



# The Boston Opportunity Agenda

Sixth Annual Report Card

January 2017

# A Historic Partnership

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# Introduction

Dear Friends,

We are proud to present the sixth annual Boston Opportunity Agenda Report Card, which reflects the progress that is being made throughout our city's entire education pipeline. More than 77,000 school-age children live in the City of Boston. The vast majority, 93%, attend a school in the Boston Public Schools system, a Boston Charter public school, or a Boston Catholic school. Our goal with this report card is to identify points where we are meeting our obligations to the students of our city as well as areas where we are falling short.

In this city where public education was literally invented, it is imperative that all of our children have access to a world-class education and graduate from high school and college career-ready and well positioned to contribute to our highly competitive economy and way of life.

As in years past, the education landscape in Boston continues to grow and change. Teachers and administrators in all of our schools are actively implementing new assessments and working to utilize the information they glean to improve classroom teaching and learning. They are also continuing to identify ways to capture the progress that students are making in their social and emotional growth, with the goal of ensuring that our young people are well rounded and ready to take on life after they exit our educational systems. As a result, this report card reflects an ecosystem that is evolving—as educational institutions at all levels strive to serve their students in the best possible way.

In the following pages, you will find the most up-to-date information available on Boston's education pipeline, from kindergarten through college graduation, including measures on: school readiness; 3rd-grade reading proficiency; 10th-grade proficiency; high school completion; dropout rates; post-secondary enrollment and completion statistics; and adult postsecondary attainment.

The public systems—the Boston Public Schools and Boston's Charter public schools—use the same assessments. The data for both are gathered from the Boston Public Schools and from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Each measure includes a baseline, the current percentage of students who are at proficiency and the actual number of students represented by the percentage. Where assessments are in the process of changing, the baseline has been updated to the first year the current assessment was implemented. For example, the baseline for 3rd-grade reading is 2014—the first year that PARCC was administered by the Boston Public Schools and the Boston Charter public schools. We will continue to update the baseline in this way when assessments change in order to ensure that readers may easily compare changes in the data over time. The resource for data for the Catholic schools reflected in this report is the Archdiocese of Boston.

As this publication goes to press, the Boston Opportunity Agenda is embarking on a new piece of work that will contextualize the

data points in this report card. Over the coming year, we will be working with representatives of the Boston Public Schools, Boston's Charter public schools and the Archdiocese of Boston, as well as the Boston Mayor's office, higher education, philanthropy and the workforce development community to create a definition of college and career readiness for Boston. We will also be setting a citywide goal with leading and lagging indicators so that we can all reach a better understanding of the skills, attributes and knowledge our young people must possess when they exit K-12 and pursue their postsecondary path.

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 meets the needs of the 21st century economy of our city.

As we move forward, we will continue to update you on our progress and let you know how you can be a part of helping to transform the educational experiences of all Boston students as they prepare themselves for productive, fulfilling and well-rounded lives.

Sincerely,



Reverend Ray Hammond  
Chair



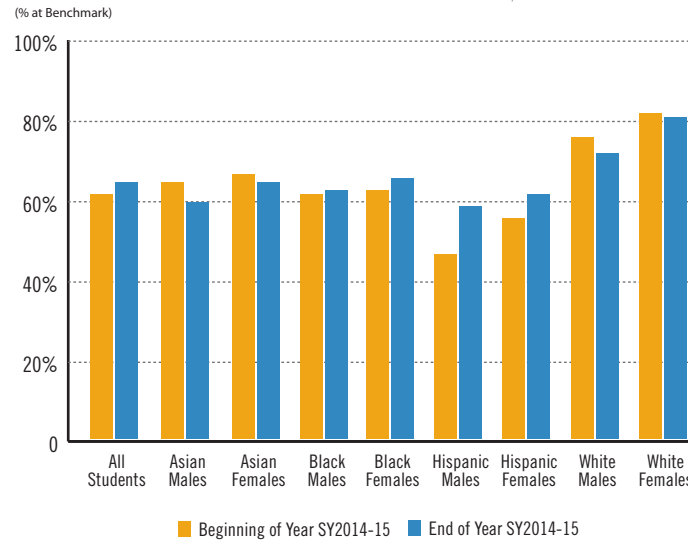
Kristin McSwain  
Executive Director



# 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 2015-2016, 61% of incoming kindergarteners were assessed as having the necessary early learning skills—a decrease of two percentage points. Kindergarten achievement continues to be strong, with 64% of students finishing the year at benchmark.

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 five period in order to affect school readiness. To start, it is critical to have a better understanding of the developmental progress of young children during the first five years and the transition they make into the K-12 school system. The Boston Opportunity Agenda has been working with a number of partners to convene a cross-sector Birth to Eight conversation in Boston to address this issue. For more information, see the Birth to Eight section of this report card.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Boston Catholic elementary schools measure kindergarten readiness in a variety of ways, including the DIBELS NEXT and the Bracken School Readiness Assessment, as opposed to a common assessment. They are working on a multi-year, grant-funded early childhood initiative to establish high-quality classrooms and benchmarks for 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 2015 / 2016	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	62%	61% (64% at end of year)	1935 (2044 end of year)	↓

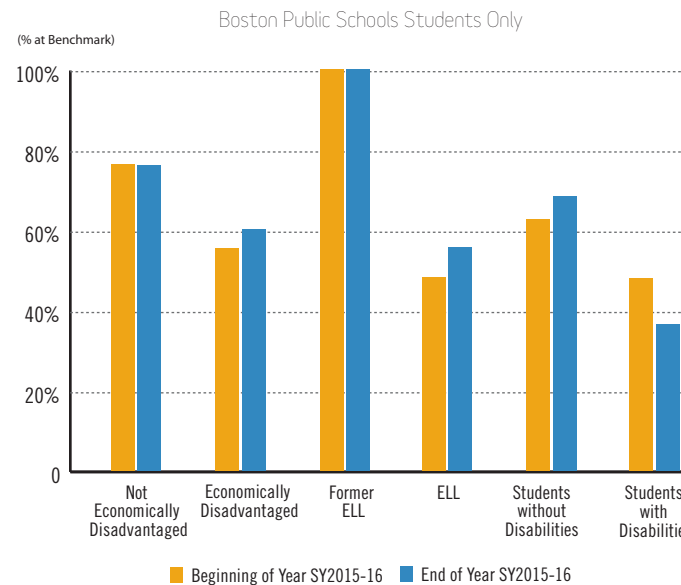
### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Boston Charter public schools also do not have a uniform measure across schools. However, many schools utilize Strategic Evaluation of Progress (STEP) to measure literacy growth for students. We 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



...It is critical to have a better understanding of the developmental progress of young children during the first five years...

