



# Welcome, Gayle McCracken

## Director of Human Resources

### **Where did you work prior to coming to Dedham?**

I worked as a Human Resources Director for Wellesley Public Schools for the past seven years.

### **How many years of experience do you have in human resources and in local government?**

I have 35 years of human resources experience and 18 years of it was working in local government for town and school departments.

### **What are your goals as the new Human Resources Director here in Dedham?**

Some of my goals are to implement a succession planning structure, to increase diversity, and to utilize the software packages that the town has purchased to its fullest capacity to aid employees. Ultimately, the Human Resources Office is here to support the town and its employees. We source and hire the most qualified applicants, train them properly, and keep them motivated through learning, career advancement, and a good work environment.

### **What aspect of this role are you most excited about?**

I'm excited to work with the team in Dedham to continuously make Dedham a great place to work.

### **What are some challenges you have faced recruiting during the pandemic and how have you overcome them?**

I worked for the Wellesley School Department during the pandemic. We had to staff a new Remote Learning School within a few weeks. This involved transferring employees who requested accommodation to teach in the Remote Learning School and backfilling their position with a new teacher. Overall, we hired or transferred 113 employees within three weeks. In addition, we had processed numerous FMLA requests and ADA requests. We used multiple recruiting sources to hire and backfill all of the open positions. The pandemic created many traumatic and sad issues for employees. The Human Resources Office was there to support the employees during this difficult time.

### **Are there any programs or events you have organized in your past roles that you would like to start here in Dedham?**

I'd like to analyze the usage of Munis for our HRIS system to effectively utilize all of the HR fields that are available. I have used some of these fields in my work with the Town of Canton. This will allow the employees to have better access to their data. I'd also like to restart the wellness initiatives. The pandemic had an effect on people's mental and physical health. While I was in Wellesley, I was actively involved in the West Suburban Wellness Committee. We started multiple wellness initiatives that I would like to continue in Dedham.

### **What are your hobbies/interests when not at work?**

I enjoy working outdoors, playing the piano, boating, playing with my dog, and socializing with friends.

### **Do you have a mantra you often refer to or live by that keeps you motivated/energized?**

Look for the good in people. If you look for the good in people, you will be happier and feel more energized.