

Case Study No. 17

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATION GRANTMAKING

Don't Just Give. Solve.

The Boston Foundation Embraces Innovation and Constant Learning in Pursuit of Educational Equity

by LYNN JENKINS

SEPTEMBER 2017

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE EDUCATION GRANTMAKING

Discipline & Focus	Knowledge	Resources Linked to Results	Effective Grantees	Engaged Partners	Leverage, Influence & Collaboration	Persistence	Innovation & Constant Learning
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grantmakers^{for}education

Grantmakers for Education exists to improve outcomes for all learners by serving as a trusted partner for all education philanthropists as they adapt to the changes impacting our world. To accomplish this, Grantmakers for Education's purpose is two-fold:

1. To provide members with an informal and balanced environment for collaborating, discussing and acting on important issues in public education.
2. To help members identify and prepare for what's next. With our finger on the pulse of our diverse network and eye on the broader horizon, we keep members informed of relevant and pressing issues, and equip members with the tools and knowledge required to shape the future.

Grantmakers for Education developed its series of case studies on effective education grantmaking as reflection and discussion tools. Cases are not intended to serve as endorsements, sources of primary data or illustrations of successful or unsuccessful grantmaking. In addition, to help make the case a more effective learning tool, it is deliberately written from one foundation's point of view, even though other foundations may have been involved in similar activities or supported the same grantees.

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“Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of men – the balance-wheel of the social machinery.” – Horace Mann

For more than two decades, Grantmakers for Education has worked in partnership with its members to increase philanthropy’s impact on public education so that all learners – no matter what their background or zip code – have the opportunity to thrive. We accomplish this by continually emphasizing the importance of educational equity, fostering collaboration, and creating opportunities for grantmakers to learn from one another.

This case study focuses on the work of the Boston Foundation, one of the nation’s oldest community foundations. As the case portrays, the foundation has always been committed to educational equity and even played an important role during Boston’s fractious school desegregation era. But the board knew it could do more and needed to do more – the well-being of individuals, families, communities and the city as a whole demanded it.

Accordingly, the board chose a new leader who took the foundation on a bold new path. Rather than stay “behind the scenes” as it had in the past, the Boston Foundation began commissioning rigorous research, publicizing the results, and bringing people together to discuss the findings and develop strategies to address needs uncovered by the research. It also began to pursue a policy agenda aligned with its research. The foundation’s new stance was riskier because it meant challenging widely shared myths, revealing unpleasant truths, and taking policy positions that were not always popular. But the foundation’s leaders and staff believed that the magnitude of the equity challenge demanded nothing less.

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2008, many people in Massachusetts who cared about public education – especially those who believed that a high-quality education was the key to bridging inequities in society – were feeling hopeful. After years of effort, there were encouraging signs of progress in improving educational outcomes for students who had historically struggled. Nowhere was this a more urgent priority than in places like Boston, where three-quarters of the students in public schools were black or Hispanic and more than 70 percent were economically disadvantaged.

By this time, a decade and a half had passed since the Massachusetts legislature had approved its landmark Education Reform Act of 1993. Spurred by the far-reaching law and by compelling studies documenting the dire challenges faced by students who did not earn a high school diploma, state and local leaders, business and foundation leaders, community nonprofits and others had invested significant resources and energy in the cause of revamping public education, championing rigorous new academic standards, teacher quality initiatives, charter schools and more.

These changes had generated impressive gains in K-12 student achievement and graduation rates relative to other states. And intensive efforts to expand college access had also spurred increases. As a result, leaders in other cities and school districts across the country often pointed to Boston – and Massachusetts as a whole – as examples to emulate.

But what happened to students, especially minority and first-generation students, after they enrolled in college? Researchers who interviewed these students heard frequent stories about their struggles:

“[College courses] were just a whole lot different than high school,” one student said. “Not once do I remember using the textbook. We would just talk about everything. I was in class every day but never passed one of my tests. I could study all day, but when it came to the tests... I was just like, lost.”¹

“Never before had I truly felt such an extreme sense of estrangement and alienation,” another said. “I quickly realized that my cultural and socio-economic backgrounds were vastly different from those of my predominantly white, affluent peers. I wanted to leave.”²

And: “I remember thinking, am I really as qualified as everyone else? It was difficult to believe that I actually belonged there.”³

Staff in youth-serving organizations in Boston’s most challenged communities heard similar stories from many young people they knew, but there was no comprehensive data on long-term college outcomes for Boston Public Schools graduates.

That changed in late 2008, however, when an eye-opening report alerted local leaders to a crisis in postsecondary attainment.⁴ The Boston Foundation, a 100-year-old community foundation that had funded the research, brought the community together to talk about the results – and what they should do about it.

USING ALL THE TOOLS IN THE TOOLBOX

Founded in 1915, the Boston Foundation was one of the largest and oldest community foundations in the United States. (See Attachments A-C.) Through its grantmaking, it had played a major role in an array of projects that shaped nearly every aspect of life in the city. For example, the foundation was instrumental in establishing Massachusetts Advocates for Children, which led to the creation of a bold new state law guaranteeing an education for children with disabilities. The foundation also played pivotal early roles in launching renowned public television station WGBH, cleaning up the Boston Harbor and revitalizing low-income neighborhoods across the city. (See Attachment B.)

From the beginning, improving the quality of life for all of Boston’s residents had been central to the foundation’s work. This was a priority for Anna-Faith Jones, who joined the Boston Foundation in 1974 and was named president in 1985, becoming the first African-American woman in the United States to head a community foundation.

Soon after she became president, the foundation launched a new \$10 million program targeting inner-city poverty, and over the following years, it further increased its investments on behalf of the city's least advantaged. Believing that the foundation's board needed to better reflect Boston's racial/ethnic composition, Jones also sought to diversify the board and add new members from backgrounds other than banking.

Over time, she also took on a thornier challenge: trying to build support for changing the foundation's trust structure to a corporate structure so that the board could have more latitude in its grantmaking. Some local leaders vehemently opposed such a change. "This is a trust town," one warned. "Don't break the trust." But in 1998, a damning article in *The Boston Globe* revealing abysmal returns on the foundation's financial investments provided a tipping point for change, and Jones successfully steered the organization through the restructuring process.⁵

Three years later, after leading the Boston Foundation for more than 15 years, Jones announced her plans to retire. Rather than rush to find her successor, the board decided to use the transition to stop and reflect. With help from external consultants, they evaluated the foundation's past and present work and concluded that it should take on a more assertive leadership role in order to accelerate progress in remedying some of the city's greatest problems.⁶ Chief among these were deep pockets of poverty and disparities in opportunity and outcomes for various subpopulations within the city.

As a result, the Boston Foundation's ensuing CEO search focused on finding a new leader with deep public sector experience. That person was Paul Grogan, and when he became the new president and CEO in early 2001, it was with a mandate. As he later explained:

Before I came, the board had taken the opportunity to ask itself, is the Boston Foundation all it can be? While they knew it was doing very good things, the answer to the question was no. They began to develop the idea that the institution could play a much larger role in the civic life of the community at a time when civic engagement was in decline, especially in the corporate sector as a result of mergers and acquisitions. The board directed me to use all the tools in the toolbox to elevate the foundation's civic leadership and its profile.⁷

Knowing that the board would have to be much more representative in order for the foundation to play a more involved and influential role in the city, Grogan's first step was to focus on the board:

The process of diversifying the board had begun under my predecessor. But it was still a fairly small board, so expanding it provided the room to create more diversity and representativeness that would allow us to assume this broader role and also help us gain legitimacy to do so. People compliment me on our board all the time: "You have the best board in the city. How did you do that?" I tell them it is all about conceiving of the board as another instrument of purpose. Reshaping the board was part of the reconception of the foundation.

The next priority was to map out the foundation's new body of work. Three months after Grogan entered his new role, he presented a plan to the board:

We laid out a plan based on taking on a set of new distinct but related functions: data and research, forums, public affairs and media, and serial mobilizations and convenings. . . In effect, the Boston Foundation became a think tank joined to a grantmaking institution, and the data and research produced by the think-tank part of the foundation would allow the region to have unusually rigorous and intelligent conversations. When everyone is looking at the same information, the conversation is more productive and ideological boundaries are less pronounced.

Meanwhile, the foundation would continue to provide up-to-date information on key aspects of city life through the Boston Indicators Project⁸ and to fund promising initiatives in its areas of interest: education, health and wellness, jobs and economic development, housing, neighborhoods and arts and culture.

To carry out its expanded body of work, Grogan hired new staff with expertise in areas where he saw gaps. His first hire was Mary Jo Meisner, a veteran journalist and newspaper executive who in November 2001 became the foundation's new vice president for communications, community relations and public affairs. The arrival of someone with such a strong communications background sent a clear signal that the Boston Foundation was no longer going to be invisible or do everything it could to stay out of the news.

FINDING ITS VOICE

As foundation staff began executing the new strategy, they funded new research and hosted forums that brought together leaders and experts to discuss the research findings and decide how to address the needs and challenges identified. Fortunately, the Boston area had a number of high-caliber think tanks – including research centers at Northeastern, University of Massachusetts and MIT as well as independent entities such as MassINC – that were well equipped to do this work and keenly interested in studying local issues.

When the new research uncovered the need for policy changes, Grogan, Meisner and other members of the foundation staff met with city and state leaders to advocate for them. As Grogan explained:

Many foundations keep their distance from the government to avoid what they see as the taint of politics, but public sector engagement is absolutely essential to creating a vital and prosperous city and region. There is not a single large and important problem in society that can be solved without the involvement of the public sector. . . . [so] deciding to enlarge impact leaves no choice but to engage with state and local government.

As the foundation ventured into the riskier realm of policy and politics, Grogan knew it would be vital to safeguard the foundation's objectivity in order to preserve its credibility. This would be accomplished by rooting all of its policy recommendations in solid data and research, and by forging coalitions of business, community and civic leaders to join its advocacy efforts.

The Boston Globe took notice of the changes underway at the Boston Foundation and praised it for “stepping up to the plate with a new brand of civic leadership.” Philanthropic leaders in some other cities were

also inspired to consider how to be a stronger force in their own communities.⁹ At times, however, the foundation's new "out front" role rubbed people the wrong way. These people sometimes included Boston's Mayor Menino – yet Grogan believed that conflict was inevitable and even healthy. "Real change in society is never unaccompanied by conflict," he told a reporter once. "You don't all get around the table and hold hands and say, 'Now we'll have civil rights for everybody.'"

BREAKING WITH TRADITION

Since the beginning of its existence, the Boston Foundation had taken an active interest in public schools, believing that access to a high-quality education was the path to opportunity. In the mid-1960s, for example, when African-American parents and activists in Roxbury and Dorchester protested BPS's refusal to give their children access to better and less crowded schools, the foundation provided funding to transport 400 students to less crowded and higher performing schools in the Back Bay.

In 1982, it provided seed funding for The Boston Compact, a new partnership that brought businesses, colleges and universities, and others together to help improve Boston's public school system. And the following year, it gave a major grant to the newly created Boston Plan for Excellence (BPE), which provided crucial funding and support for programs in Boston Public Schools. Over the next thirty years, more than \$32 million flowed through the foundation to the BPE.

While education continued to be a major focus of the foundation's grantmaking, it expanded its focus from only funding traditional public schools to funding charter and Catholic schools too. As Grogan reflected:

I came into the foundation convinced that incremental change was never going to get us there. We had mayoral control [over the school system], which limits political shenanigans in school governance. We had a great superintendent, Tom Payzant, who stayed a long time. But those things didn't fundamentally change the way the district was organized, so the progress was incremental. When I came in and we started supporting charter schools, which the foundation had never done, it was big news. People said, "Wow, what is going on here?"

The next year, the Boston Foundation turned heads once again when it supported efforts by Superintendent Payzant to implement pilot schools, an innovative educational model designed to help Boston Schools "compete against charter schools."¹⁰ District schools approved to become pilot schools would be granted charter-like autonomy in budgeting, staffing and other areas. But unlike charters, their teachers would continue to belong to the Boston Teachers Union (BTU).

The Center for Collaborative Education, a nonprofit that played an instrumental role in pilot school development, made the case for the new choice option this way:

An equity challenge for Boston, as for most urban systems using a managed portfolio approach to high school reform, is to meet the demand for good choices for students and

*families. The goal is to have a variety of schools that successfully educate a variety of students. With a greater number of high-performing schools like pilot schools from which to choose, more Boston high school students will graduate and experience the long-term benefits of having a high school diploma, such as enrolling in postsecondary education, earning an income sufficient to support a family, and being civically engaged. In turn, the district will stem the trends of declining enrollment and high dropout rates, and improve its performance overall.*¹¹

Interest in the pilot school model was strong, and when the Boston Foundation issued a request for proposals in 2006, 15 schools applied for grants; 13 were approved. Each received a \$20,000 planning grant with a commitment for additional funding (a one-time grant of up to \$100,000) if the planning process resulted in the creation of a pilot school.

Explaining his interest in the model, Grogan said:

The business community learned a long time ago that what you do is train people properly and then push authority and responsibility as far down the organization as you can. We've known that for decades, yet school districts sit there with these command and control systems. I think it makes so much more sense for schools to be in charge of their personnel and their budgets and able to take initiative. This idea that most of the decisions should be made by an overweening central bureaucracy or a 200-page teachers' union contract is absurd.

Despite the early momentum, however, the BTU's new leadership soon began to block efforts to expand the number of pilot schools due to an ongoing disagreement with the mayor over the terms of expansion and other contractual issues. The impasse frustrated Grogan and the mayor alike as it derailed what they saw as a very promising way to test an innovative school model and expand high-quality public school options for those who needed them most.

SHAPING POLICY

Grogan knew from the research the foundation was supporting how much Boston parents in low-income communities – indeed, in all communities – wanted access to good public school options. In 2003, for example, the Boston Foundation had sponsored a study on school choice in Massachusetts that documented extremely high demand for charter schools, inter-district transfers and other forms of choice. The report had also documented major disparities in how school choice was being exercised. Even though the state's longstanding inter-district choice program (METCO) had been initiated to integrate suburban schools, for instance, the vast majority of the students participating in it were white.¹²

The question was, what types of schools were doing the best job of educating low-income students? Two subsequent studies funded by the foundation looked more closely at this question. The first, released at a forum sponsored by the Boston Foundation in February 2006, concluded that Boston's pilot high schools

were having an especially positive impact on student engagement and performance.¹³ But the second, conducted by researchers at Harvard and MIT in 2009 using a more rigorous study design,¹⁴ reached different conclusions. It found that charter schools were having a significant positive impact on student achievement at both the middle and high school level, while pilot schools were not.

As Grogan wrote in the report's foreword:

It is not an exaggeration to say that charter schools in Boston are making real progress in breaking the persistent connection between poverty and poor results. The Boston Foundation joins with the city and the state in continuing to seek innovative approaches to education in all schools so that we can break that connection for all of Boston's students.

Armed with this new research, Grogan led the formation of a broad-based coalition to work together to expand the number of charter schools in Massachusetts as well as pursue other promising strategies to close achievement gaps. Members of the coalition testified before the state legislature and emphasized that passing new legislation to raise the state's charter cap would better position the state to win funding through President Obama's recently announced Race To The Top grant competition.

And their efforts succeeded. After months of intensive work, Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick signed a new state law on January 14, 2010 that expanded district charter schools in low-performing districts; established in-district Innovation Schools;¹⁵ and gave superintendents more latitude to turn around chronically low-performing schools. Afterwards, the governor sent a photograph of the signing ceremony to Grogan with a personal note: "This was our finest hour."

Thanks to the strength of the state's application and the broad-based coalition that supported it, Massachusetts placed first among the Race to the Top applicants and received \$250 million in federal funding for its new education reforms. The law and infusion of funds were seen as major victories for the foundation and members of the coalition – but implementation would turn out to be more challenging than it seemed in the glow of victory.

TRACKING PERSISTENCE

As the foundation moved forward boldly on the K-12 front, it also began to build out its higher education work. When Elizabeth Pauley became the foundation's senior director of education programs in 2006, the head of programs came into her office the first day and told her that the foundation would be significantly expanding its work beyond grade 12. "The board recognized that earning a high school diploma was no longer enough," she recalled, "so eliminating racial/ethnic disparities in college access and success must now be a priority."¹⁶

Shortly after Pauley's arrival, Neil Sullivan, executive director of Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) – the city's Workforce Development Board and school-to-career intermediary – came to the foundation with a new research proposal. Since the 1980s, the PIC and the Center for Labor Market Studies (CLMS) at

Northeastern University had been conducting follow-up surveys about a year after high school graduation to find out what students were doing. Were they enrolled in college? Were they working?

These surveys had provided valuable information, but as time went on, it had become increasingly difficult to reach people by phone to conduct the survey. As Sullivan explained:

*We had been looking for other ways to track students' progress. We'd asked local colleges and universities to share their data, but they wouldn't. They were worried about violating privacy laws and also lacked good data systems to provide this information. We had been working with professor Andy Sum at Northeastern, who identified the National Student Clearinghouse as a source we could use to do long-term tracking of student outcomes. We were only the second place in the country to use the clearinghouse data for this purpose.*¹⁷

A few colleges that enrolled Boston Public Schools graduates did not belong to the Clearinghouse, but PIC was able to work out data sharing agreements with most of them. As a result, the study ultimately covered more than 96 percent of BPS graduates. One of the last hurdles was to get permission from the Boston School Committee to share graduates' birth dates so that data from BPS, the Clearinghouse, and Boston PIC's previous annual surveys could be linked.

After the new research strategy was successfully piloted for students from one high school, the PIC and CLMS were ready to measure seven-year outcomes for *every* BPS graduate from the Class of 2000. The Boston Foundation agreed to fund the completion and publication of this groundbreaking study.

Before long, however, leaders and staff at PIC and the Boston Foundation received early signs that the data would be bleak and became anxious about how people would react. "Especially Mayor Menino," said Pauley, "because he thought of all of the city's kids as *his kids*." Hoping to avoid a negative reaction to the study results, Sullivan began meeting with leaders at City Hall to clue them in on the preliminary research findings and talk about what to do.

AN AUDACIOUS CHALLENGE

On November 17, 2008, the PIC and CLMS released *Getting to the Finish Line: College Enrollment and Graduation*. The contents revealed that of the 2,964 students who had graduated from BPS in June 2000:

- 64 percent (about 1,900 students) had attended a two- or four-year college at some point over the next seven years;
- Only 35 percent of those who had attended college had earned some type of degree;
- Students enrolling in private four-year colleges were four to five times more likely to complete a degree than those attending public two-year colleges.

The report also revealed major disparities in degree completion by race/ethnicity, gender, and type of high school attended (i.e., "exam schools" that base entrance on grades and performance on an entrance exam vs. non-exam schools). For example, two tables in the report showed the following:

Number and percent of college enrollees from the BPS graduating class of 2000 who obtained a college degree seven years after graduation, all and by gender, race-ethnic group, gender/race-ethnic group, and type of high school attended

Group	(A) College Attendees	(B) Graduates	(C) Graduates as % of Attendees
All	1,904	675	35.5
Men	813	276	33.9
Women	1,091	399	36.6
Asian	275	143	52.0
Black	884	249	28.2
Hispanic	326	78	23.9
White	366	195	53.3
Exam school	618	366	59.2
All other schools	1,286	309	24.0

Group	(A) College Attendees	(B) Graduates	(C) Graduates as % of Attendees
Asian men	145	69	47.6
Asian women	130	74	56.9
Black men	347	82	23.6
Black women	537	167	31.1
Hispanic men	121	23	19.0
Hispanic women	205	55	26.8
White men	176	97	55.1
White women	190	98	51.6

Source: *Getting Through*, 2008.

The authors highlighted the relatively weak completion rates for men – specifically, black and Hispanic men – compared to those for women, and they warned of dire implications. “The far lower college degree attainment rates among Black and Hispanic males substantially lowers these young males’ future earnings and their marriage prospects with adverse consequences for the economic and social well-being of children in the city and the state,” they wrote.¹⁸

The report did not present results for individual colleges and universities, but there was immediate pressure from *The Boston Globe* to provide to this information. Accordingly, Sullivan contacted leaders from all of the higher education institutions included in the study over the 2008-2009 holiday season, allowing them to review the data and urging them to agree to make their data public. All but two ultimately agreed.

As for Mayor Menino’s reaction to the study, that question was answered the day the report was released, when he joined leaders from BPS, PIC, CLMS, higher education, the business and nonprofit communities, the Boston Foundation, and other funders at a press conference. After the report’s authors presented the study findings, the mayor issued a challenge: to increase the graduation rate for the class of 2009 by 50 percent, and to *double* the graduation rate for college enrollees in the BPS Class of 2011. Achieving this ambitious target would require collective action in three areas:

Getting Ready – ensuring that BPS students are academically ready to succeed in college;

Getting In – ensuring that students apply for and gain access to higher education, including financial aid; and

Getting Through – ensuring that students receive necessary supports to earn a degree that prepares them to enter the workforce.

Speaking at the press conference, Grogan underscored the foundation’s commitment to helping achieve the mayor’s goal. “This work is truly about reclaiming the American Dream for the next generation because of the economic power of higher education. The potential impact of this collaboration is extraordinary.”

WORKING TOGETHER ON THE POSTSECONDARY CHALLENGE

From Pauley’s perspective, both the report and the mayor’s response to it had a profound impact. “By not pointing fingers,” she said, “he sent a clear message that we are all going to work together to solve this. That allowed everyone to get around the table and create a framework of mutual accountability. *Everyone* has to get better at what they do.”

Soon after the press conference, the mayor convened a new Success Boston Task Force to develop plans to meet his college completion challenge. Headed by BPS superintendent Carol Johnson, Paul Grogan, University of Massachusetts Boston chancellor J. Keith Motley, and PIC chair Gary Gottlieb, the task force rolled up its sleeves and began meeting regularly to discuss strategies, coordinate efforts, and track progress in the three major areas of work: Getting Ready, Getting In, and Getting Through (Figure 1).

Research was another crucial part of the task force’s work. BPS students in future graduating classes would be tracked over time to assess their rates of success compared to those for the Class of 2000 baseline group and against Mayor Menino’s challenge goal, and the task force would commission studies to determine which strategies and interventions were most effective.

Figure 1: Overview of Lead Partners and Strategies from Success Boston Task Force, April 2009

Getting Ready	Getting In	Getting Through
<p>Lead Partner: Boston Public Schools</p> <p>Focus: Improving students’ academic preparation</p> <p>How: Double the number of AP classes; establish an International Baccalaureate program; expand access to credit recovery programs; expand efforts to ensure high graduation rates and college readiness for populations at greatest risk of dropping out.</p>	<p>Lead Partners: The Boston Foundation and nonprofits devoted to college access and success</p> <p>Focus: Helping students transition from high school to two- and four-year colleges and universities</p> <p>How: Expand college access and transition supports; target students with the greatest needs; partner with colleges to provide transition support; raise awareness of what works.</p>	<p>Lead Partners: University of Massachusetts Boston and local colleges and universities</p> <p>Focus: Improving college graduation rates of BPS students</p> <p>How: Provide enrichment programs for BPS students; promote dual enrollment to acquaint students with campus life; provide mentoring, financial aid counseling, career coaching and other wrap-around services, especially in the first two years of college.</p>

Source: City of Boston Mayor’s Office, College Success Task Force ¹⁹

Getting Ready

As the lead partner for the “Getting Ready” part of the Success Boston work, BPS began taking steps to expand students’ access to rigorous educational experiences. Many of the strategies were included in Superintendent Carol Johnson’s five-year strategic plan for BPS (2009-2014), *The Acceleration Agenda*, which articulated three goals:

- Ensuring all students achieve MCAS proficiency;
- Closing access and achievement gaps; and
- Graduating all students from high school prepared for college completion and career success.

The district’s efforts on the “Getting Ready” front included expanding students’ access to rigorous courses (especially eighth grade algebra and Advanced Placement courses), instituting a “Transitions to College”

course for BPS seniors, and improving curricular alignment, as well as more generalized strategies such as improving school leadership, strengthening teaching and increasing parent engagement in schools.²⁰

These efforts to improve students' college readiness were occurring against the backdrop of a looming budget shortfall, however. Between 2008 and 2010, Superintendent Johnson made a series of proposals aimed at reducing transportation and facilities costs – for example, by changing BPS's school assignment zones, and by closing and merging schools. But she backed away in the face of “withering criticism for excluding parents, failing to create neighborhood schools, and not providing kids in poor neighborhoods better access to quality schools.”²¹ By December 2010, BPS's budget shortfall was \$63 million, and deficits would become a regular occurrence several years later, with no politically easy solutions in sight.

Getting In

Meanwhile, as BPS was working to get more students ready for postsecondary education, the Boston Foundation and a group of nonprofit partners were taking strides to provide more support for at-risk students during the critical and often bumpy transition from high school through the first two years of college.

This work had started even before the November 2009 report was released. While the paper was being completed, Pauley reached out to community organizations to learn more about how they were serving BPS high school students and see what more they could do:

For example, I met with Posse and Bottom Line since they were already working in the college access and support space and serving large numbers of students. I asked them how quickly they could scale up to serve all BPS graduates. At the time, Posse was serving something like 60 students per year. BPS had 3,000 graduates per year. They laughed me out of the room! So I paused and thought: there are a ton of community organizations with deep relationships and interest and expertise in the college-going space. They work with young people and are youth development experts. I sent out an open invitation: “Anybody you know who is working in this space, please come to a meeting next Weds.” At that point, there was no money attached; it was just anybody interested in coming up with a solution. We didn't know what the solution would be. We just knew there would be news that wasn't great and there would be a challenge to come up with a solution.

Many of those who came to the first meeting were from large community-based organizations, and the discussion was highly productive, so the foundation kept bringing the group together regularly, listening to their experiences and their needs. Pauley recalled:

The first conclusion we drew from the conversations (and this was later reinforced by the data) were that most of the degrees earned went to kids who had gone to the exam schools – generally, those with the strongest academics.

We also talked a lot about what happens when kids get to college. The nonprofits all felt that this can be a very lonely and strange experience for kids – especially those who are low income, first generation and students of color. Everyone assumes that they know so many things they don't actually know or where to go for help. Everyone around the table could point to kids who came back to them when they hit the first bump in the road because that was a trusted relationship.

We realized that there were parts of the pipeline that nobody owned, and the transition from high school to college was a big one. Higher education was saying that students needed ongoing support, and the nonprofits already had brand recognition. So it was obvious the logical solution was to extend the horizon for these community organizations to keep working with the young people they were already working with, from their senior year through their first two years of college.

Thus, a group of carefully selected nonprofit community partners received funding from the Boston Foundation to provide coaching for 300 students in the current BPS graduating class. Consistent with its new five-year strategic framework, *Thriving People, Vibrant Places*, most of the grants were multi-year, and several were for general operating support rather than project support. The latter was in response to input from the leaders of community organizations, who emphasized their urgent need for operating support and for consistency of funding over time.

The Success Boston grants included:

- \$200,000 annually to the ACCESS Foundation for financial aid advising and support and coordination of Success Boston coaches (general operating support);
- \$150,000 annually to The Education Resources Institute, Hyde Square Task Force, and PIC for Success Boston programming;
- \$150,000 annually to the Bottom Line Foundation to implement a strategic plan (general operating support); and
- \$125,000 annually to Freedom House to support implementation of its strategic plan, capacity building, and expansion of its college transition support program (general operating support).

Using a case management approach, coaches began working with individual students to help them complete financial aid documents; manage their time; balance school, work and life; explore possible majors and careers; and conquer all sorts of obstacles. At one point, for example, a student named Elisio Depina misplaced his green card and was told he could not start classes without one. His coach, Danny Rivera, quickly stepped in to help him navigate the bureaucracy so that he could get a new card in time for the first day of classes. When Danny had met Elisio, he was a high-school dropout working at a McDonald's. As Elisio described:

I could have gone on like that, but I kept thinking I wanted more out of life. I kept asking myself who I wanted to be. So I went back to high school and passed all of my courses and graduated. I knew I wanted to go to college, but I've always had financial problems and didn't know how to start. Then I got a call from Danny, who said 'I'm here to help you.' That's when my life began to change.²²

Knowing that the work would be complex and demanding, the foundation brought all of the coaches together monthly to talk about how their work was going, share practices and brainstorm solutions to challenges that came up. The first year was hectic, Pauley said, as everyone was figuring things out along the way. “The organizations were hungry to get started, and we got lucky with talent and enthusiasm.” The next year, participants honed the model and developed metrics they would all use to assess results, including enrollment, persistence and grade point average.

Over time, the group and its work kept evolving, Pauley said, “ultimately becoming a well-organized, high-functioning professional learning community.”

Getting Through

Things were also moving forward on the higher education front. The foundation had not convened college and university leaders regularly in the months leading up to the report’s release – a decision that Pauley and others regretted. But Keith Motley, Chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Boston, stepped up to engage them and secure their buy-in – for example, by inviting all leaders of the local colleges and universities to a meeting at the Boston Foundation to talk about the research and its implications. “He put a lot of his own capital on the line, and his reputation as a leader moved a lot of his peers,” one observer said. As a result, 38 higher education institutions across the greater Boston area committed themselves to Success Boston.

One of the first things the college and university leaders did was agree to track students’ progress over time. Many of them – particularly Northeastern, UMass Boston, and Bunker Hill Community College – made significant investments in expanding campus-based supports and worked with community partners to determine what kinds of supports to provide when, how (e.g., one-on-one or in a group), and where. And some also looked toward other ways to increase persistence, such as expanding students’ access to internships. Efforts in the latter category eventually became a fourth strand of work led by the PIC: *Getting Connected*.