# A Strong Educational Foundation

## 3rd-Grade Reading Proficiency

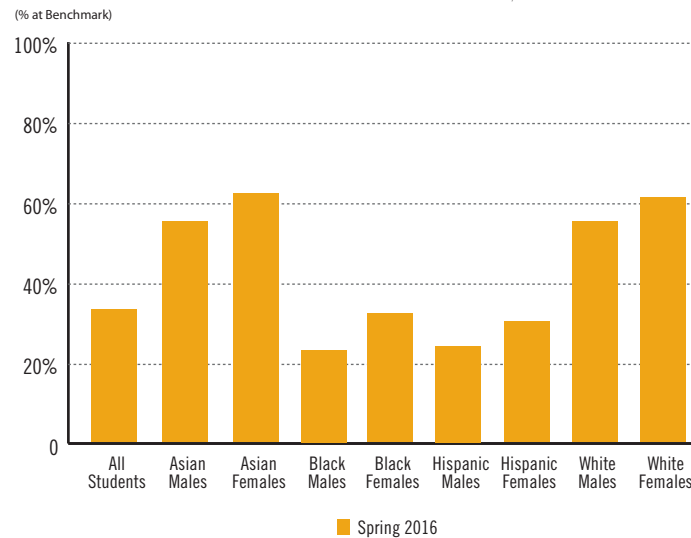
### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

Public schools in Massachusetts are in the middle of a tremendous, state-initiated change in assessments. Over the past three years, Boston's public schools have moved from administering MCAS in all grades to PARCC (*Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers*) in all grades except 10th. This report card uses 2014/2015 as a



### What's Under the Hood:

Meeting or Exceeding Expectations For PARCC  
Boston Public Schools Students Only



base line for reading proficiency since it is the first year that the PARCC was administered.

BPS 3rd-grade English Language Arts (ELA) PARCC scores remained the same this year at 33% "Met or Exceeded Expectations." Eight schools saw strong Student Growth Percentiles, which demonstrate gains in student knowledge during the school year.

BPS is expanding the methods and strategies that have successfully transformed BPS kindergarten classrooms to include 1st and 2nd-graders. *Focus on First* and *Focus on Second* are in various stages of implementation. At each grade level, new reading curricula have been adopted and teachers are engaged in professional development and coaching that has already produced tremendous results in K1 and K2 classrooms.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Boston Catholic schools are also in the midst of a monumental change in assessments. Boston Catholic schools have moved from administering the Stanford 10 to the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) in mathematics and reading.

The MAP assessments are administered online and identify areas of strength and opportunity for every student. All of the assessments are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and results are reported in a projected proficiency to MCAS. Based on the Fall 2016 MAP administration, 74% of



## Percentage of 3rd-Graders Reading Proficiently

	Base 2014/2015	Current 2015/2016	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b> (PARCC)	33%	33%	1424	↔
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b> (MAP)	79%	74%	1488	↓
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b> (PARCC)	61%	55%	287	↓

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

3rd-graders scored “Proficient” and “Advanced” in reading, down from 79% in 2014/15.

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

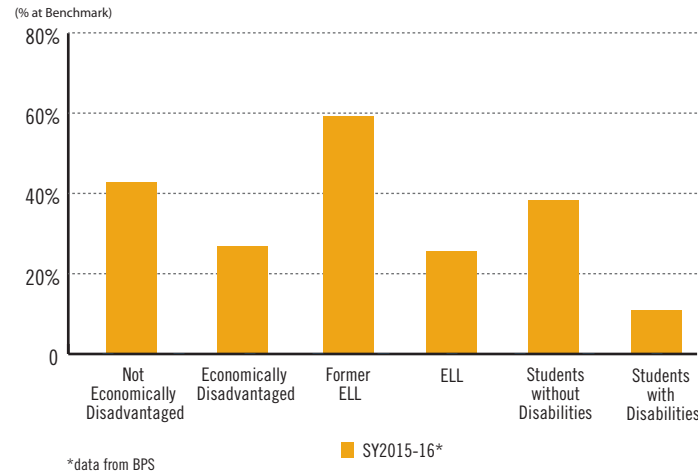
55% of Boston Public charter school 3rd grade students “Met or Exceeded Expectations” in ELA, which is down from 2015’s 61%. The aggregate figures include data from all of Boston’s Charter public schools with a 3rd grade.

### 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 through students’ entire educational experience, even affecting graduation from high school.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



The Boston Public Schools is expanding the methods and strategies that have successfully transformed its kindergarten classrooms to include 1st and 2nd-graders.

# On Track for High School Graduation

## 6th-Grade Mathematics Proficiency

### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

This year, 32% of 6th-graders scored “Met or Exceeded Expectations” on the PARCC assessment. This is an increase of two percentage points over last year. However, there is clearly a great deal of work to be done to ensure that students are literate in math and ready to take on the high level course work that leads to college completion. In order to make progress, BPS has partnered with EdVestors on its *Zeroing in on Math Initiative*, which provides professional development and support for teachers

and school leaders, as well as works with a set of Math Fellows to identify and problem solve barriers to math achievement.

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

In Fall 2016, 48% of 6th-graders scored “Proficient” and “Advanced” on the NWEA MAP in mathematics, down seven percentage points from last year. The MAP assessment in mathematics is administered online and identifies areas of strength and opportunity for every student. This assessment is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and results are reported in a projected proficiency to MCAS. Over the coming year, the Archdiocese will conduct a series of teacher workshops dedicated to interpreting MAP data to inform classroom instruction.

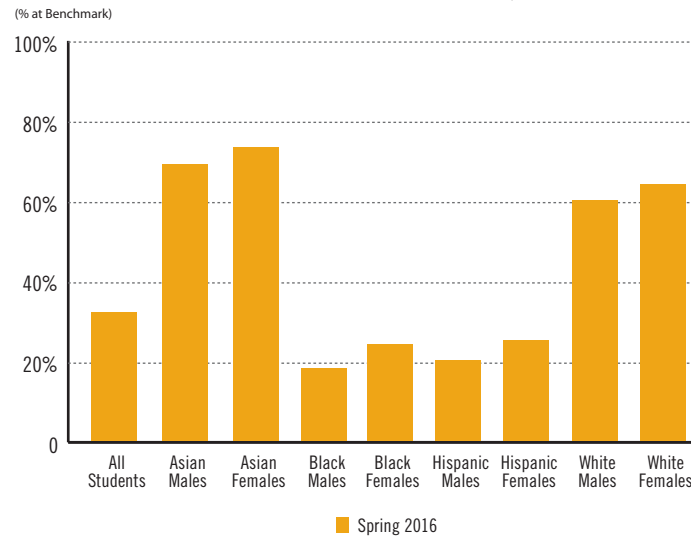
### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Sixth-grade math scores remained level in the aggregate this year at 53% “Met or Exceeded Expectations” for Boston’s Public Charter schools. The aggregate figure reported here includes data from all of Boston’s Charter public schools with grade 6: Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, Boston Renaissance, Brooke Charter School East Boston, Brooke Charter School Mattapan, Brooke Charter School Roslindale, Codman Academy, Dorchester Collegiate Academy, Excel Academy, KIPP Academy Boston, MATCH Community Day and Neighborhood House.



### What’s Under the Hood:

Meeting or Exceeding Expectations For PARCC  
Boston Public Schools Students Only



## Percentage of 6th-Graders Proficient in Math

	Base 2014/2015	Current 2015/2016	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b> (PARCC)	30%	32%	1044	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b> (MAP)	55%	48%	922	↓
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b> (PARCC)	53%	53%	590	↔

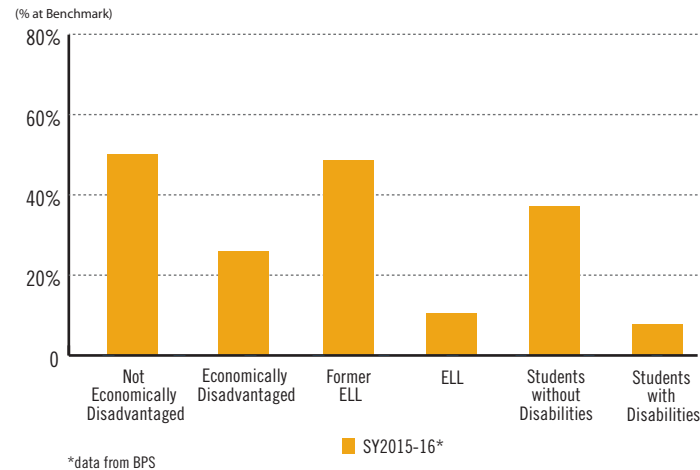
Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

### Why does it matter?

Proficiency in 6th-grade math is one of the indicators for high school and postsecondary success. The Boston Opportunity Agenda is adding this metric this year because it has recently been included in the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's College and Career Readiness Early Warning Indicator System. We also anticipate that it will become a part of the City of Boston's College and Career Readiness indicators. Finally, it is a metric that all three education systems are paying attention to as they strive to improve rigor for all students across Boston.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



Proficiency in 6th-grade math is one of the indicators for high school and postsecondary success.

