

THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE
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Office of the Superintendent of Schools
William H. Lupini, Ed.D.

Dear Brookline Residents:

On Saturday, April 30, 2005, the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) held their annual conference at Brookline High School. In allowing the group to do so, Headmaster Bob Weintraub was very clear about his expectations that all workshops held and materials available would be appropriate for high school aged students.

This morning I learned that the Fenway Community Health Organization, an exhibitor at the event, had, in fact, brought "a small number" of copies of The Little Black Book to the conference. The Little Black Book is a document that was designed for individuals over the age of 18. It contains sexually explicit material and was not meant for school-aged audiences. Fenway and GLSEN both agree with us that this booklet should not have been available at the event.

We were very pleased to be able to host this GLSEN event. However, I do not believe that this booklet was appropriate for a high school audience and we would not have approved of its presence had I known. Yet, I am very concerned that the conversation about this conference not focus on this document but, instead, remain on the positive nature of the experience, which was very well received by our attending students. Moreover, I want to be very clear that, while we will revisit our procedures for granting access to outside groups wanting to utilize our facilities, we will continue to emphasize our core values in all that we do here in Brookline. Specifically, our core value of "Respect for Human Differences" demands that we not only ensure that all students learn in an environment that is safe, respectful and supportive, but that we continually seek out ways of educating our students, parents and community members of the need to respect the views and lifestyles of all of our citizens.

On behalf of the Public Schools of Brookline, I apologize for the fact that this sexually explicit material was available at an event at Brookline High School.

Sincerely,

William H. Lupini, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools