



# The Boston Opportunity Agenda

Seventh Annual Report Card

February 2018

# A Historic Partnership

## Convening Partners and Investors

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Boston



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# Introduction

We know that in Boston a postsecondary credential is crucial to full participation in our knowledge economy and entry into the middle class.

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present our Seventh Annual Report Card, which includes a number of changes and updates. A year ago Boston Opportunity Agenda leaders took time to analyze and reflect on the educational progress our city has made since we launched in 2010. Our purpose was to identify where we need to double down on our efforts if we want all of our young people to enjoy the great opportunities that our city and booming economy have to offer adults.

We know that in Boston a postsecondary credential is crucial to full participation in our knowledge economy and entry into the middle class. Over the past eight years, we have made progress on almost every metric of the education pipeline, but we still see large achievement gaps throughout the entire K-12 system. Additionally, only 51 percent of our students are achieving a postsecondary credential.

Some of the changes in this new report card are the result of changes in the way student success is assessed throughout the system. Public schools in Massachusetts underwent yet another state-initiated change in assessments this year. Over the past four years, schools have moved from administering MCAS in all grades to PARCC (except 10th grade) to Next Generation MCAS in most grades and subjects. Since the results of these different assessments are not comparable, this report card uses the recently released 2016/2017 Next Generation MCAS results to set new baselines.

We know from our data analysis that many Boston students, particularly low-income students of color, fail to achieve a post-secondary degree because they lack the necessary preparation.

As a result, the Boston Opportunity Agenda is focused on ensuring that all students graduate high school ready for college, career and life. Since the release of last year's report card, we have worked with leaders from across K-12, higher education and workforce development and created a shared definition of College, Career and Life Readiness which can be found on pages four and five of this report card. In October of 2017, we launched the definition and announced the initial metrics that we are committed to gathering. These metrics will be used to set a citywide goal which we plan to announce in June of this year.

Our ambition is to build on almost 10 years of work in high school and college completion while simultaneously ensuring that the talent born and grown in Boston can meet the needs of our city's 21st century economy.

As we move forward, we will continue to update the community on our collective progress.

We thank you for everything you already do and hope you will join us in our efforts to build in- and out-of-school opportunities that help our students, teachers and partners work together toward achieving the positive outcomes we seek. We ask that everyone, including those working outside of our established education systems, do what they can to support these efforts. With your help and support, we believe we will succeed in reaching our ambitious goals.



Reverend Ray Hammond  
Chair



Kristin McSwain  
Executive Director



# Boston's College, Career & Life Readiness: Definitions

Life is made of journeys big and small. We know that the world we are preparing our children for is fast-changing and that the paths they will travel are still emerging. To succeed, they'll need the power to find goals worth seeking, to figure out how to reach them—and to adapt as the world changes around them. And so we build in our students the power to navigate new situations and the skills that will enable them to move through any barriers they find along the way.

<p><b>Set a Vision</b></p>	<p>Boston's graduates are keenly curious and deeply hopeful. They know that the way things are isn't the only way they could be, and they know they have the power—and the responsibility—to make things better, for themselves and for others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to set goals</li> <li>• Confident</li> <li>• Curious</li> <li>• Hopeful</li> <li>• Sense of agency</li> </ul>
<p><b>Choose a Course</b></p>	<p>Boston's graduates build plans that account for the realities of their situation. They know their own strengths and weaknesses and can assess those of others; they can get the job done. They can read the context that surrounds them, choose a wise course through it, and stick with their plan when things get hard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess and reflect</li> <li>• Read the landscape</li> <li>• Plan and persist</li> <li>• Practice self-regulation</li> <li>• Take initiative</li> </ul>
<p><b>Change Course</b></p>	<p>Boston's graduates can assess what's really going on around them and adapt their plans as needed when their situation changes. Grounded in their self and community, they are able to keep trying when things get hard, and work their way through the problems they encounter—both the clear-cut and the ambiguous—with imagination and rigor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to navigate situations, analyze and adapt</li> <li>• Comfortable in ambiguity</li> <li>• Comfortable with change</li> <li>• Give and take feedback</li> <li>• Resilient</li> </ul>
<p><b>Build Competence</b></p>	<p>Boston's graduates have the academic knowledge it takes to do high-quality intellectual work, the technical skills required to practice their craft, and the practical competencies they need to take care of themselves as they make their way through the day-to-day. They know how to learn what they don't already know; they're confident in their power to grow and make change around them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to learn</li> <li>• Ability to self-assess</li> <li>• Academic foundation</li> <li>• Financial, media, technology literacy</li> <li>• Technical skills</li> </ul>
<p><b>Work with Others</b></p>	<p>Boston's graduates bring out the best in others, and do some of their best work through collaboration. They listen to what others say, hear what they mean, and tune in to what they feel. They build on other people's ideas and communicate their own, by argument and by story.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to find and ask for help</li> <li>• Collaboration skills</li> <li>• Communication skills</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Service and responsibility to others</li> </ul>

## Boston's College, Career & Life Readiness: Measures

<p>Implement an individual student plan</p>	<p><b>Set a Vision</b>          Choose a Course          Change Course          Build Competence          Work with Others</p>
<p>Enrollment in “anywhere, anytime” learning—          badging, internships, credits, workplace learning</p>	<p><b>Set a Vision</b>  <b>Choose a Course</b>  <b>Change Course</b>  <b>Build Competence</b>  <b>Work with Others</b></p>
<p>Enrollment in rigorous course work:          IB, AP, dual enrollment, CVTE, Mass Core Completion</p>	<p>Set a Vision  <b>Choose a Course</b>  <b>Change Course</b>  <b>Build Competence</b>          Work with Others</p>
<p>Individual GPA at/over 2.7 on a 4.0 cumulative scale</p>	<p>Set a Vision          Choose a Course  <b>Change Course</b>  <b>Build Competence</b>          Work with Others</p>
<p>Individual attendance at/over 94% annually          for grades 9-12</p>	<p>Set a Vision  <b>Choose a Course</b>          Change Course  <b>Build Competence</b>          Work with Others</p>

Our research-based year one measures are listed in this table. Along with each measure is the part of the definition upon which those measures touch. This list will evolve as the research base expands and as BPS, Charter and Catholic schools develop and implement individualized student plans to increase readiness.

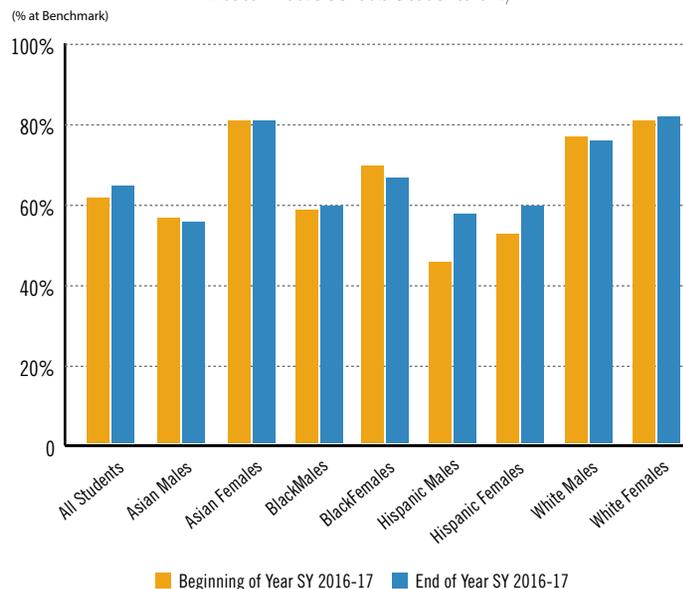
These metrics are the initial set of measures. We will use them in year one to set a baseline. We will set a citywide goal by the start of SY 2018. Additional measures will be added as we learn more.

# A Strong Educational Foundation

## Early Literacy: Percentage of Kindergarteners Achieving the DIBELS\* Benchmark

### What's Under the Hood: DIBELS NEXT\* in Kindergarten

Boston Public Schools Students Only



### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

The DIBELS NEXT assessment is given when children enter kindergarten and when they leave. In 2016/2017, 61% of incoming kindergarteners were once again assessed as having the necessary early learning skills. While the percentage remains the same, the actual number of young people who are school ready has increased.

A strong kindergarten experience is helping our youngest learners prepare for the demands of elementary school, but more must be done in the birth to age eight period in order to have an impact on school success. The Boston Opportunity Agenda has been working with more than 200 representatives from nonprofits, schools, city agencies, hospitals and funders to create a citywide Birth to Eight plan that improves early childhood outcomes. For more information, see the Birth to Eight Collaborative section of this report card.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Individual Catholic elementary schools do measure kindergarten readiness, but no one assessment is used across all schools in the Archdiocese of Boston. Instead, schools utilize a variety of early literacy instruments, including DIBELS NEXT and the Bracken School Readiness Assessment. They are working on a multi-year, grant-funded early childhood initiative to establish high-quality classrooms and benchmarks for student learning.

\*The Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) are a set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through 6th grade.

“Why does it Matter” source: Strategies for Children, “A Report on the Cost of Universal, High Quality Early Education in Massachusetts.”



## Percentage of Entering Kindergarteners Achieving the DIBELS\* Benchmark

	Base 2013 / 2014	Current 2016 / 2017	Number of Proficient Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	62%	61%	3209	↔

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

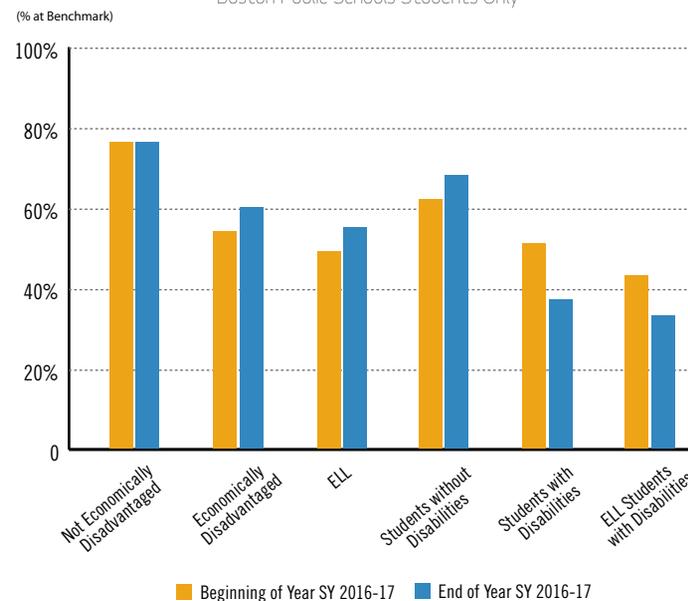
Boston Charter public schools also have no uniform measure. Many schools, but not all, utilize Strategic Evaluation of Progress (STEP) to measure literacy growth for students. Through the Birth to Eight Collaborative, the Boston Opportunity Agenda will be working to identify potential common measures moving forward.

### Why does it matter?

A child's brain develops more during the first five years of life than at any other time. Infants and preschoolers experience enormous social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth during this period. This is also the time when a child's ability to self-regulate begins to emerge. A high-quality early education program provides preschoolers with the opportunities they need to grow and thrive, and those who participate in these programs are 40% less likely to repeat a grade, 30% more likely to graduate from high school and all are more than twice as likely to go to college. They develop better language skills, score higher on school readiness tests and have fewer behavioral problems once they enter school. Finally, as adults, they have higher annual earnings and are more likely to be homeowners.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



A strong kindergarten experience is helping our youngest learners prepare for the demands of elementary school...

# A Strong Educational Foundation

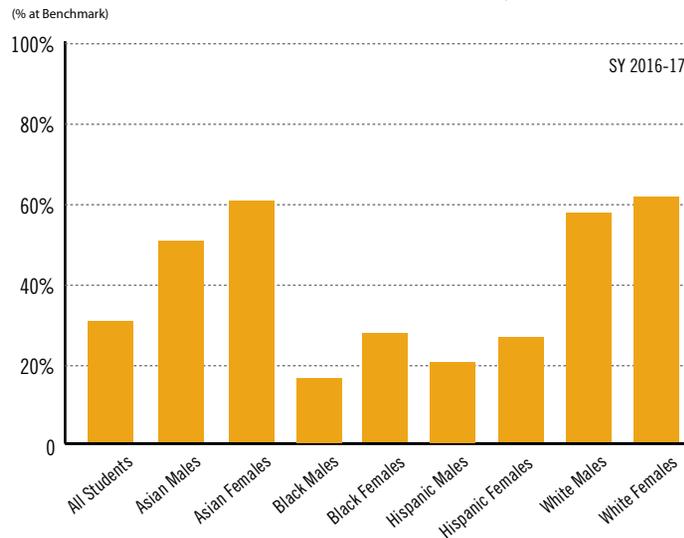
## 3rd-Grade Reading Proficiency

### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

Public schools in Massachusetts experienced yet another state-initiated change in assessments this year. Over the past four years, they have moved from administering MCAS in all grades to PARCC in all grades (except 10th) to Next Generation MCAS in most grades and subjects. Since the results of these different assessments are not comparable, this report card will use the recently released

### What's Under the Hood:

Meeting or Exceeding Expectations For Next Gen MCAS  
Boston Public Schools Students Only



2016/2017 Next Generation MCAS results to set a new baseline for reading proficiency moving forward. The Next Generation MCAS scores fall into four categories: Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Partially Meeting Expectations and Not Meeting Expectations.

Close to one-third, or 30%, of BPS 3rd-grade students scored “Meeting Expectations” or higher on the Next Generation MCAS in the 2016/2017 school year. The charts on the left and right show how this aggregate breaks down across different BPS populations. The scores range from a low of 5% for ELLs with Disabilities to 61% for white females.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Boston Catholic schools are in the second year of administering the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress Growth Assessment (MAP Growth) in Reading. This national assessment measures student progress and growth for each individual. A linking study by NWEA previously allowed comparisons between MAP Growth and the PARCC exam. However, there is no such study to compare MAP and Next Generation MCAS. As such, we have reset the baseline for Boston Catholic schools. We will be working to resolve these data challenges in future report cards. Based on the spring 2017 MAP Growth administration, 73% of 3rd-graders scored at or above their grade level in reading.



## Percentage of 3rd-Graders Reading Proficiently

	Base 2016/2017	Current 2016/2017	Number of Proficient Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b> (Next Gen MCAS)	30%	30%	1269	n/a
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b> (MAP Growth)	73%	73%	1501	n/a
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b> (Next Gen MCAS)	41%	41%	222	n/a

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE and the Boston Public Schools

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

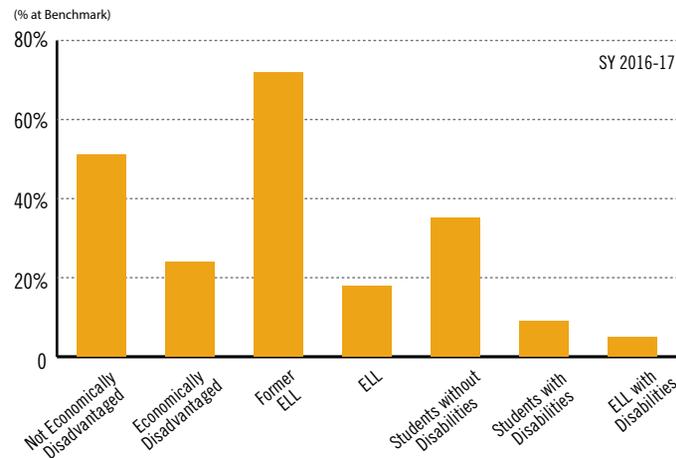
Some 41% of Boston Public charter school 3rd grade students scored “Exceeding or Meeting Expectations” on the Next Generation MCAS test in 2016/2017. The aggregate figure reported here includes data from all of Boston’s Charter public schools with a 3rd grade: Boston Renaissance, Bridge Boston, Brooke Charter School, Codman Academy, Conservatory Lab, MATCH Community Day and Neighborhood House.

### Why does it matter?

In the first three grades, students are learning to read and from 4th grade on they must be able to read to learn. In grades one through three, pupils are building skills, including all-important reading skills—and the habits they develop become deeply ingrained. Success in 3rd-grade reading provides a foundation that has an impact throughout students’ entire educational experience, even affecting graduation from high school.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



Public schools in Massachusetts experienced yet another state-initiated change in assessments this year.

# On Track for High School Graduation

## 6th-Grade Mathematics Proficiency

### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

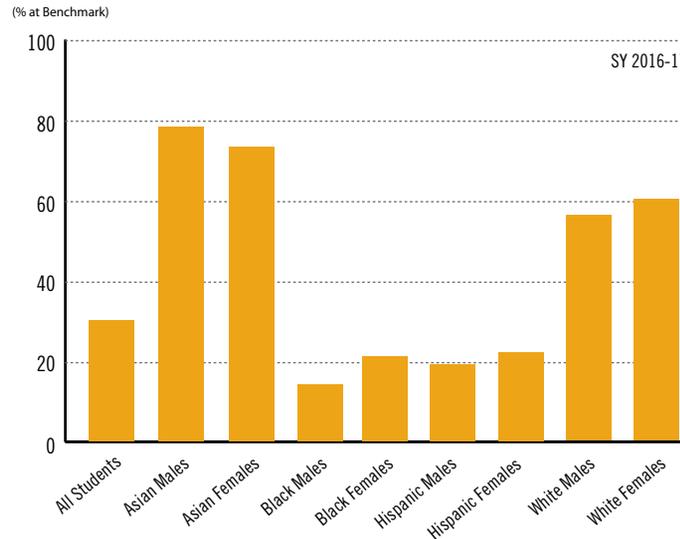
Public school 6th-graders in Boston also took the Next Generation MCAS this year for the first time. Similar to ELA, Mathematics scores are reported in four categories: Exceeding Expectations, Meeting Expectations, Partially Meeting Expectations and Not Meeting Expectations.

Some 30% of 6th-graders were proficient on the 2016/2017 Mathematics MCAS. The charts below and to the right show how different subpopulations performed.



### What's Under the Hood:

Meeting or Exceeding Expectations For Next Gen MCAS  
Boston Public Schools Students Only



### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Boston Catholic schools administer the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress Growth Assessment (MAP Growth) in Mathematics. This national assessment measures student progress and growth for each individual student. A linking study by NWEA previously allowed comparisons between MAP Growth and the PARCC exam. However, there is no study that compares MAP Growth and Next Generation MCAS.

In spring 2017, 57% of 6th-grade students performed at or above their grade level. Due to the change in Massachusetts' state assessment, this data is not comparable to the Next Generation MCAS. Over the coming year, the Archdiocese will continue to hold teacher workshops dedicated to interpreting MAP data to inform classroom instruction.

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Sixth-grade math scores in the aggregate were 46% "Meeting or Exceeding Expectations" for Boston's Charter public schools. The aggregate figure reported here includes data from all of Boston's Charter public schools with a 6th grade: Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, Boston Renaissance, Brooke, Codman Academy, Conservatory Lab, Excel Academy, Helen Y. Davis Leadership Academy, KIPP Academy Boston, MATCH Community Day, Neighborhood House and Roxbury Preparatory.

## Percentage of 6th-Graders Proficient in Math

	Base 2016/2017	Current 2016/2017	Number of Proficient Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b> (Next Gen MCAS)	30%	30%	971	n/a
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b> (MAP Growth)	57%	57%	1118	n/a
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b> (Next Gen MCAS)	46%	46%	578	n/a

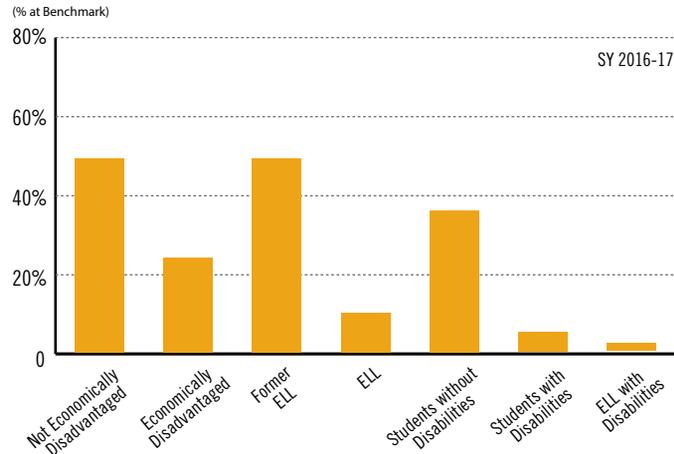
Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE and the Boston Public Schools

### Why does it matter?

Proficiency in middle grade math is just one of the leading indicators for high school and postsecondary success. Successful completion of middle school math requirements puts students on track to access and complete advanced math courses in high school. As such, 6th-grade math proficiency has been included in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's College and Career Readiness Early Warning Indicator System. Finally, middle grade math is a metric that all three education systems are paying attention to as they look to improve rigor for every student in Boston.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



Successful completion of middle school math requirements puts students on track to access and complete advanced math courses in high school.

# On Track for High School Graduation

## Percentage of 10th-Graders Who Pass All MCAS Tests\*



### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

To earn a high school diploma, students in Massachusetts must meet the Commonwealth's Competency Determination (CD) in addition to all local graduation requirements. The Competency Determination is defined as "Proficient" or higher in ELA and Math as well as "Needs Improvement" or higher in Science. Despite changes in the assessment of other grades and subjects, the 10th-grade MCAS has not been updated to the Next Generation MCAS and remains the assessment for determining competency in Massachusetts. This year, the percentage of Boston Public Schools 10th-graders completing the competency requirement rose a percentage point to 65%. This is the third year in a row that student performance has increased.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

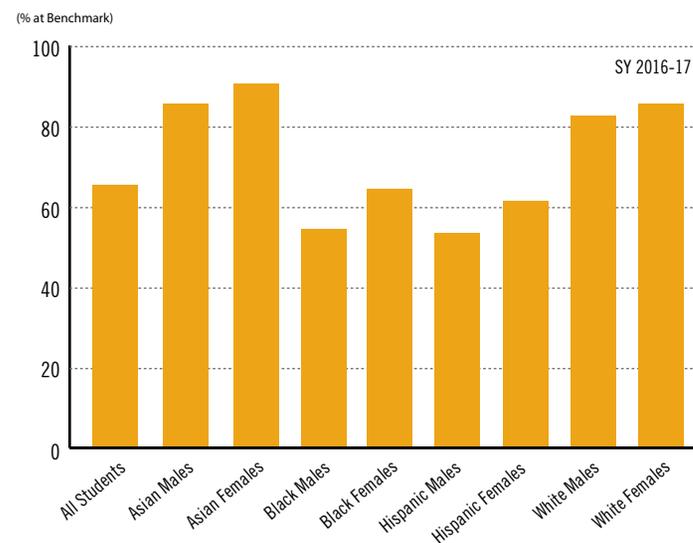
As previously noted, Boston Catholic schools administer the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress Growth Assessment (MAP Growth) in Reading. This national assessment measures student progress and growth for each individual. In the spring of 2017, 80% of 8th-graders

\*It is important to note that with the graduating class of 2013, the standards for graduation increased from "Needs Improvement" on ELA and Math to "Proficient" on ELA and Math and "Needs Improvement" in Science.

"Why does it Matter" source: Center for Labor Market Studies, "The College Enrollment and Graduation Experiences of BPS Graduates."

performed at or above their grade level in reading. This assessment is conducted online and is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The data, however, is not comparable to the 10th-grade MCAS. In the coming year, Boston Catholic schools will be partnering with high schools, community partners and key stakeholders to recalibrate the definition of academic competency for the broader Archdiocese of Boston that aligns with the Commonwealth's Competency Determination.

**What's Under the Hood:** Percentage of Grade 10 Students Scoring Proficient or Higher in ELA and Mathematics and Needs Improvement or Higher in Science  
Boston Public Schools Students Only



## 10th-Grade Proficiency

	Base 2014/2015	Current 2016/2017	Number of Proficient Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b> (MCAS)	59%	65%	2274	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b> (MAP Growth)	80%	80%	1329	baseline reset
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b> (MCAS)	88%	87%	532	↑

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE and the Boston Public Schools

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

This year the competency results for Boston Charter public schools increased by one percentage point from 86% to 87%.

The aggregate figure reported here includes data from all of Boston's Charter public schools with grade 10: Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, City on A Hill, City on A Hill Dudley, Codman Academy, Excel Academy, MATCH High School and Roxbury Preparatory.

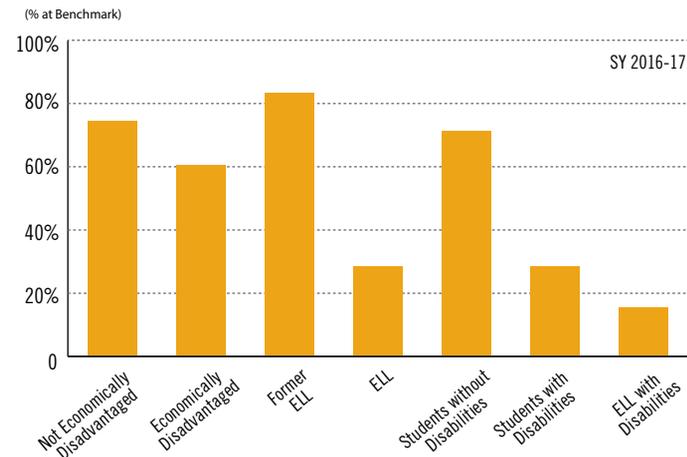
### Why does it matter?

While many understand that proficiency on the MCAS is necessary in order to graduate from high school, it also serves as an indicator of whether a student will enroll in and complete postsecondary education. According to a Center for Labor Market Studies report, "Not only are students with strong reading and math scores more likely to attend college, but they are also much more likely to enroll in 4-year colleges and graduate with a Bachelor's degree." These

students are also less likely to enroll in developmental education courses upon postsecondary enrollment, increasing the likelihood that they will complete a college degree or other postsecondary credential.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



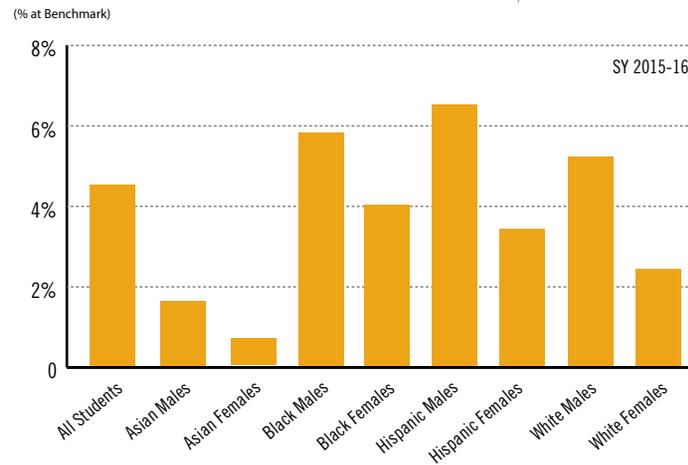
This year the competency results for Boston Charter public schools increased by one percentage point from 86% to 87%.

# High School Graduation

## Annual Dropout Rate



**What's Under the Hood:**  
Annual Dropout Rate  
Boston Public Schools Students Only



“Why does it matter?” source: U.S. Chamber of Commerce, “The Ugly Truth: A State-by-State Snapshot of Education in America.”

## How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

The dropout rate in the Boston Public Schools increased in 2015/2016 by .1 percentage point. This increase, while small, continues an upward trend. At the school level, dropout rates vary substantially from a low of zero to a high of 30%. This year, two schools had no dropouts: Quincy Upper and New Mission. Four other schools had dropout rates of less than 1%: Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School, John D. O’Bryant School of Mathematics and Science and Henderson Upper. Additionally, the 9th grade cohort dropout rate decreased to its lowest point ever at 13.2% for the 2011/2015 cohort.

The percentage of dropouts varies widely by both racial/ethnic group and gender. Overall, more males than females dropped out. This dynamic can be seen across all racial/ethnic groups as demonstrated by the chart on the left. These differences are most pronounced among Hispanic students. The chart on the right illustrates gaps across other subgroups. The differences are most pronounced by English Language status.

## How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

It is not possible to quantify dropout rates for parochial schools, because once students leave a Catholic school, they often return to a public school or another private school. The Archdiocese of Boston continues to work on a solution to this problem and is helping us to identify district and Charter students who may have entered Catholic schools but are captured as dropouts in the public data.

## Annual Dropout Rate

	Base 2012/2013	Current 2015/2016	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	4.5%	4.5%	830	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	2.0%	1.0%	15	↑

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

\*Please note that there is a large annual fluctuation due to small sample size.

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

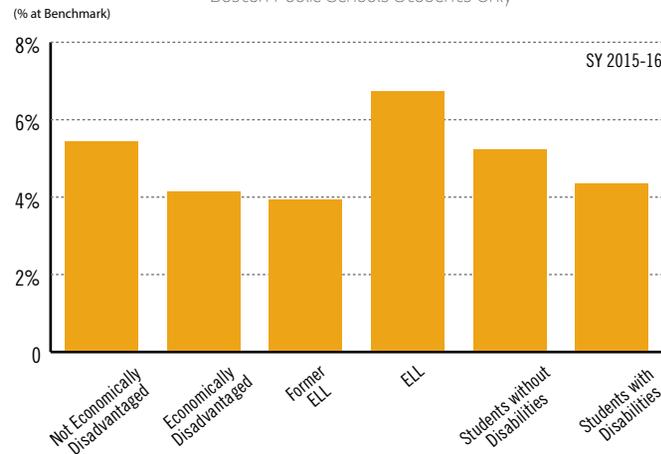
Boston Charter public schools have a very low dropout rate. In 2015/2016, only 1% of students dropped out. This is an increase of .7%. Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, Excel Academy and Roxbury Preparatory had no dropouts in 2015/2016. Other schools included in the data are Academy of the Pacific Rim, City on A Hill Circuit Street, City on A Hill Dudley, Codman Academy and MATCH High School.

### Why does it matter?

Lost lifetime earnings for Massachusetts Class of 2010 dropouts alone will total nearly \$3.7 billion, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education. If all students who graduate were ready for college, as much as \$57.1 million could be saved each year in remediation costs and lost earnings. If the state's male graduation rate grew by just 5%, the Massachusetts economy would see crime-related savings and additional revenue of about \$115 million each year. Further reductions in the number of dropouts each year would multiply these savings.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only

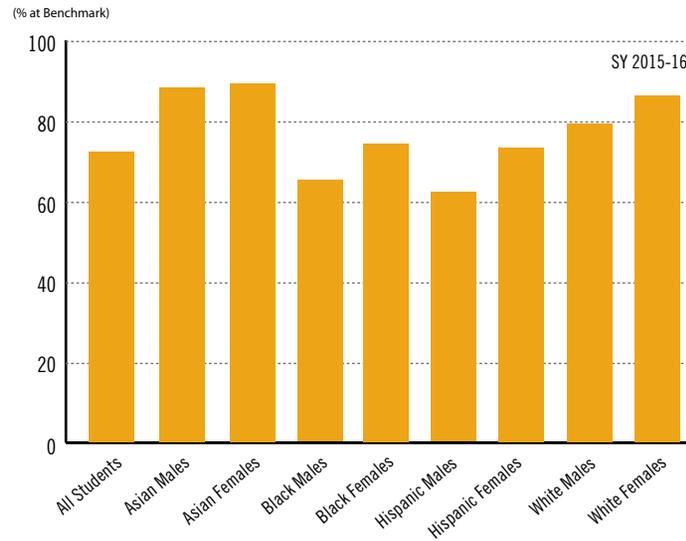


The BPS 9th grade cohort dropout rate decreased to its lowest point ever at 13.2%...

# High School Graduation

## Who's Graduating?

### What's Under the Hood: 4-Year Completion Rates Boston Public Schools Students Only



### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

Boston continues to have one of the highest urban four-year graduation rates in the nation, at 72.4%. This year the rate increased 1.7 percentage points. This growth continues a 10-year upward trend. It is accompanied by an increase in the rates for three of the four major racial/ethnic groups, however the four-year graduation rate for Black students dropped 0.3 percentage points to 69.3%.

Five schools met or exceeded the 90% goal of the Every Student Succeeds Act. They are: Another Course to College, Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School, John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science and New Mission High. An additional seven schools met or exceeded the state four-year cohort graduation target of 85%. They are: Boston Arts Academy, Boston Community Leadership Academy, Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, Lyon Upper, Fenway High School, Quincy Upper and TechBoston Academy.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

The Boston Catholic Schools have a very high graduation rate. For the graduating class of 2014, 97% of those who enrolled as freshmen graduated in four years from Catholic secondary schools in the city of Boston. The other 3% reverted back to the Boston Public Schools, Boston Charter public schools or chose another private school.

## 4-Year Graduation Rate

	Base 2012/2013	Current 2015/2016	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	65.9%	72.4%	4190	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	84%	97%	3439	↔
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	74.0%	77%	239	↓

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

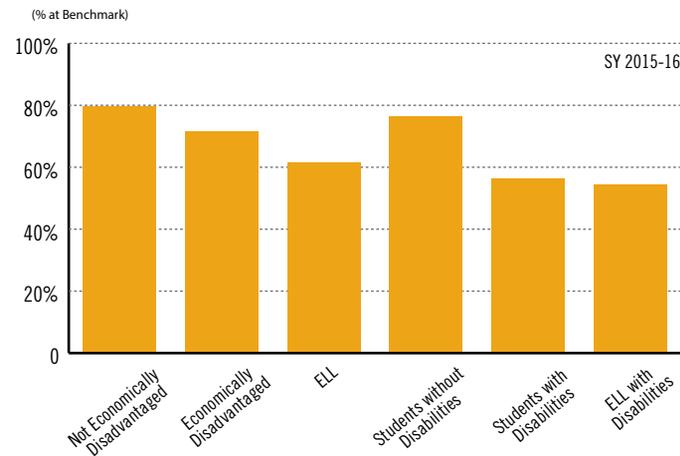
### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Six Boston Charter public schools have been serving high-school students long enough to have a 4-year cohort graduation rate. This year their combined graduation rate dropped 3.1 percentage points to 77 percent, still a very high rate. The schools include: Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, City On A Hill, Codman Academy and MATCH High School. As other schools grow their cohort of students, their completion rates will be added to this measurement in future report cards.

Academy of the Pacific Rim and Boston Collegiate both exceeded the state four-year cohort graduation target of 85% as well as the 90% goal of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



For the  
graduating  
class of 2014,  
97% of those  
who enrolled  
as freshmen  
graduated  
in four years  
from Catholic  
secondary  
schools.

# Postsecondary Attainment

## College Enrollment

### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

In 2015, the Boston Public Schools sent 70% of graduating high school seniors on to postsecondary education. This figure is down 1 percentage point, but it only reflects those students who enroll in a postsecondary institution within 16 months of graduating high school. The college-going rate for BPS increases if you look at enrollment beyond the first 16 months following graduation. However, we know from higher education research that one predictor of college completion is enrollment immediately following graduation. We also know that the majority of careers in the 21st century will require some form of postsecondary education. Our economy demands that a higher percentage of BPS graduates enroll in postsecondary institutions.

With the launch of our *College, Career and Life Readiness* metric and a strong citywide focus on the importance of a postsecondary plan, we are working toward dramatically increasing postsecondary attainment over the next several years.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Graduates of Boston's Catholic schools have an extremely robust college-going culture and enroll in college at a rate of 96%. This is an increase of 3 percentage points over last year. In the coming year, we will be working with the Archdiocese of Boston to dig deeper into this data so that we can gain a better understanding of students' educational destinations.

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Boston Charter public schools also have a strong college going culture. Graduates of the schools enroll in college immediately following high school at a rate of 89%. Additionally, 85% of those graduates enroll in 4-year institutions of higher education. Six Boston Charter public schools have graduates that are enrolling in college as a part of the class of 2015. They include: Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, City on A Hill, Codman Academy and MATCH High School.

"What is College Today?" source: College Board, "How College Shapes Lives: Understanding the Issues."



## College Enrollment\* Rates for High School Graduates

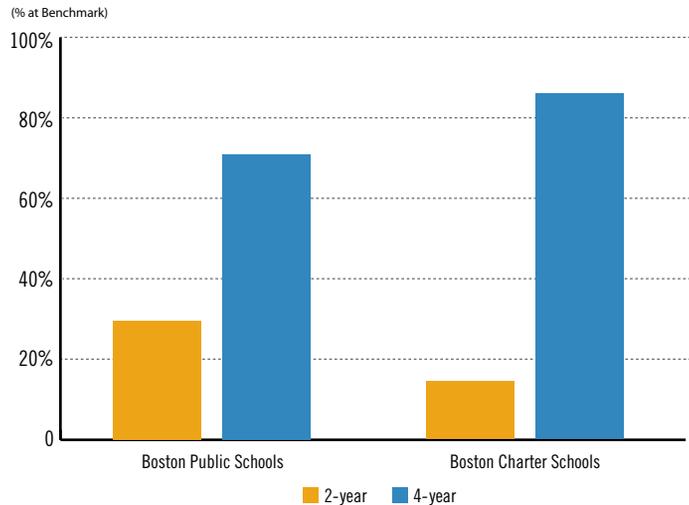
	Base Class of 2013	Current Class of 2015	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	71%	70%	2390	↓
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	96%	96%	3388	↑
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	90%	89%	228	↑

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

\*Enrolling within 16 months of high school graduation

### What's Under the Hood:

Class of 2015 2-year and 4-year College Enrollment Rate



Data from Mass Department of Elementary and Secondary Education DART

### What is College Today?

Over the past 30 years, the composition of the postsecondary student population in the United States has fundamentally changed. In 1970, 73% of all students were enrolled in public and private nonprofit four-year colleges and universities. By 2010 that number had fallen to 56%. Today in the U.S., “going to college” includes a wide variety of student experiences ranging from residential living at four-year colleges and universities to commuting from home to a nearby community college or for-profit institution.

The reality is that 43% of undergraduate students are enrolled in two-year institutions or institutions that do not grant Bachelor’s degrees. The students enrolled at these types of institutions are working toward postsecondary certificates or Associate degrees, which comprised 44% of the credentials awarded in 2010-11.

We are  
working toward  
dramatically  
increasing  
postsecondary  
attainment over  
the next  
several years.

# Postsecondary Attainment

## College Completion



### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

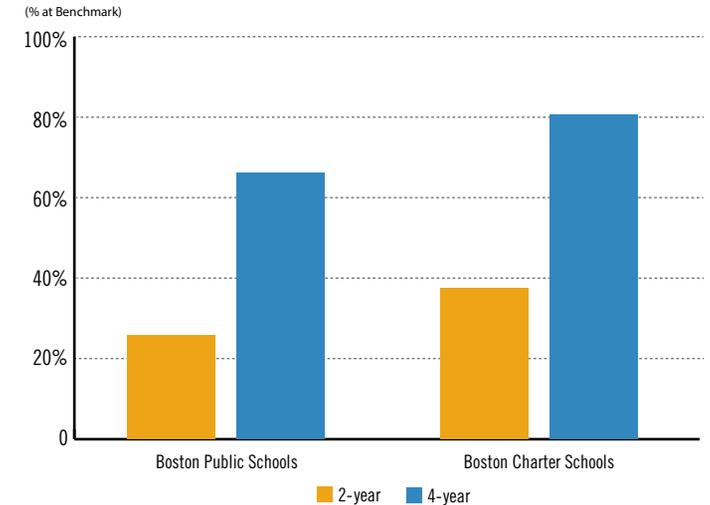
The percentage of BPS students who graduate high school and enroll in and complete a postsecondary credential within six years of high-school graduation increased this year to 51% for the class of 2010. This increase represents a steady trend over the last several years. The Boston Public Schools believes that its strong emphasis on the importance of all students graduating ready for postsecondary pursuits will increase the percentage of students who complete their credentials going forward. Additionally, Success Boston's work through the Lumina Talent Hub, described in the next section will improve the college completion rates of BPS graduates.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Boston Catholic schools have completed a data agreement with the National Student Clearing House that will allow them to track Catholic school graduates to and through college. We anticipate being able to establish a baseline for this metric for next year's report card.

### What's Under the Hood:

Class of 2010 2-year and 4-year College Completion Rate



Data from EDWIN

## College Completion Rates for High School Graduates Who Enrolled in College

	Base 2012/2013	Current 2015/2016	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	50% (Class of 2006)	51% (Class of 2010)	1178	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	42% (Class of 2006)	73% (Class of 2010)	96	↑

\*data from EDWIN

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Graduates of Boston’s Charter public schools who enroll in college are completing a postsecondary credential at a rate of 73% within six years of their graduation from high school. This is an increase of 25 percentage-points from last year. It should be noted that the 10-year span from entrance into high school and potential graduation from a postsecondary institution—coupled with the relatively short time that Charter public schools have been in operation—means that the total number of students who have completed high school and are six years from graduation is quite small. As a result, increases or decreases in college completion of as few as five or six students can impact the completion percentage significantly. The figures above include students who graduated from: Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, City on A Hill, Codman Academy and MATCH High School.

### Why does it matter?

A postsecondary degree is essential for success in Greater Boston’s knowledge economy, where more than half of all job vacancies require at least an Associate’s degree—a percentage that is expected only to grow. In addition, a typical Bachelor’s degree holder will earn \$1 million more than a high-school dropout over the course of a lifetime.

“Why does it Matter” source: Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University, “The College Payoff.”

The Boston Public Schools believes that its strong emphasis on the importance of all students graduating ready for postsecondary pursuits will increase the percentage of students who complete their credentials...

# Adult Learners

## Credentialed for Success



### How are we doing?

The Boston Opportunity Agenda reports on the percentage of 25- to 64-year olds with postsecondary credentials because this demographic best represents the city's workforce. This year the percentage increased by 2 percentage points to 57%. This puts us well within reach of our goal of 60% by 2025. These credentials consist of an Associate's or Bachelor's degree or an industry-recognized certification that allows individuals to secure higher-paying jobs.

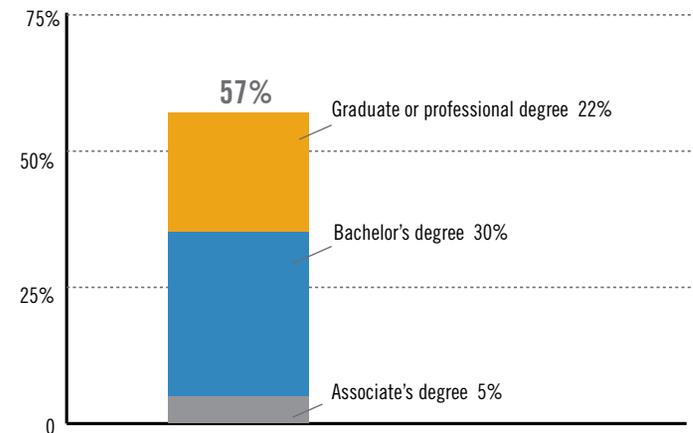
We are learning more about how to move this metric in meaningful ways that will meet the demands of our regional economy and support each individual's ability to thrive, but we still have a long way to go. A great deal of interesting and potentially game-changing work is happening in a variety of places throughout Boston that will ultimately impact the adult population and adult-serving organizations.

### Aspen Forum for Community Solutions

Described more fully later in this report card, the Boston Opportunity Youth (OY) Collaborative is comprised of 80 different partners, including local community-based organizations, the Boston Public Schools, philanthropy, city and state agencies and postsecondary institutions. The Collaborative impacts the number of credentialed adults in two ways. First, young people who are connected to postsecondary courses of study will ultimately increase the

### What's Under the Hood:

25 to 64 years old with College Credentials



percentage of Boston adults with a credential. Second, the OY Collaborative is working closely with Bunker Hill and Roxbury Community Colleges as well as the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology so that the lessons learned can have an impact on the wider community college landscape.