# 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 CD 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, MCAS remains the assessment for determining competency in Massachusetts. For the second year in a row, the percentage of Boston Public Schools 10th-graders completing the competency requirement increased five percentage points to 64%. Overall, 82% of students scored "Proficient" or higher on ELA, 67% scored "Proficient" or higher in Math and 88% scored "Needs Improvement" or higher on the Science MCAS. Each of these scores is 4%, 3% and 4% higher respectively compared to 2014.

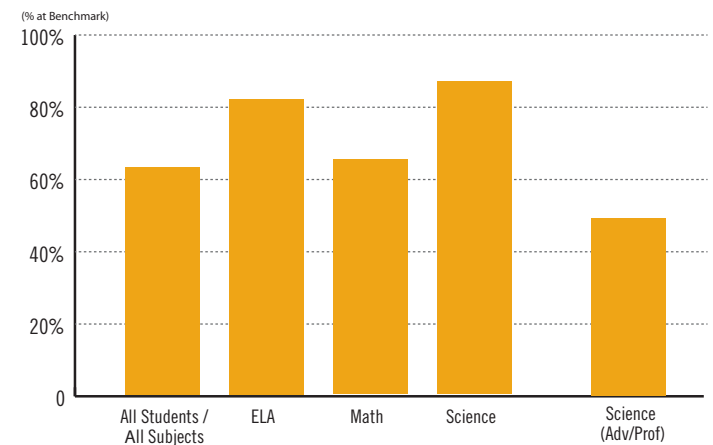
While the achievement gap persists, the disparity between African-American and Latino students and white students continues to decrease. The proficiency achievement ELA gap between white and African American/Black students narrowed

\*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."

from 15% in 2015 to 7% in 2016. The gap in ELA between white and Hispanic/Latino students decreased from 16% in 2015 to 10% in 2016. Proficiency rates also improved across most subgroups, including economically disadvantaged, ELLs, and students with disabilities. The ELA proficiency rate for ELLs increased seven percentage points to 58% in 2016—42% higher than in 2009 when the proficiency rate was 16%.

**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 2015/2016	# of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b> (MCAS)	59%	64%	2247	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b> (MAP)	94%	92%	1551	↓
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b> (MCAS)	88%	86%	394	↓

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

In Fall 2016, 92% of 8th-graders scored “Proficient” and “Advanced” on the NWEA MAP in reading, down two percentage points from last year. This assessment is conducted online and is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The results are reported in a projected proficiency to MCAS.

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

This year the competency results for Boston Charter public schools decreased by two percentage points from 88% to 86%. 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 and MATCH High School.

### 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.

While the achievement gap persists, the disparity between African-American and Latino students and white students continues to decrease.

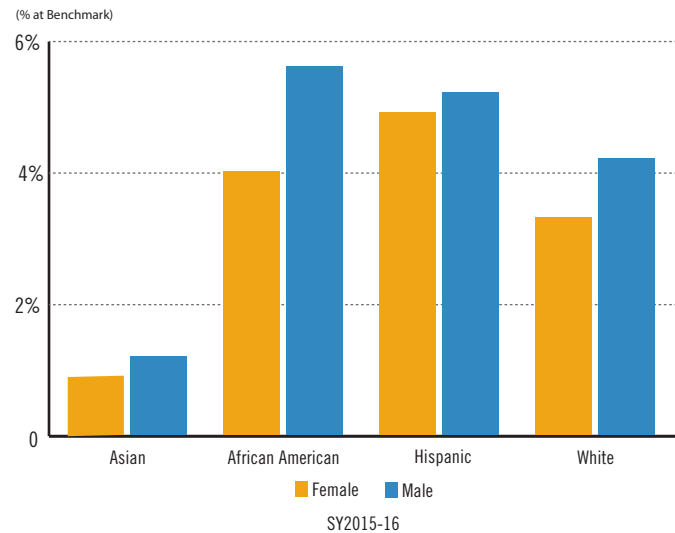
# High School Graduation

## Annual Dropout Rate



12

**What's Under the Hood:**  
Annual Dropout Rates by Race and Gender  
Boston Public Schools Students Only



### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

For the first time in four years, the dropout rate in Boston Public Schools increased in 2014-2015 by .6 percentage points. At the school level, dropout rates vary substantially from a low of zero to a high of 29.9%. This year, only one school had no dropouts: Henry Dearborn STEM Academy. Five others had dropout rates of less than 1%: Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School, Fenway High School, John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science and New Mission High.

While there is much good news to celebrate, several trends are worth noting and may benefit from additional exploration. Dropout rates across grade levels have fluctuated over the years, however the 12th-grade dropout rate has been the highest for the past three years. Among those 12th-graders who did drop out, 53% had completed the necessary MCAS requirements for graduation. This is also true for 35% of the 11th-graders who left school. Finally, the 9th-grade cohort that started in 2010 has a dropout rate of 15.4%. This is the lowest ever.

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

## Annual Dropout Rate

	Base 2012/2013	Current 2014/2015	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	4.5%	4.4%	812	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	2.0%	0.3%	4*	n/a

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

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

### 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 Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Boston continues to work on a solution to this problem as well as to help us to identify district and charter students who may have entered Catholic schools but are captured as dropouts in the public data.

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Boston Charter public schools have an incredibly low dropout rate. In 2014-2015, 0.25% of students dropped out of a charter school. Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Preparatory, City on A Hill Circuit Street, and City on A Hill Dudley had no dropouts in 2014-2015. Other schools included in the data are Boston Collegiate, Codman Academy and MATCH High School. Each of these schools had dropout rates below 1%.

### 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.

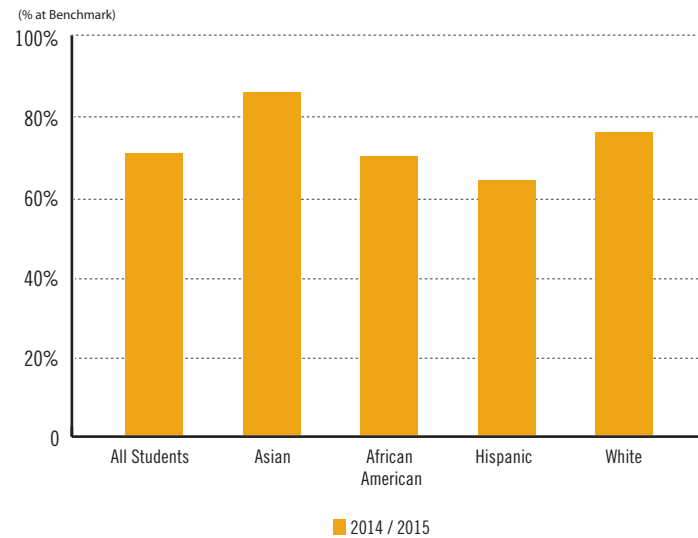
**Boston Charter  
public schools  
have an incredibly  
low dropout rate.**

# 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 70.7%. This year the rate increased four percentage points. Since 2007, the four-year graduation rate has steadily increased despite higher MCAS graduation requirements. Compared to the previous four-year cohort, all student groups except English language learners in the 2015 cohort saw noticeable increases in their 4-year graduation rates, which was up 10.4 percentage points for students with disabilities, 5.6 for male students, 4.2 for low-income students, 4.0 for high needs students, and 2.5 points for female students. Finally, nine schools met or exceeded the state four-year cohort graduation target of 85% as well as the 90% goal of the Every Student Succeeds Act. They are Another Course to College, Boston Community Leadership Academy, Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School, the Edward M. Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science, Fenway High School, New Mission High and the Josiah Quincy Upper 9-12.





