

Dispatches from the Field: A B.C. Social work Blog
Brian Gonsalves, Boston Green Academy



Brian Gonsalves,
Director of Student Support Services
at Boston Green Academy

[Dispatches from the Field](#) is a monthly feature at Innovate@BCSW designed to showcase the school's commitment to [field education](#), and to fostering fruitful relationships with organizations, both in Boston and around the world, who are providing critical services to those living at the margins of society.

Agency partner: [Brian Gonsalves](#), BCSSW Field Advisor

Organization: [Boston Green Academy](#)

Services: Founded in 2011, Boston Green Academy is a Horace Mann Charter School serving students in grades 6-7 and 9-12 in the Boston Public School District. The school takes a particular interest in promoting sustainable living among its students, encouraging them to "create a diverse 21st century green economy."

As Director of Student Support Services at the academy, Gonsalves is responsible for addressing “anything that happens outside of the classroom in order to ensure success within it.” In short, he works to manage student behaviors that may get in the way of learning.

“Adolescents, of course, are experiencing all kinds of emotions as they seek to negotiate the relationships they encounter on a daily basis,” he explains. “It’s a time when many youth are just starting to come of age and gain some measure of independence. It’s also a time where some are beginning to understand their own mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, or struggles with identity. My job is to help them to find solutions to more effectively manage some of these challenges.”

Gonsalves’ team offers a variety of services to students, including crisis intervention, mentoring programs, direct individual counseling, assessment and referral when needed, and group therapy.

Relationship with BCSSW: Gonsalves has a unique connection with BC Social Work, having completed his own MSW in Chestnut Hill in 1992. He’s been supervising students from various schools of social work since 2004, including BCSSW. This year, his office includes five such MSW candidates who work directly with students in each of the aforementioned service areas.

“For the BC students, Boston Green Academy offers a great opportunity to get first hand experience in an urban school setting,” says Gonsalves. “It’s also a place that allows MSW candidates to better understand the social systems that impact students, reminding them that no one grows up in a vacuum. And it helps to remind us all that there exist certain finite resources, and that we have to do our best with what we have.”

“We’re also very lucky to have students of the caliber of BC here at our school. I appreciate all of their up-to-date knowledge from their coursework, which has allowed me to stay relevant myself in the clinical field. It’s a privilege to be able to continue to improve in my own profession, and my ongoing connection with BCSSW plays an important role in my own development.”

