



Brandon Pride

A Newsletter for Parents/Guardians and Friends of Brandon at the suggestion of the Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Upcoming Events

- ⇒ October 10th- Circus
- ⇒ October 10th- Celtics
- ⇒ October 11th- Columbus Day
- ⇒ October 17th- Providence Bruins
- ⇒ November 10th- 1st Quarter Grades Close
- ⇒ November 24th- Early Dismissal
- ⇒ November 25th- Thanksgiving



We are looking for **donations** of the following items for the classrooms and residences:

- Car/Sport Magazines
- Crayons/Markers
- Drawing pads
- Puzzle books

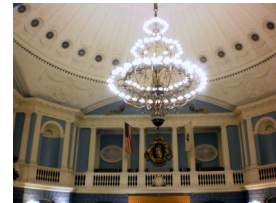
VIP Tour of MA State House & EOHHS Offices



In recent months, Brandon opened its doors to several very important figures in state government who included: Governor Deval Patrick and his staff, State Treasurer and Gubernatorial Candidate Timothy Cahill, Secretary of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) JudyAnn Bigby, Asst. Secretary of Health & Human Services Marilyn Chase, and Secretary of Education Paul Reville. In late September, the tables turned and 15 Brandon students and staff accepted an invitation for a special tour of EOHHS and the Massachusetts State House. The well-dressed and delightfully polite boys enjoyed bags of goodies and VIP treatment at EOHHS headquarters before heading across the street to visit the State House. High-lights included photo opportunities with Natick's State Rep. Linsky and State Senator Ross, seeing the Senate and

House chambers, expansive Boston views from the front balcony of the State House, and visiting the Governor's office. The boys also learned from Asst. Secretary Chase about 'secret passages' in the building and are determined to come back and find them. The tour was a unique and unforgettable experience for our students! Please see all the photos taken which are on display in the Administration Lobby.

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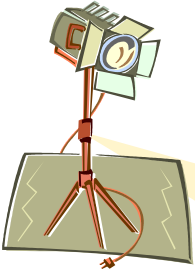
The Big Day at TD Garden

by student, A.G.

On Sunday, October 10th about 10 boys from Brandon went to the Celtics game at the Boston Garden. They were playing the Toronto Raptors. The game was a lot of fun. We got to get slushies and lemonade. Our seats were on the balcony, but it was cool. We even got on the screen, the cameraman was doing pictures around and a few of us were shown waving and cheering. The ten kids that got to go were on the ten highest levels at Brandon, basically. I like getting to do this kind of thing and I feel good about myself when I'm on one of the highest levels. When I'm doing really well like this other people feel good about me too. I think when kids know there is going to be an out trip like this they do the best they can so that they can hopefully get to go. The Celtics beat the Toronto Raptors 96-84. All the kids and staff had a great time!



Together We Can Achieve



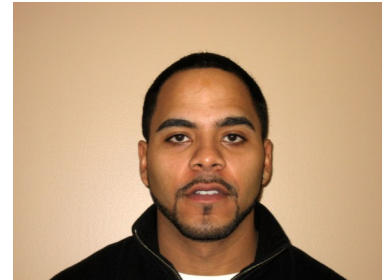
Student Spotlight

My name is Sal. Before I came to Brandon I was doing biking riding, skateboarding, building and other outdoor things I enjoyed doing. But not everything was going all that well. I was not getting along with some of my family members at the time, I was getting in trouble with the school system for being late and absent and my grades had gone down a lot. I didn't think I was being treated fairly at home, it was difficult to get up in the morning and when I missed a lot of school it affected my grades. My guardian felt it was necessary for me to get treatment for some of my behaviors and I ended up at Brandon. When I first came to Brandon I wasn't too sure what was going to happen so I stayed to myself and I was depressed for a while. I was isolating and different things like that. When my biological family (my parents and the rest of my family) became involved I

started making healthy relationships with my mom and my brother and sister. First I started talking to them on the phone and then in visits and stuff. I've also gained a lot of trust and privileges at Brandon because of my high level. This kind of helps me to move forward and helps things go more smoothly. I don't have as many bumps in the road as I would have in the past. Now I feel relieved in a way that I'm not being treated unfairly and I feel more happy because my biological family is involved with me now. When I see them it just brightens up my days. My goal is to move on from Brandon and go home with my mom. I would like to get a job, like carpentry, building or construction and I also want to make sure that I keep control of my behaviors and not let them take control of me. I feel that Brandon is one of the safest places to get treatment.

July Staff of the Month: *Pedro Diaz*

Pedro was a huge asset to the House 2 team for the time that he was there and is now greatly missed. Pedro then transferred to Cedarbrook, where he has become an integral part of the Cedarbrook Team. He found the CB boys a basketball league to participate in and was able to negotiate with the coach of the team to allow the boys to play, and to get their fee reduced to \$20. He came up with work study tasks for the boys who didn't have the money and motivated them to complete it by the time the payment was due. He worked with case management to get the permission form signed in time. He has also developed a circuit training plan for other boys.. Pedro is someone you can always count on to lend support and who can adapt to any situation. When the CB house supervisor was out for a period of time, Pedro stepped in and fulfilled the role. Any house would be lucky to have a staff person like Pedro. He takes his job very seriously and is eager to take initiative to help organize enjoyable activities for the kids. Pedro has a certain way about him that the kids both respect and admire.



August Staff of the Month: *John Johnson*

John has significantly helped staff learn different and new ways of helping others and has been a great support when someone just needs to talk. The kids in House 5 as well as the kids in school and other houses know he cares and that, in turn, is sometimes all they need. He has told kids what might happen if they don't change while also encouraging them to try their best and utilize their strengths. He goes out of his way to give kids rides home and to get them ice-cream "just because." John has been such a huge support not only to the kids but also to staff.