### Lumina Talent Hub

In September, the Lumina Foundation designated Boston one of 17 Talent Hub communities across the country. Boston earned this designation through the combined efforts of Success Boston that meet

## Percentage of 25- to 64-Year-Olds with Postsecondary Credentials

Base 2011	Current 2015	Annual Change	Goal
51%	57%	↑	60%

Data from the American Community Survey

Lumina’s rigorous standards for creating environments that attract, retain and cultivate talent—particularly among students of color, first-generation college students and those from low-income households.

Boston’s Talent Hub focuses on developing meta majors so that recent high school graduates, primarily 18- to 22-year olds, shorten their time to complete college and complete at higher rates. Like the other Talent Hub cities across the nation, Boston is committed to eliminating deep disparities in educational outcomes among African-Americans and Hispanics.

### SkillWorks

SkillWorks is a workforce funder collaborative comprised of local and national philanthropy that invests in sector-based training and placement strategies for low-skill, low- and moderate-income job seekers and employers who need to find and retain skilled employees. SkillWorks focuses its support in sectors where jobs seekers have greater access to entry level employment and opportunities for advancement through short-term skills training and certification. These sectors have traditionally included healthcare, construction and hospitality. Recently, SkillWorks expanded its

sector-driven portfolio into the IT/Tech industry where demand is heightened from a cross section of the region’s employers.

As a first step toward expanding access for both job seekers and employers, SkillWorks is partnering with the Boston Private Industry Council to convene a new employer-led industry consortium of CIO leaders from a cross section of employers with high demand IT/ Tech jobs to broker new career pathways for so-called nontraditional talent into IT occupations.

### Why does it matter?

Our rapidly evolving, complex economy is causing a surge in demand for skilled employees. Two-thirds of all jobs created in this decade will require some form of postsecondary education, according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce. Today, only some 40% of adults in the U.S. have achieved that level of education. Americans with a high school diploma or less accounted for four out every five jobs lost in the recent recession.

“Why does it matter?” source: Luminafoundation.org Goal 2025, *Why is the Goal so Urgent?*

In September, the Lumina Foundation designated Boston one of 17 Talent Hub communities across the country.

# Birth to Eight Collaborative

## A Strong Educational Foundation

The Boston Opportunity Agenda is working with more than 200 representatives...

The Boston Opportunity Agenda is working with parents and more than 200 representatives from early education centers, family day-care centers, nonprofit organizations, schools, public health, philanthropy, government and medical institutions to create a citywide plan for children from birth to age eight. Our strategy has three main prongs. First, we are identifying core metrics that, if moved, will result in better outcomes for children and families. The three outcomes we have selected are:

**Outcome 1:** All children ages birth to three experience a healthy start and healthy development.

**Outcome 2:** Early education and care providers build curious, confident and involved three- to five-year-old learners.

**Outcome 3:** Students aged five to eight are ready for sustained success.

Next, we have identified large community-wide endeavors that can be leveraged. One is the Boston Basics Campaign, which educates parents of infants in five codified behaviors, or basics, in interacting with infants that boost their children's language abilities, reasoning and confidence—starting from birth.

Another is DRIVE, a screening initiative of the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley in partnership with the Commonwealth's Office of Early Education and Care, Boston's Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Network, and the Mayor's Office. DRIVE is an innovative approach to improving school readiness with child development screening.

Finally, we are working in five committees to align current resources and activities and identify new ideas for increasing the rate and pace of change in early childhood. The committees are focused on areas with the greatest potential to create change:

- Family engagement and parent skill building;
- Coordinated developmental and behavioral screening and services;
- Quality education 0-5;
- Quality education K-3; and
- Maximizing the health and well-being of kids and families by coordinating health care institutions and educational institutions with families.

### Community Partners

Abt Associates, Action for Boston Community Development, Inc., American Academy of Pediatrics, Archdiocese of Boston, Barr Foundation, Black Philanthropy Fund at the Boston Foundation, Boston Children's Hospital, Boston Children's Museum, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Boston Community Capital, The Boston Foundation, Boston Medical Center, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Public Library, Boston Public Schools, Boston Renaissance, Boston University, Boston's Higher Ground, Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester, Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Boston, Brazelton Center, Bridge Boston, Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition, Catholic Charities, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Center on the Developing Child at Harvard, Charlestown Nursery

School, Children's Health Watch, City of Boston, City of Cambridge Dept. of Human Service Program, CitySprouts, Countdown to Kindergarten, Cradles to Crayons, Crispus-Attucks, Department of Public Health, Department of Early Education and Care, East Boston Social Center, Efficacy Institute, Epiphany School, Families First, Family Nurturing Center of Massachusetts, Financial Empowerment Center-Dudley, First Teacher, Generations Incorporated, Girl Scouts, Head Start ABCD, Health Resources in Action, Hestia Fund, The Home for Little Wanderers, Horizons, IBA, Jumpstart for Young Children, Kennedy Center, KeySteps Inc., Mass Department of Public Health, NAMI Massachusetts, Neighborhood Villages, New Profit, Nurtury, Paige Academy, Phenomenal Moms, The Harold Whitworth Pierce Charitable Trust, PPAL, Raising A Reader Massachusetts, ReadBoston, Room to Grow, Ropes & Gray, School Effectiveness and Inequality Initiative, Smarter Give, Smart From the Start, Inc. (Smart), Social Venture Partners Boston, South Boston Neighborhood House, United South End Settlements, Sportsmen's Tennis and Enrichment Center, Strategies for Children, Inc., Tartt's Day Care Center, Tufts Medical Center, Union Capital Boston, United South End Settlements, United Way Of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, University of Massachusetts Boston, Vital Villages, Wellesley Center for Women and Children, West End House, Young People's Project and YMCA of Greater Boston.

PHOTO: MAYPONG | DREAMSTIME.COM



# Summer Learning Academies

## On Track for High School Graduation



PHOTO: CASEY ATKINS

### Summer Learning Academies

In 2017 the Boston Public Schools officially adopted the Boston Summer Learning Project as its flagship summer school offering, rebranding it to the Boston Summer Learning Academies (SLA), institutionalizing a demonstration project as a citywide approach to summer learning. Supported by the Boston Opportunity Agenda, the SLA aims to reverse summer learning loss; improve the skills associated with school, college and career success; and deepen school-community partnerships. Powered by \$1.4 million from BPS and another \$700K in private funds raised by nonprofit partner Boston After School & Beyond (BASB), the 2017 Summer Learning Academies involved 31 sites and collectively reached 2,307 high-need Boston students in grades K-12. This marks substantial growth from the summer of 2016 when 1,166 students were served. By offering a common measurement platform to 101 additional summer sites, the broader network—coined the 5th Quarter of Learning—reached 11,334 Boston youth in 2017.

Co-managed by BPS and BASB, the SLA serves high-need students who are unlikely to access quality summer programming on their own. Across SLA sites, certified academic teachers and enrichment staff co-develop and co-deliver academic and enrichment programming to prepare students for success in the next grade level. The SLA sets standards with common goals and shared evaluation, while allowing flexibility in program approach. All of these opportunities allow students to apply content knowledge in hands-on exciting ways, empowering students to become life-long learners who are equipped for success in school, work and life.

All 5th Quarter partners implement common measures, including teacher surveys, student input and third-party observations to evaluate programs. Representatives from each site gather year round to discuss best practices identified through shared data to improve their programs for the ensuing summer. This data-driven approach is at the forefront of innovation in youth development and summer learning nationally.

### Community Partners

ACEDONE, Achieve, Alliance for Inclusion and Prevention, BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life), Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, Berklee College of Music, Bethel A.M.E. Church, Bird Street Community Center, Boston Area Health Education Center, Boston Arts Academy, The Boston Foundation, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Boston Day and Evening Academy, Boston Private Industry Council, Boston Public Schools, Boston Scores, Boston University, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Boston, Boston Plan for Excellence (BPE), Breakthrough Greater Boston, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Burke High School, Calculus Project, Camp Harbor View, Community Music Center of Boston, Courageous Sailing, Crossroads Dearborn STEM Academy, DotHouse Health, Empow Studios, Freedom House, Generation Teach, Hale Reservation, Harlem Lacrosse, Harvard-Kent School, Haynes Early Education Center, Health Resources in Action, The LEAH Project, Horizons at Dedham Country Day School, Imagine That, Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA), Josiah Quincy Elementary School, Josiah Quincy Upper School, Leahy Holloran Community Center,

Mass Audubon's Boston Nature Center, MassArt, Artward Bound, Neighborhood Network Center Inc., North Bennet Street School, Northeastern University, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Phillips Brooks House Association, Sociedad Latina, Sportsmen's Tennis and Enrichment Center, The Steppingstone Foundation, St. Stephen's Youth Programs, Thompson Island Outward Bound, Tierney Learning Center, University of Massachusetts Boston, UMass Boston Institute for Learning and Teaching, VietAid, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Wheelock College, World Ocean School, YMCA of Greater Boston and Zoo New England.

