theatre at BAA

*Inside-Out* is a showcase featuring a behind-the-scenes look at the many facets of theatre, including: design, construction, playwriting and performance. Captivating exhibitions range from ancient Greek drama to theatre technology and film.

### Show Times and Dates

November 8, 9 and 10 @ 6:30 pm  
Black Box Theatre and Assembly Hall  
Free Admission (Reservations Required)  
[theatreboxoffice@bostonartsacademy.org](mailto:theatreboxoffice@bostonartsacademy.org)  
For information visit the BAA website  
[www.bostonartsacademy.org](http://www.bostonartsacademy.org)

## Important Dates\*

### Friday, November 2

Term 1 ends  
College Fair 9-11 am  
BAA Cafeteria

### Saturday, November 3

SATs at various city locationst

### Monday, November 5

Professional Day for Teachers  
**No School for Students**

Parent/Caregiver Council Mtg.+  
6-7:00 pm BAA Assembly Hall

### November 6-8

MCAS ELA Retesting

### Tuesday, November 6

Start of Term 2

### Thursday, November 8, 9, & 10

BAA Fall Theatre Production  
(See page 3 for details)

### Monday, November 12

Veteran's Day: **No School**

### Tuesday, November 13

Professional Day:

**No School for Students†**  
**Off Campus Assignment**

### November 14 & 15

Math MCAS Retesting

### Thursday, November 15

Senior Grant Exhibition 4-6 pm

### Friday, November 16

Fall Off the Wall Ball  
(See page 2 for details)

### Tuesday, November 20

**Early Release 12:30 pm**

Narrative Family Conferencest  
1:30-8 pm (See pg. 3 for details)

### Wednesday, November 21

Early Release before 12:30 pm  
(See page 3 for details)

### November 22 & 23

Thanksgiving Break: **No School**

### November 26-30

Carlos Estévez Artist Residency

### Thursday, November 29

Carlos Estévez Artist Reception  
Gordon Gallery 5-7 pm  
(See BAA website for details)

### Saturday, December 1

SATs at various city locationst

\* Calendar events are subject to change.  
Please call to confirm times and dates.

† Important parent/caregiver date!

## Sandra and Philip Gordon to be honored at 10th Annual Benefit & Gala



*Sandra and Philip Gordon*

BAA is excited to announce that Sandra and Philip Gordon will be the recipients of the school's Apollo Award at the 2008 Benefit and Gala on June 2, 2008 at the Calderwood Pavilion, Boston Center for the Arts. Sandy has been president of the Boston Arts Academy Foundation since the school's founding and has led the effort in raising over \$8 million in private support over the past 10 years. Phil is chairman and co-founder of EdVestors, a non-profit organization that links philanthropists to innovative programs and services in public education. Both have been long-time champions of youth, education and the arts and BAA takes great pleasure in recognizing their tireless and inspirational work.

We are further pleased to announce that Katherine and Michael DeMarco and Ron and Ronni Casty have signed on as the 2008 Chairs of this extraordinary event. Their leadership will provide us the direction and inspiration to make our 10th anniversary fundraiser the most successful ever.

This evening will also give the BAA community an opportunity to reflect on the past 10 years and pay special tribute to our founding institutions of higher learning, the ProArts Colleges. They shared in the dream of a public high school for the arts early on, nurtured that dream into reality, and supported us throughout this critical first decade of growth. For their vision and unfailing support, we are most grateful.

For further information on participating as a corporate or individual sponsor of this exciting evening, please contact:  
Rick Tagliaferri, Executive Director, Boston Arts Academy Foundation  
617-635-6543 or [rtagliaferri@bostonartsacademy.org](mailto:rtagliaferri@bostonartsacademy.org)

A PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL  
FOR THE VISUAL AND  
PERFORMING ARTS  
*Boston Arts  
Academy*

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