## 4-Year Graduation Rate

	Base 2012/2013	Current 2014/2015	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	65.9%	70.7% (2843 students)	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	84%	97%	↑
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	74.0%	80.1% (213 students)	↑

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

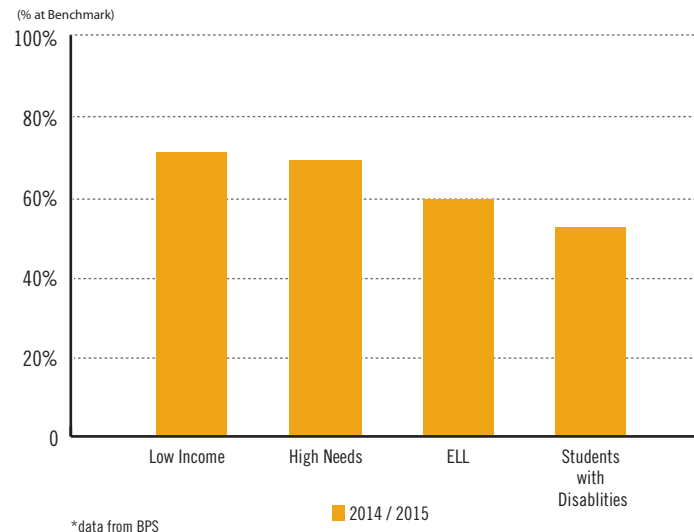
Boston Catholic schools continue to experience a high graduation rate, which exceeds the national average. For the graduating class of 2014, 97% of those who enrolled as freshmen graduated in four years from Catholic secondary schools in the city of Boston. The remaining 3% reverted back to Boston Public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

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Six Boston Charter public schools have been serving high-school students long enough to have a four-year cohort graduation rate. This year their combined graduation rate rose 4.8 percentage points to 80.1%, placing them among the highest in the nation for urban systems. Currently the schools include Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, City On A Hill, Codman Academy and MATCH High School. Academy of the Pacific Rim actually exceeded the state four-year cohort graduation target of 85%.

### Other Drivers

Boston Public Schools Students Only



Boston continues  
to have one  
of the highest  
urban four-year  
graduation rates  
in the nation...

# Postsecondary Attainment

## College Enrollment

### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

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 demand some form of postsecondary education. As a result, our economy demands that larger numbers of BPS graduates enroll in postsecondary institutions. The BPS continues to send 71% of graduating high school seniors to postsecondary pursuits. This figure remains level from the class of 2013 and 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.

Over the coming year, the Boston Opportunity Agenda and Success Boston will be working to further define college and career readiness and establish leading and lagging indicators to track our progress in an effort to increase this percentage.

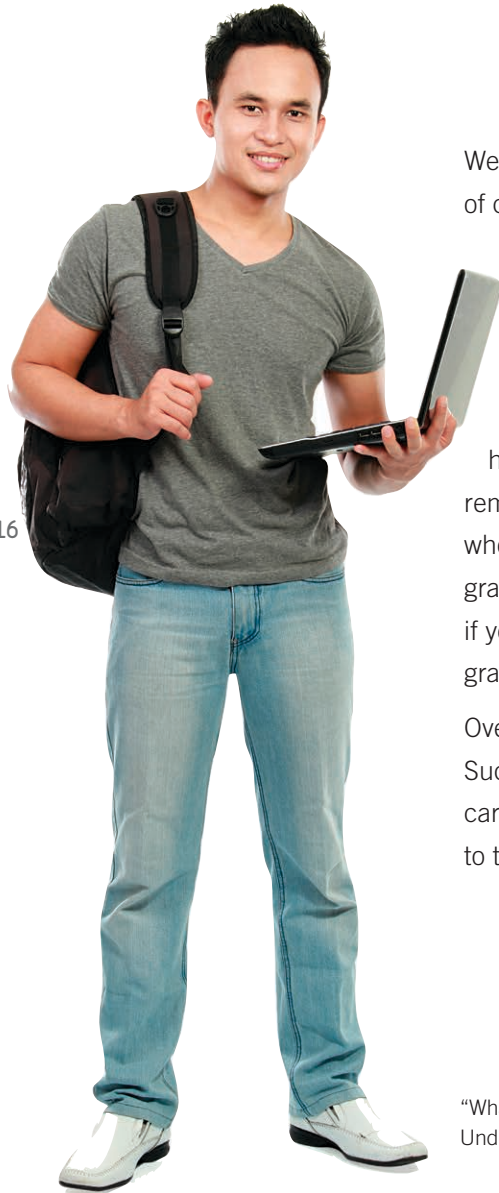
“What is College?” source: College Board, “How College Shapes Lives: Understanding the Issues.”

### 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 93%. Currently, this data is self-reported. Over 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 their educational destinations.

### How are Boston Charter public schools doing?

Boston Charter public schools graduates also have a strong college going culture and enroll in college immediately following high school at a rate of 88%, with 93% enrolling in four-year institutions of higher education. This rate is higher than the national average. Six Boston Charter public schools have graduates that are enrolling in college as a part of the class of 2014. They include Academy of the Pacific Rim, Boston Collegiate, Boston Preparatory, City on A Hill, Codman Academy and MATCH High School.



## College Enrollment\* Rates for High School Graduates

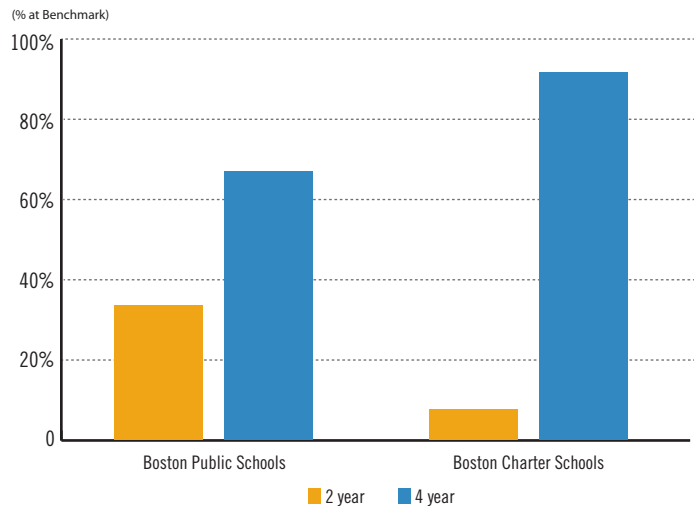
	Base Class of 2013	Current Class of 2013	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	71%	71%	2414	↔
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	96%	93%	3171	↓
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	90%	88%	175	↓

Data from Archdiocese of Boston and DESE

\*Enrolling within 16 months of high school graduation

### What's Under the Hood:

Class of 2013 2yr and 4yr 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.

Over the past 30 years, the composition of the postsecondary student population in the United States has fundamentally changed.

# Postsecondary Attainment

## College Completion



### How is the Boston Public Schools doing?

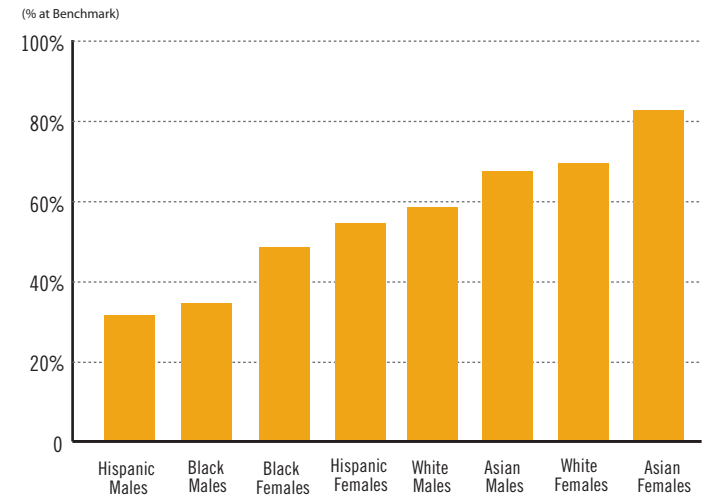
The data available for postsecondary completion varies widely among the three types of schools. The focus on BPS graduates through the Success Boston College Completion Initiative provides us with a robust and timely data picture for those students. The most current data available on students who enroll in and complete a postsecondary credential within six years of high school graduation is for the class of 2009. These students have reached a postsecondary completion rate of 51.3%, an all-time high and close to the national average. When looking at subgroups, the college completion rates for males and females have increased, although the gains are much larger for females. This trend is consistent when looking at completion across race and gender.

Finally, it is worth noting that three BPS schools met or exceeded the state average of 63.3% for students who enroll in and complete college within six years of high school graduation. They are Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School and the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science.

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

### What's Under the Hood:

Six-Year College Completion Rates of First-Year Enrollees from the BPS Class of 2009



Source: Success Boston's *Reaching for the Cap and Gown* 2016

### How are Boston Catholic schools doing?

Boston Catholic schools are working to implement a tool to track the postsecondary attainment of their graduates. This includes work with individual schools in the Archdiocese, partnerships with other organizations and a broader strategy to keep track of former students. It is important to report on this data and the Archdiocese of Boston is committed to finding a mechanism to do this work.

## College Completion Rates for High School Graduates

	Base 2012/2013	Current 2015/2016	Number of Students	Annual Change
<b>Boston Public Schools</b>	50% (Class of 2006)	51.3% (Class of 2009)	1314	↑
<b>Boston Catholic schools</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Boston Charter public schools</b>	42% (Class of 2006)	48% (Class of 2008)	56*	↓

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? Why does it matter?

The most current data available for Boston's Charter public schools is the class of 2008. Graduates of Boston's Charter public schools who enroll in college are completing a postsecondary credential at a rate of 48% within six years of their graduation from high school. This is a dip from the class of 2007. 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 operating—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. In the coming year, we hope to address our data challenges and provide same year data comparisons for all three types of schools.

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.

The six-year college completion rate of first-year college enrollees from the BPS class of 2009 was 51.3%, an all-time high and close to the national average.

# 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. These credentials consist of an Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree or an industry-recognized certification that allows individuals to secure higher-paying jobs. This year, the percentage remains the same as last year at 55%.

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. While each initiative is at a different stage of implementation, all are connected to national or statewide networks of other cities and communities. These networks, detailed below, will allow Boston to share our challenges, celebrate our successes and learn from other cities.

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

### 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. While the OY is focused on building pathways for young people between the ages of 16 and 24 to postsecondary work and a career, it impacts the number of credentialed adults in two ways. First, young people who are connected to postsecondary courses of study will ultimately increase the percentage of Boston adults with a credential. Second, OY is working closely with Bunker Hill and Roxbury Community Colleges as well as Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology so that the lessons learned from building pathways to market-based careers can have an impact on the larger community college landscape.

### Ford Corridors of College Success

Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) is completing a planning process designed to secure new—and improve existing—postsecondary pathways for residents of the Dudley neighborhood in Roxbury and Dorchester. For the past year, DSNI has been working closely with residents, youth, Jobs for

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

Base 2011	Current 2013 / 2014	Annual Change	Goal
51%	55%	↔	60%

Data from the American Community Survey

the Future, the Boston Opportunity Agenda and others to build a common understanding of:

- the goals, aspirations and college knowledge of local residents;
- the local labor market and high demand careers that are valued by the DSNI community; and
- pathways that bridge the two.

This work has led to the identification of two “best bets” for local residents. Each “best bet” starts with a credential and leads to a high paying first job and a career pathway.

### SkillWorks

SkillWorks is a workforce funder collaborative comprised of local and national philanthropy to invest in sector-based training and placement strategies for low- and moderate-income job seekers and help employers find and retain skilled employees. Recently, SkillWorks expanded its work in the IT/Tech industry, where positions are growing faster than the average for all other jobs in the state. 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 IT/Tech leaders from a cross section of employers with high demand IT/Tech jobs to broker new career pathways for talent. New investments are percolating through a health-IT bridge to college program and the newly launched internship program Hack Diversity to broker placements for a more diverse pool of students currently in IT training programs in our region’s two-year, four-year and boot-camp programs.

### 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 about 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.

A great deal of interesting and potentially game-changing work is happening in a variety of places throughout Boston...

# Thrive in 5

## A Strong Educational Foundation



Thrive in 5 envisioned a Boston where a child's ZIP code does not determine his or her future. Its focus was on a city where all children—particularly those from low-income families, children of color, children with special needs and children who are learning English—have access to resources and opportunities that promote healthy development, early learning and school readiness.

In the beginning of 2016, the Thrive in 5 Leadership Council decided to wind down operations and sunset the initiative at the end of June 2016. While much work remains to improve systems that support children and families across Boston, given progress to date, key approaches, lessons being adopted—and the continuing leadership of the City and many partners—it is time to explore a new chapter of Birth to Eight work in Boston.

Thrive in 5 catalyzed a citywide conversation and sparked new thinking about how the city coordinated and deployed resources so that all children enter school ready to succeed. Seizing on a national momentum for early childhood education, Thrive in 5 created an extensive network of community partners and built nationally recognized replicable models for its overarching strategies—parent engagement, quality early education, and universal child development screening.

## Boston Children Thrive

**Boston Children Thrive** (BCT), Thrive in 5's signature family engagement model, was created four years ago with parents and partners in five pilot communities: Allston/Brighton, Dudley, East Boston, Fields Corner and the South End/Lower Roxbury. BCT empowered parents to be leaders and change-makers in a neighborhood-wide campaign that engaged all members of the community in supporting school readiness. Parents worked alongside professionals to develop and lead innovative programming for young children and their families that responds to the needs of diverse cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic groups. This included play groups, field trips, workshops and community events. Over the years, BCT grew in its reach and elements of the model have been sustained by the five neighborhoods and introduced into additional communities. As a result, BCT:

- Connected families with community-based resources and parent-driven activities that support their children's early learning and development;
- Encouraged parents to become change agents in their communities through structured and supported leadership opportunities;
- Followed families' participation in developmentally appropriate activities and events, and enhanced our understanding of how early family engagement supports children's success in school; and
- Enrolled 31% of all children living in poverty in Boston.



The parent leadership model has been so successful that a state-sponsored Boston-based coalition, “The Boston Family Engagement Network,” has now instituted Parent Partners in each of their 10 grantee sites in the city. The Children’s Museum of Boston has also replicated the Parent Partner model to increase patronage from previously underrepresented communities.

## Ready Educators

Thrive in 5’s **Ready Educators** strategy encompassed multiple initiatives to move Boston’s early care and education programs to the highest quality, using child outcomes to drive program improvement and supporting innovative models from design to implementation.

- **Boston K1DS** embedded the critical quality drivers of the Boston Public Schools’ (BPS) successful K-1 (pre-K) program in 14 community-based preschool classrooms, increasing at-risk children’s access to high-quality early education and, ultimately, improving their school readiness. Initial evaluation results from the three-year demonstration project show that children in Boston K1DS classrooms made substantial strides in their language, literacy, mathematics and self-regulation skills and that Boston K1DS classrooms are improving the learning experiences of young children in high-poverty neighborhoods. Boston K1DS now serves as a model for the federal Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG) across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Many of the Boston K1DS programs are now PEG programs. The PEG community continues to work with community-based and BPS district Pre-K classrooms in Boston to share resources, advocate for high-need families and strengthen program quality.

## Screen to Succeed

Thrive in 5 developed and implemented **Screen to Succeed**, a city wide early childhood developmental screening model, along with a technology infrastructure to support data collection. Now a part of DRIVE (Data & Resources Investing in Vital Early Education) at United Way, the initiative increases access to developmental screening, and develops the infrastructure to capture, analyze and aggregate these data. Once analyzed, the data identify at-risk children, drive program improvements and determine where policy changes and investments are needed to ensure that children enter kindergarten on-track. To date, 24 programs in Boston are engaged in this initiative and more than 4,000 children have been screened in Boston.

Data indicate that 58% of children were developmentally on-track in all five developmental domains screened by the ASQ; however 19% of children needed further assessment in at least one domain, indicating a potential delay. Of children who were screened multiple times, 62% who initially scored with a strong concern scored better when screened at a higher age—improving to “potential concern” or “on track,” and 74% of children who scored “on track” initially remained “on track” when screened later.

The data collected through DRIVE helps families, teachers, health providers and the city take a data-driven approach to early childhood, making informed, strategic decisions to tailor supports and resources to the children, families and communities that need them most.

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# Birth to Eight Collaborative

## A Strong Educational Foundation

...we hope to create a citywide plan for Birth to Eight that builds out metrics in the early childhood space and connects them to success in the third grade.

The Boston Opportunity Agenda is working with more than 200 stakeholders to explore and create a new citywide Birth to Eight framework. As we do so, our efforts are shifting from a focus on Birth to Five to a focus on Birth to Eight. This change is based on a variety of factors. First, the national early childhood conversation has also moved to focus on birth to eight and provides a natural springboard for the work that we want to do in Boston. Second, there are several Boston efforts in early education that we hope to maximize, contextualize and connect: Boston Basics, a parent education campaign targeting low-income parents of infants to three year olds; Screen to Succeed, a developmental screening initiative based at the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley; and Mayor Martin J. Walsh's efforts to improve kindergarten readiness by expanding access to high quality pre-kindergarten. Finally, with the wind down of our previous birth to five effort, Thrive in 5, we hope to create a city-wide plan for Birth to Eight that builds out metrics in the early childhood space and connects them to success in the third grade. We also hope to apply the lessons that we learned through Thrive in 5, specifically the need to partner more closely with the medical community and the city.

Our initial convening activities to test the community appetite for such a plan with the Mayor Martin J. Walsh's Chief of Education, parents, public, charter public and private school leaders, doctors, hospitals, public health advocates and the early education community have been successful. Since no individual

system is "responsible" for children in this age range, we hope that defining a set of metrics, establishing a baseline and collecting data will illuminate gaps, inform public policy efforts, and identify programmatic interventions that we can undertake collectively. Ultimately, these new benchmarks should increase the rate and pace of change of school readiness and 3rd-grade reading proficiency.

To date, we have put forth three outcomes and a number of potential benchmarks. While we hope that all children in Boston will reach all of the outcomes, for the purpose of focus we have targeted specific age ranges for each outcome. We have also identified one or two benchmarks under each which include metrics for providers, children and families.

### Outcomes and Benchmarks

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

**Provider benchmark:** % of young children attending high quality child care

**Child benchmark:** % of young children that don't meet developmental screening milestones who receive interventions

**Family benchmark:** % of families that have a consistent and trusting relationship with a medical provider or support team

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

**Provider benchmark:** % of young children attending high quality pre-k education programs

**Child benchmark:** % of young children that don't meet developmental screening milestones who receive interventions

**Family benchmark:** % of families that have a consistent and trusting relationship with a medical provider or support team

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

**Provider benchmark:** % of children who have access to a high quality school

**Child benchmarks:** % of children who are ready for kindergarten

% of children reading & math proficient in Grade 3

**Family Benchmark:** % of teachers and principals who rate proficient and principals who rate proficient or exemplary on family engagement

## Community Partners

Action for Boston Community Development, Inc., Archdiocese of Boston, Barr Foundation, Be The Change, Black Philanthropy Fund, Boston Children's Hospital, Boston Children's Museum, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, The Boston Foundation, Boston Medical Center, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Public Schools, Boston Renaissance, Boston University, Boston's Higher Ground, Boys and Girls Clubs of Dorchester,

Boys and Girls of Greater Boston, Bridge Boston, Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition, Catholic Charities, Center on the Developing Child at Harvard, Children's Health Watch, American Academy of Pediatrics, City of Boston, City of Cambridge Dept. of Human Services Program, CitySprouts, Cradles to Crayons, Department of Public Health, Department of Early Education and Care, East Boston Social Center, Eos, Families First, Family Nurturing Center of Massachusetts, Financial Empowerment Center-Dudley, First Teacher, Generations Incorporated, Girl Scouts, Head Start ABCD, Health Resources in Action, Horizons, Jumpstart, Kennedy Center, KeySteps, Inc, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, NAMI Massachusetts, New Profit, Nurtury, PPAL, Raising A Reader MA, ReadBoston, Room to Grow, Ropes & Gray, School Effectiveness and Inequality Initiative, Smart From the Start, Inc., Social Venture Partners Boston, South Boston Neighborhood House, Sportsmen's Tennis and Enrichment Center, Strategies for Children, Inc., Tartt's Day Care Center, The Harold Whitworth Pierce Charitable Trust, The Home for Little Wanderers, Union Capital Boston, United South End Settlements, United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, University of Massachusetts Boston, Vital Villages, West End House, and YMCA of Greater Boston



# Summer Learning Project

## On Track for High School Graduation



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The Boston Summer Learning Project (SLP) is a citywide effort dedicated to connecting school, out-of-school time, and summer learning. Launched by the Boston Opportunity Agenda, the project aims to reverse summer learning loss; improve skills associated with school, college and career success; and deepen school-community partnerships. In 2016, the SLP partnered with 23 summer learning programs to collectively provide 2,260 high-need students with structured, engaging summer learning opportunities. By offering a common measurement platform to 105 additional summer sites, the broader network—called the Boston Summer Learning Community—reached a total of 10,084 Boston youth in 2016. This impressive expansion marks a 79% increase in students and a 61% increase in programs compared to 2015.