## 2017 Summer Results

*Skill Development*—Summer programs this year recorded real progress in improving critical skills essential for college and career success. In the summer of 2017, teachers rated students as significantly improved in math, English Language Arts and all six social-emotional skills measured: critical thinking, communication, perseverance, relationships with adults, relationships with peers and self-regulation.

*Program Quality*—As rated by external observers on the Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT) tool, programs on average exceeded the research-based benchmark on 14 out of 15 domains falling just below the benchmark in Nature of Activity. Findings from the student survey, the SAYO Y, were similar to previous years and mirrored positive trends from the APT, although students also pointed to areas for future growth, including opportunities for youth leadership, youth choice and autonomy.

## Local and National Impact

Boston's programs were part of the largest, most rigorous national study to date on summer learning, commissioned by the Wallace Foundation and researched by the RAND Corporation. The fall 2016 report, *Learning from Summer*, showed that students who attend summer learning programs at high rates outperform control groups in math, reading and social-emotional skills. These statistically significant advantages persist over the course of the entire school year.

These findings were a driving factor in BPS's decision this year to nearly triple its financial investment in the SLA model, infusing \$1.4 million into the initiative (including the cost of in-kind teaching staff). In November of 2017, BPS released a call for proposals for the 5th Quarter Opportunity Portfolio to identify sites for the 2018 Summer Learning Academies. Modeling last year's Request for Submissions process, this announcement is supported by approximately \$2.25 million in district funds, which will be awarded competitively to programs with a track record of implementing research-based programming and serving high-need students in Boston.

Building on the momentum of 2016, BASB led efforts this past year to secure statewide funding to expand summer learning across the Commonwealth. Representative Alice Peisch, Co-Chair of the Joint Committee on Education, filed House Bill 2868. The bill would expand Boston's research-based summer approach to cities with high proportions of low-income students. In April 2017, the bill was heard by the Joint Committee on Education; it was unanimously approved and advanced to the House Ways and Means Committee where it awaits further action.



# High School Redesign

## Crafting a Future Vision



PHOTO: MARK PIANOWSKI

Boston Public Schools students are the leaders, scholars, entrepreneurs, advocates and innovators of tomorrow. Boston families deserve nothing less than a world-class innovative education system with welcoming schools that are working to transform the lives of all our children. The job of BPS is to prepare its graduates to be productive, successful workers and citizens.

Today, a quality secondary education is not available to all Boston students. Many of our high schools need to update their teaching and learning approaches to provide the tools necessary for success in postsecondary education, career and life. Boston's High School Redesign (HSReD) Initiative was created by the BPS and the City of Boston to address these challenges.

### Our Accomplishments

In its first phase, HSReD aimed to build a shared community vision for the defining elements of a high-quality, modern high school learning experience. A six-month public engagement process that reached more than 2,000 students, teachers, administrators, parents and other community members gathered thoughts and feedback on what students should know and ideas about what schools of the future should offer. A set of design principles were created to guide the initial work. A number of pilot projects commenced across the district and were used to inform phase two including a design process at Madison Park Technical Vocational

High School and a student-led high school redesign book published at Margarita Muniz Academy in partnership with 826 Boston.

During the second phase, the Boston Opportunity Agenda worked with the BPS, the Mayor's Office and a wide variety of stakeholders to create a citywide definition of College, Career and Life Readiness. The definition builds on the HSReD principles and ties them to tangible outcomes by providing a framework for describing not only what a student should be able to do but also the experiences that are necessary to build those competencies. The BPS has adopted the definition as its North Star.

Throughout the initial period of public engagement around HSReD and the work to create a citywide definition of College, Career and Life Readiness, there has also been significant attention to increasing the rigor of high school academic instruction, expanding meaningful student engagement with Career Technical Education, and continuing to create opportunities for college and career exploration. Several high schools are introducing (or expanding) the use of Project-Based Learning, standards-based performance tasks to assess student learning, and new career technical education programming. This work is outlined below. There has been an explosion of interest in creating dual enrollment opportunities for students with local two- and four-year colleges. Finally, planning and early implementation of several "Linked Learning" pathways and for creating three new school designs has begun.

Simultaneously, the BPS is currently engaging in a planning and landscape analysis focused on how to support off track youth to persist through secondary school. They have been working with the Parthenon Group to analyze the educational pathways of on

and off track high school students and to explore options for how to strengthen outcomes for students who have fallen off track to graduate. BPS also worked with Springpoint to identify and catalogue activities, programs and initiatives at local high schools that support students through to graduation and include exploration of post-secondary options. Together the actions taken to date are laying a foundation for system and school based changes that will support increased engagement in school and stronger outcomes for all youth that will be pursued over the next several years.

The current phase of HSReD combines improvement strategies, redesign initiatives and innovation initiatives. It includes central office and system changes, new supports and strategies for existing high schools and the development of new program models. For the most part, it is not about launching new schools. While much emphasis has been placed on this around the country, launching a new school does not necessarily result in the broader system changes and innovations that improve high school learning for all students.

To guide the work during the 2017/2018 school year, the secondary school office at BPS has established the following goals:

#### **Increase Access to Rigorous College Coursework and Decrease Remediation Course Enrollments**

- Core subjects prepare students for college and career
- Opportunities for students take college level courses toward certificate programs and/or academic degrees while in high school

#### **Increase the Landscape of College + Career and Technical Education Offerings**

- Professional skills and industry-related knowledge are part of academic coursework and provide context for learning

#### **Create a Continuum of Work-Based Learning Experiences**

- Real-world experiences, including mentoring, job shadowing and internships, provide opportunities to explore careers

#### **Graduate All Students College, Career and Life Ready**

- Such supports as counseling and supplemental and/or remedial instruction help students develop their own success plan

### **Moving Forward: The Next Phase**

Intentional career pathways designed to align with these goals are under development or are underway at Brighton High School (Arts and Media) and Excel High School (Business Technology), Charlestown High School (C-Town Tech and C-Town Business), East Boston High School (e.g., Design and Visual Communication, Hospitality Management, STEM—AP, Aviation and Biotech), Madison Park Technical Vocational High School (e.g., Automotive Design, Culinary Arts, Metal Fabrication and Plumbing) and Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers. Other innovations, such as Intrepid Academy at Hale Reservation—a nature immersion semester model—is underway at Another Course to College and New Mission and TechBoston Academy is collaborating with STEAM Studio Education Foundation, the MIT Edgerton Center and the BPS Office of Innovation to develop student-centered and hands-on approaches in science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM.)



PHOTO: MARK PIJANOWSKI

# Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative

## Building Pathways for Opportunity Youth

...Boston's  
opportunity  
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the 7,000  
young people in  
Boston who are  
16-24 years old  
and are  
not in school  
or working

Convened by the Boston Opportunity Agenda and the Boston Private Industry Council, the Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC) is a group of more than 80 stakeholders who have been working together for the last five years to expand and better connect education and employment pathways available to Boston's opportunity youth—the 7,000 young people in Boston who are 16-24 years old and are not in school or working. Over the course of its existence, the OYC has conducted research, shared data and mapped programs and pathways designed to support youth in their education and careers. Currently the Collaborative is focused on ensuring that lessons learned through our initiatives, focus groups and research over the past five years become part of the larger systems that touch Opportunity Youth (OY).

For young people ages 16-21 who are still enrolled in the Boston Public Schools system, the OYC is engaged in BPS efforts to end the school to prison pipeline. Youth and adult OYC members are active participants in two committees: BPS Attendance and Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline, which are focused on increasing student attendance by expanding whole-school approaches to both social emotional learning and school discipline.

For older OY with a high school credential, the OYC launched the Connection Center, run by X-Cel Education. It serves as a one-stop resource center that reaches out to young people, assesses their skills, challenges and interests and then refers them to postsecondary and career pathways that will lead to long-term success. Since its inception, the Connection Center has

screened close to 500 young people and connected approximately 200 with education and training programs. In December of 2017, the Connection Center co-located with Boston Career Link in a partnership that will allow both entities to provide expanded services to Opportunity Youth.

Working in collaboration with the Rennie Center, the OYC published a report on Opportunity Youth and College Success. The report compiles findings from both a literature review of best practices for supporting Opportunity Youth in postsecondary education and focus groups of local students, coaches and postsecondary leaders. Its recommendations for colleges, nonprofit partners and the state focus on increased alignment of resources and curriculum across systems, as well as coordinated support for students.

Finally the Youth Voice Project, facilitated by Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, continued to represent the voice of Boston's young people in the Collaborative's work by helping them to develop their own initiatives. This year the Youth Voice Project hosted five intergenerational conversations designed to spark dialogue, deeper understanding and greater collaboration between youth and adults. It will be expanding these conversations over the next several months, culminating in a publication about lessons learned by the participants during the conversations.

