

The Public Library of Brookline is a beloved community institution that is integral to the residents of Brookline. We are a group of former library employees with a collective 114 years of working in the Public Library of Brookline. We held positions ranging from part-time page to Branch Manager to Interim Assistant Director in our careers in Brookline. However, during the tenure of the current director, we have all left our positions in Brookline because of the deteriorating work environment. We are writing today in support of our colleagues who remain in Brookline and continue to struggle in a workplace where institutional and professional knowledge isn't valued, feedback to administration isn't welcome, and staff wellbeing isn't a priority. This environment poses a threat to the Library's quality of service to the community.

Each of us accepted new roles at other institutions for our own reasons – some of us chose positions with higher pay, better work-life balance, or greater opportunities for professional advancement. However, many of us also took lateral moves, pay cuts, moved towns, or even left the library field completely. What all our departures do have in common is that we left the Public Library of Brookline as a direct result of the current director's leadership. Seventeen full-time staff have left the Library under the current administration, including five of six department heads. Four full-time staff have left since the beginning of August 2024 alone. This represents a 50% turnover of current active full-time staff positions in a two-year period. This doesn't include all of the essential administrative, custodial, and part-time staff who have also departed the library. With this significant turnover and loss of years of experience at all levels, the Library does not function as effectively as it once did.

Two years after the current director joined the Library, there are now more part-time staff than full-time staff across all three Library locations. Many vacated positions have been downgraded to lower professional levels or pay-grades, and in some cases de-professionalized completely – while still expecting the same standard of work for lower pay and status. The staff who remain are burning out due to the expectation that they provide the same excellent level of service with fewer people, less time, and less support. Additional proposed changes to staff quality of life such as the elimination of Sunday overtime pay, which is a standard in libraries in the area, reinforce that the administration is devaluing the Library's most crucial resource: staff.

Staff morale is at an all-time low and the quality of services at the Public Library of Brookline is at a breaking point. The staff need the community's support so they can resume their focus on the reason we all accepted positions at the Library: to serve the Brookline community at the highest level. We encourage you to reach out to the Board of Trustees, the Select Board, and the Town Administrator to demand more transparency and accountability from the Library Director.

We are no longer employed by the Public Library of Brookline, but we stand in solidarity with our colleagues and we ask you to stand with us.

Below are our years of experience and the position we held when we resigned from the Library.

Batia Bloomenthal, Putterham Branch Supervisor, **27 years**

Robin Brenner, Teen Librarian, **18 years**

Sarah Collier, Library Assistant, **4 years**

Tony Corsentino, Cataloging Librarian, **3 years**

Macy Davis, Children's Librarian, **3 years**

Guy Harris, Coolidge Corner Branch Supervisor, **1 year**

Julie Kellndorfer, Youth Services Supervisor, **6 years**

Roy MacKenzie, Reference Supervisor, **11 years**

Caroline Richardson, Coolidge Corner Children's Librarian, **13 years**

Lily Weitzman, Reference Librarian, **7 years**

Tiffany Wilson, Cataloging Librarian, **5 years**

Gina Wise, Circulation Supervisor, **12 years**

Brita Zitin, Coolidge Corner Branch Assistant Supervisor, **4 years**