Co-managed by the Boston Public Schools (BPS) and Boston After School & Beyond (BASB), the SLP serves high-need students, identified largely by principals, who are unlikely to access quality summer programming on their own. Across SLP 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.

All Boston Summer Learning Community partners implement common measures, including teacher surveys, student input, and third-party evaluations, to evaluate programs. Supported by a citywide database, this unified approach to measurement enables program providers to jointly highlight strengths, identify

weaknesses, and pursue continuous improvement. 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 (SLP & Aligned):** 826 Boston, ACEDONE, Achieve at Noble and Greenough School, Action for Boston Community Development, Alliance for Inclusion and Prevention, America SCORES Boston, BCYF Leahy Holloran Community Center, Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, Berklee College of Music City Music Program, Bethel A.M.E. Church, Math and Science Scholars, Boston Area Health Education Center, Boston Private Industry Council, Boston University, Upward Bound, Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Boston, BPS Department of Early Childhood, BPS Office of English Language Learners, BPS Summer Early Focus, Breakthrough Greater Boston, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL), Camp Harbor View Foundation, Community Music Center of Boston, Courageous Sailing, Crossroads for Kids, Dorchester House, Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School, Freedom House, For Kids Only Afterschool, Hale Reservation, Generation Teach, Generations Inc., Health Resources in Action, The LEAH Project, Here-in Our Motives Evolve (HOME, Inc.), Horizons at Dedham Country Day School, Imagine That, Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción (IBA), Let's Get Ready, Mass Audubon's Boston Nature

Center, MassArt, Artward Bound, MathPOWER, Mattahunt Community Center, Neighborhood Network Center, North Bennet Street School, Perry K-8 with Playworks and New England Aquarium, Phillips Brooks House Association, Project RISE, Sociedad Latina, Sportsmen's Tennis & Enrichment Center, The Steppingstone Foundation, St. Stephen's Youth Programs, Suffolk University, Upward Bound, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center, Tierney Learning Center, UMass Boston, VietAid, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Wheelock College, World Ocean School, YMCA of Greater Boston, and Zoo New England

## 2016 Summer Results

**Skill Development:** Summer programs this year recorded steady upward progress in improving critical skills essential for college and career success, even as the numbers of students and unique programs ballooned. In 2016, students in the Boston Summer Learning Community achieved statistically significant gains in all six social-emotional skills measured by the Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes (SAYO T). Youth surveys collected across all 127 sites mirrored these positive upward trends. Some 94% of participating students reported improvements in relationships with adults, 91% reported improvements in self-regulation, 88% reported increased critical thinking, and 82% reported increased perseverance.

**Program Quality:** As rated by external observers on the Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT), on average the 2016 Boston Summer Learning Community met or exceeded the benchmark in all 15 measured program quality domains. As captured by the SAYO Y tool, youth rated programs very

similarly on aspects of program performance in summer 2016 as compared to the previous two summers. Data trends still point to areas for future growth, including opportunities for youth leadership and youth choice and autonomy.

## Local and National Impact

In July 2015, Mayor Martin J. Walsh and Superintendent Tommy Chang issued a joint challenge for the city: enroll 10,000 children in 100 summer learning programs by 2017. Driven by enhanced recruitment efforts, the city exceeded that goal one year ahead of schedule. Building on the successes of the BSLC, BASB and its partners are working to scale this approach across the Commonwealth. House Bill 4033, An Act to increase access to high quality summer learning opportunities, would expand research-based summer learning partnerships through the SLP's proven cost-sharing model. Sponsored by Co-Chair Alice Peisch, the bill was reported favorably out of the Joint Committee on Education last March, and continues to unify communities and policymakers across the state.

In addition to expanding innovative models of learning, Boston is contributing to the growing knowledge base on out-of-school time (OST). Nationally, Boston's programs are part of the largest, most rigorous study to date on summer learning, commissioned by the Wallace Foundation and studied by the RAND Corporation. The latest in a series of reports, Learning from Summer, shows that students who attend summer learning programs at high rates outperformed the control group in math, reading and social-emotional skills. Importantly, these statistically significant advantages persist over the course of the school year.



# High School Redesign

## Crafting a Future Vision



Students of the Boston Public Schools are the leaders, scholars, entrepreneurs, advocates and innovators of tomorrow. Boston families deserve nothing less than a world-class education system of innovation, with welcoming schools that are working to transform the lives of all our children. The job of the Boston Public Schools is to prepare our graduates to be productive in our communities as successful workers and citizens. With the fast pace of change in today's economy, it is necessary to step back and look anew at the skills, behaviors and attitudes our children will need to thrive in our city and to make our city thrive.

Today, a quality secondary education isn't available to all Boston students. Many of Boston's high schools need to update their teaching and learning approaches to provide the tools necessary for success in postsecondary work, career and life. Boston's High School Redesign (HSReD) initiative aims to address these challenges.

### Our Accomplishments

#### Milestone 1: The Community Conversation

Over the past 18 months, BPS and the City of Boston partnered on a design process to create a shared public vision for our city's high schools. Beginning with a six-month public engagement process that reached more than 2,000 students, teachers, administrators, parents and other community members, thoughts and feedback were gathered to determine what students should know and what the schools of the future should offer.

#### Milestone 2: The Design Principles

Stakeholder feedback was used to create an initial set of design principles. The four principles, outlined below, are intended to guide the district's and high schools' program design, school planning and policy development activities.

#### High School Redesign Principles

##### **WHOLE PERSON**

Learning must encompass every aspect of the individual—academic, social, emotional, cultural and physical.

##### **RIGOROUS**

Cognitively demanding work is necessary to engage and stimulate our students on a daily basis.

##### **DYNAMIC**

Personalized experiences promote passion, creative exploration and diversity of thought.

##### **EXPANSIVE**

Meaningful connections, within and beyond the classroom, help our students build pathways to future success.

### Milestone 3: The First Pilot

The initial principles were applied through a pilot at Madison Park Vocational Technical High School (MPVTHS). Members of the MPVTHS community participated in “design sprints,” which were intensive sessions intended to create program, partnership and physical space ideas and plans anchored in the HSReD principles. The design sprint process produced several ideas related to programming, partnerships, the student experience and the physical space at MPVTHS.

The ideas and the principles were refined based on the experiences at Madison Park and can be reviewed on the HSReD website at [highschoolredesign-boston.org](https://highschoolredesign-boston.org).

### Moving Forward: The Next Phase

HSReD thus far has focused on visioning and identifying a set of core principles to guide its efforts. The next phase of HSReD entails redefining existing high school work and trying new approaches to high school learning that embody and reflect the redesign principles.

Redefining existing work is an iterative process that requires rigorous attention to whether the changes are creating new conditions that authentically move students, faculty, parents and the school community as a whole toward the four principles or inadvertently reinvent the old (existing) conditions. The work ahead will require innovating, then tracking, reflecting and adjusting to ensure that practices and students’ experiences reflect the principles and achieve the desired outcomes of college and career readiness for all graduates.

In addition to redefining existing work, HSReD will also need to design, test and scale new learning approaches—in some instances looking beyond current pedagogy and traditional tools to effectively prepare students for post-secondary and career opportunities that are evolving. It may be necessary to think differently about how to use learning time and the spaces in which students learn. It may also be necessary to partner with cultural, higher education, nonprofit and private institutions in ways that more powerfully activate the High School Redesign principles.