The Collaborative will continue to engage and elevate the profile of Opportunity Youth of Boston and scale pathways through data collection, convening activities and research.

**Community Partners:** Action for Boston Community Development, Allston Brighton Community Development Corporation, American Student Assistance, America's Promise Alliance, Angell Foundation, Asian American Civic Association, The Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation, Barr Foundation, Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, Boston Asian Youth Essential Service, Bunker Hill Community College, Bird Street Community Center, Black Ministerial Alliance, Boston After School and Beyond, Boston Link, Boston Cares, Boston Centers for Youth and Families, Boston Day and Evening, The Boston Foundation, Boston Mayor's Office, Boston Public Schools, Boston STRIVE, Boston Youth Service Network, B-PEACE for Jorge, Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston, Bridge over Troubled Waters, Brigham & Women's Hospital, City of Boston, City Year, College Bound Dorchester, College & Career Readiness Massachusetts, Committee for Public Counsel Services, Commonwealth Corporation, Community Work Services, Community Call, Diamond Educators Mentoring Inc., Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, Dorchester Youth Collaborative, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, ESAC-GED Plus, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Freedom House, Future Chefs, Health Resources in Action, Higher Ground, Hull Lifesaving Museum, The Hyams Foundation, Hyde Square Task Force, Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA), Inncity Weightlifting, Justice Resource Institute (JRI), Jewish Vocational Service (JVS), JFYNetWorks, KeySteps, Liberty Mutual Foundation, Madison Park Development Corporation, Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, Massachusetts Communities Action Network

(MCAN), Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, Mayor's Office of Workforce Development, More Than Words, Multicultural Dropout Outreach Collaborative, New England Center for Arts and Technology (NECAT), New England Community Services, New Horizons Boston CLC, New Profit, Northeastern University, NorthStar Learning Centers, Notre Dame Education Center, Inc., OneGoal Massachusetts, Ostiguy High School, Partnerships Advancing Communities Together (PACT), Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps, Roca Inc., Roxbury Community College, Roxbury Youthworks, Inc., RoxMAPP, SkillWorks, Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation, Sociedad Latina, State Street Corporation, Teen Empowerment, Trinity Boston Foundation, United Way of Massachusetts Bay & Merrimack Valley, Urban College of Boston, Whole Foods, X-Cel Education, Year Up, Youth Hub, Youth Options Unlimited, Youth on Board, Youth Voice Project, YouthBuild Boston, YouthBuild Just A Start and Youth Options Unlimited Boston.



PHOTO: MONKEYBUSINESSIMAGES | ISTOCK

# Success Boston: Boston's Citywide College Completion Initiative

## Getting Ready, Getting In, Getting Through, Getting Connected



PHOTO: RICHARD HOWARD

Launched in 2008 in response to a longitudinal study by Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies, which found that only 35% of BPS graduates who enrolled in college completed an Associate's or Bachelor's degree by age 25, Success Boston is a citywide college completion initiative. Its goal is to dramatically increase the rate of postsecondary completion for Boston Public Schools (BPS) graduates. Convened by the Mayor, Success Boston seeks to double the number of graduates who achieve a postsecondary degree. The specific goal is a 70% college completion rate within six years of high school graduation for the BPS Class of 2011.

Success Boston works across systems and sectors and its partner organizations are implementing a four-part strategy to ensure that students are *Getting Ready, Getting In, Getting Through and Getting Connected*.

### Getting Ready

The BPS is the lead partner for the *Getting Ready* goal and is working to strengthen student readiness for success by increasing the academic rigor of high school, strengthening college advising, and partnering with Boston Afterschool & Beyond to strengthen the social-emotional skills and abilities that will help students succeed in their postsecondary pursuits. Since 2008, core readiness activities have included expanding access to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment courses that will prepare students to meet the demands of college. In 2017, BPS adopted a College, Career and Life Readiness Definition and Framework, which will guide its work going forward.

### Getting In

Convened by the Boston Foundation, nonprofit partners bridge the high school to college experience by providing financial aid advising and "transition coaching." Launched with the class of 2009, nine nonprofits work with students, typically beginning in their senior year of high school, to help them make the transition from high school to college. Coaches meet with students—individually and in groups, on the college campus and in the community—and maintain regular contact through texting, emails and phone calls. In 2014, Success Boston received a Social Innovation Fund grant that scaled coaching from approximately 300 students per graduating class to 1,000 per graduating class, beginning with the high school class of 2015. Every community college student who attended a Boston high school is eligible for coaching, and in 2017 Success Boston partnered with

the Mayor's Tuition Free Community College program to ensure that students had access to a coach. Coaching partners include Bottom Line, Boston Private Industry Council, College Bound Dorchester, Freedom House, Hyde Square Task Force, Match Beyond, Sociedad Latina, Steppingstone and West End House Boys & Girls Club. These organizations work directly with students and in partnership with student support services at area colleges to integrate the system of transition supports for all students. The nonprofit uAspire provides financial aid advising for students, as well as training and support for nonprofits. Early data suggests students who receive coaching are more likely to re-enroll and persist in their first and second years of college.

## Getting Through

Convened by University of Massachusetts Boston and Bunker Hill Community College, 37 local postsecondary institutions have committed to support Boston's students through to completion of their postsecondary credential. Campuses track student data and provide "just in time" supports for students who need it. Campuses have built partnerships on other campuses, and in 2017, joined together to participate in a pilot effort to identify students who had "stopped out" of their higher education journey. Individual campuses developed plans to reach out to students to encourage them to re-enroll and shared best practices. In addition, campuses have built strong partnerships with nonprofit partners, in some instances "embedding" coaches—from their own student support staff and from nonprofit partners—on site as part of campus support offerings. In 2017, Success Boston was awarded a Talent

Hub grant from the Lumina Foundation, which will support the creation of clear, structured pathways for students. This work will be piloted at Bunker Hill Community College and UMass Boston, and will help students understand program and transfer requirements. Bunker Hill and UMass Boston are two of the most common destinations for students from the BPS.

## Getting Connected

Convened by the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), the Getting Connected goal focuses on building career advising and awareness with students in high school and college, and encourages employers to provide internships and part-time jobs that not only help students pay for their education, but also expose them to potential career pathways. The PIC connects high school and college students to summer jobs, and is currently working to build career advising capacity in partnership with high schools and colleges.

## Results

College enrollment rates for BPS graduates have steadily increased, as have college completion rates. For the [revised] baseline Class of 2000, 735 students earned a college degree within seven years. For the Class of 2010, 1,178 students earned a college credential within six years. Success Boston partners believe that the cross-sector partnerships contribute to this growth by improving academic readiness and providing large numbers of students with transition coaching and on-campus supports.

PHOTO: RICHARD HOWARD





# About Us

The Boston Opportunity Agenda (BOA) is a public/private partnership that works to increase dramatically the pace and scale of change in education for all children in Boston, with a focus on students who experience the least access to successful pathways. Our vision: All of Boston's children and youth are prepared to succeed in college, career and life. We fervently believe that by combining our resources, expertise and influence around a single agenda, we will have a greater impact on Boston's cradle-to-career educational pipeline.

While Boston has many exciting programs and organizations that focus on providing opportunities for individuals, the Boston Opportunity Agenda is a long-term partnership focused on achieving systemic change that will ultimately affect all Boston residents.

The partnership is entering its eighth year and is governed by the CEOs of each member organization. Together they identify strategic issues facing our education pipeline in whole or in part, formulate the Boston Opportunity Agenda priorities and strategies, and provide a call to action for community stakeholders.

## Our Strategies for Driving Change

**Data and Public Accountability:** Accurate and timely data is both a call to action and an accountability mechanism. We are committed to regularly reporting progress on key metrics and encouraging the use of common definitions, metrics and benchmarks across the pipeline to track how Boston is doing toward achieving its education goals.

**Collective Action:** We convene diverse stakeholders to establish and tackle big goals, forming networks that share data and best practices and engage in continuous improvement. We also source and invest in catalytic solutions to increase the pace and scale of change.

We have created multiple ways for others to join us:

- **Investing Partners** contribute financial and human resources to BOA priority initiatives.
- **Philanthropic Partners** align their education investments to support BOA priority initiatives or advance BOA goals and share common data collection, tools and analysis.
- **Community Partners** join one of the priority investment networks and align one or more of their education programs in support of BOA goals. They share common data collection tools and analysis as well as participate in continuous improvement work.

Our current partners are identified in the programmatic updates section of the report card. To learn more about becoming a Boston Opportunity Agenda partner at any level please contact Kristin McSwain at [Kristin.McSwain@bostonopportunityagenda.org](mailto:Kristin.McSwain@bostonopportunityagenda.org).

## These generous investors have made the Boston Opportunity Agenda's accomplishments possible

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