The goal is that the redefined and the new work will create the instructional and experiential models, as well as broader system changes, needed to provide all students with the high school experience embodied by the redesign principles.

### Milestone 4: The Leadership Team

To shepherd and lead this work, BPS has launched a new High School Office. The team consists of an Assistant Superintendent of High School Redesign and College and Career Readiness, an Executive Director of Career/Vocational/Technical Education, a Director of Post-Secondary Partnerships and Initiatives, a Managing Partner of Innovation, an Executive Director of Alternative Education, and a Director of Online and Blended Learning.

For the most up to date implementation plan visit [highschoolredesign-boston.org](https://highschoolredesign-boston.org).



# Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative

## Building Pathways for Opportunity Youth

A key piece of the research has been to engage a group of young adult peer leaders in a Youth Voice Project, to solicit feedback from young people in the community.

Convened by the Boston Opportunity Agenda and the Boston Private Industry Council, the Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative (OYC) is a group of more than 80 stakeholders who have been working together for the last four years to expand and better connect education and employment pathways available to Boston's opportunity youth: 16-24 year olds who are not in school or working. There are approximately 9,000 such young people in Boston.

The Collaborative has conducted research, shared data and mapped programs and pathways designed to support youth in their education and careers. A key piece of the research has been to engage a group of young adult peer leaders in a Youth Voice Project, to solicit feedback from young people in the community.

Currently the Collaborative is focused on the largest segment of the Opportunity Youth (OY) in Boston: older youth who have already earned a high school credential. With a grant from Jobs for the Future and the Aspen Institute, Boston was able to launch the Connection Center, run by X-Cel Education. The Connection Center 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. The Center has seen 366 opportunity youth since February 2015. Some 92 OY persisted in a program and 25 have completed their programs. Among the completers, seven have started entry-level career jobs and 12 have started college.

This year, the Collaborative was also able to explore some of the challenges faced by Opportunity Youth. In June 2016, the Collaborative and the Boston Public Schools hosted a series of events to address the school to prison pipeline. Arnold Chandler and Tia Martinez from *Forward Change* presented their data-based analysis on the prison pipeline to a crowd of close to 250 attendees that included school leaders, policy advocates and government officials. They discussed the ways in which the changes in the job market, criminal sentencing, school discipline and family systems have made it even more likely for men of color to be incarcerated than it was 30 years ago. During the event, BPS Superintendent Tommy Chang outlined the district's plans for addressing suspension. Plans include more proactive and positive whole-school approaches to both social emotional learning and school discipline, with a goal of reducing the annual number and rate of student suspension.

Finally the Collaborative's Youth Voice Project, facilitated by Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, continued to represent the voice of Boston's young people. Some of their major accomplishments this past year included participation in Connection Center outreach, leadership in the June prison pipeline events, facilitation in national convenings, and advocacy for state-funded youth jobs and policy changes in the Boston Public Schools. In August 2016, the Youth Voice Project hosted an end-of-the year showcase at a high-visibility event in the BPS Bolling Building. The youth leaders organized and



hosted the event to reflect on their accomplishments, make recommendations to BPS and cast the vision for next year's youth leaders.

While these efforts help us learn about the best ways to engage Opportunity Youth, the Collaborative will continue to elevate the profile of the opportunity youths 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, 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, 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, Youth Options Unlimited Boston.



# Success Boston: Boston's College Completion Initiative

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



Success Boston is Boston's citywide college completion initiative that is working to dramatically increase the postsecondary completion rate for Boston Public Schools (BPS) graduates. Convened by the Mayor of Boston, partner organizations are implementing a four-part strategy to ensure that students are *Getting Ready, Getting In, Getting Through and Getting Connected*. Success Boston was launched in 2008 in response to a longitudinal study by Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies and the Boston Private Industry Council, which reported that only 35% of BPS graduates who had enrolled in college completed an Associate's or Bachelor's degree by age 25. Success Boston set a goal of achieving a 70% college completion rate for graduates of the Boston Public Schools by 2017.

### Getting Ready

The Boston Public Schools is the lead partner for *Getting Ready* and is working to strengthen students' readiness for success by increasing the academic rigor of high school, strengthening college advising, and partnering with Boston Afterschool and Beyond to articulate the social-emotional skills and abilities that will help students navigate postsecondary pathways. Since 2008, core readiness activities have included expanding student access to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment courses that prepare students to meet the demands of college. In addition, financial aid advising is provided to students, beginning in the senior year of high school and continuing through the first years of college.

Moving forward, BPS is working with Success Boston and the Boston Opportunity Agenda to develop a set of indicators which measure college and career readiness for all students.

### Getting In

Led by the Boston Foundation, nonprofit partners are working to bridge the high school to college experience by providing "transition coaching." Launched with the class of 2009, nonprofits work with students to help them 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.

Originally, approximately 300 students per year received this coaching, the vast majority of whom were low-income students of color and the first in their families to go to college. In 2014, the Boston Foundation was awarded a five year, \$6 million grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service, to expand Success Boston's coaching model, based on early evidence showing that coaching had a statistically significant impact on a student's ability to remain enrolled in college. Indeed, for some population groups, the impact was more than 20 percentage points.

Beginning with the high school class of 2015, 1,000 students annually are receiving coaching, including every community college student from a BPS high school. Nonprofit partners who are coaching students 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. The organization uAspire provides financial aid advising to seniors and college students as well as training and support for nonprofits. 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.

## Getting Through

Led 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 are tracking BPS student data, and providing "just in time" supports for students who need it. In addition, campuses have built strong partnerships with the nonprofit coaching partners, and in some instances, have "embedded" coaches—from their own student support staff and from nonprofit partners—on site as part of the campus support offerings. In this way, UMass Boston, Bunker Hill Community College, MassBay Community College, Roxbury Community College and Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology are expanding their own capacity to support students, and ensuring that the nonprofit transition coaches are providing timely and accurate support for students.

## Getting Connected

The efforts around the "Getting Connected" goal are led by the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) and focus on building career advising and awareness with students in high school and college, as well as encouraging employers to provide internships and part-time jobs that not only help students afford their education, but also expose them to potential career pathways. Boston 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 has college completion. A report released in 2016 shows that the six-year college completion rate of first-year enrollees from the BPS Class of 2009 was 51.3%, within one percentage point of the 52% Success Boston goal set in 2008. Even more impressive is the gain in the absolute number of BPS graduates completing college within six years of high school graduation, 1,314 from the Class of 2009, compared to 735 students from the Class of 2000 who earned a college degree within seven years.

Success Boston partners believe that the improved academic readiness, the transition coaching and the campus-based supports are contributing to this growth. Even though more must be done to achieve the goal of 70% completion, Success Boston's focus on data, partnership efforts and mutual accountability have contributed to the upward trends.





# About Us

**The Boston Opportunity Agenda (BOA)** is a public/private partnership that is working to dramatically increase the pace and scale of change in education for all residents of Boston, with a focus on students who have the least access to successful pathways. Our vision is of a Boston in which all children and young people are prepared to succeed in college, career and life. We deeply 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 innovative 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.

This remarkable partnership is entering its seventh year and is governed by the CEOs of each of the member organizations. Together, they identify strategic issues influencing our education pipeline in whole or in part, formulate the Boston Opportunity Agenda priorities and strategies—and offer 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 on progress through key metrics and encouraging the use of common definitions, metrics and benchmarks across the entire education pipeline to track how well Boston is doing as it strives to reach its education goals.

**Collective Action:** We convene diverse stakeholders to establish and tackle big goals, form 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. They 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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