TRACKING SUCCESS OVER TIME

As time went on, the Boston Foundation continued to fund research on postsecondary outcomes for various groups of students, thereby also assessing the impact of its \$1 million annual investment in Success Boston. In January 2013, it released a follow up to the earlier study, again conducted by researchers at Northeastern’s Center for Labor Market Studies. The *Getting Closer to the Finish Line* report provided additional positive news:

- ***College enrollment continued to increase.*** First-year enrollment rates of BPS graduates rose from 61 percent in 2005 to almost 70 percent in 2010.
- ***The need for remedial courses in college decreased from the Class of 2009 to 2011,***²³ though remaining generally high: 60 percent among community college students and 14 percent among students at the University of Massachusetts.

- **College completion rates were higher.** The six-year college completion rate for the BPS Class of 2005 was 47 percent (compared with just 40 percent for the Class of 2000), approaching Mayor Menino’s first completion goal.
- **Success Boston was having a measurable impact on college persistence.** Two-year persistence rates for BPS students in the Class of 2009 who had received transition coaching via Success Boston were 16 percentage points higher than those of peers who were not in the program. The gains were greatest for black and Hispanic students.²⁴ Even so, only 22 of every 100 students who enrolled in a two-year college had either obtained a degree or remained enrolled by year four.

Paul Grogan expressed his reaction to the findings in the report’s preface:

Ultimately, this report not only reflects the power of a city willing to come together to meet a serious challenge – it shows that, given the necessary supports, the potential for the majority of Boston students to succeed in college and go on to contribute to our region’s economy is truly within our reach.

The authors also highlighted the need to strengthen efforts in specific areas – in particular, increasing academic rigor for students attending non-exam schools, and providing earlier and more comprehensive college advising. “The persistent gaps in outcomes related to gender, race-ethnicity, exam and non-exam school settings and students attending two- and four-year institutions warrant much deeper exploration and innovative solutions,” they wrote. Furthermore, “*raising the persistence rates of two-year college enrollees will be critical to attaining the longer-term college graduation goals of the Success Boston initiative.*”

Community colleges were already on the minds of foundation staff. Based on previous evidence that so few low-income students who entered these institutions ever completed a degree or credential, the foundation had been providing funding to support the state’s participation in *Achieving the Dream*, a national initiative focused on improving student success at community colleges. It had also funded multiple studies on community college outcomes and operations.²⁵

Based on the results of one of its studies, the Boston Foundation had advocated for a controversial community college reform bill in 2012. The Coalition for Community Colleges, led by the Boston Foundation, successfully pressed lawmakers to centralize control over the state’s community college system – a change that community college presidents vehemently opposed, since it would increase oversight and significantly reduce their autonomy over budgets and curricula. But the foundation made the new law much more palatable to community colleges the following year by advocating for an overhaul of the state’s funding system, which resulted in an additional \$20 million for Massachusetts’ community colleges in exchange for meeting performance goals.

A NEW MAYOR AND SUPERINTENDENT

In January 2014, Boston swore in a new mayor, Marty Walsh, who won the election after Mayor Menino opted not to run again. Menino had served an unprecedented five terms in office, and the city was stunned when he died that fall after a long battle with cancer. “His death hit the city like a punch,” *The Boston Globe* said.

The mayoral transition did not slow the city’s education momentum, though. Like Grogan and his colleagues at the Boston Foundation, Walsh and his new education chief, Rahn Dorsey – a former executive at the Barr Foundation – were strong believers that expanding access to a high-quality education was the key to equalizing opportunities and sustaining a vibrant regional economy.²⁶

Three weeks after Dorsey began his new position, the mayor walked into his office and asked him to form a task force to examine system-wide policies, programs, and practices in BPS and make recommendations for how to eliminate achievement and opportunity gaps in the school system. The group met regularly to shape plans for making Boston a national model for equity in education.

Meanwhile, the mayor and Dorsey were also focused on another urgent matter: finding a new superintendent for BPS. Since Carol Johnson’s departure in mid-2013, the position had been filled by an interim, and the mayor’s team was keen on finding a strong new leader. They were looking for someone who believed in school autonomy and innovation, and who embraced charter as well as district schools, seeing these and other options as valuable components of a robust system of school choice. The Boston Foundation provided \$25,000 to support the superintendent search, and in May 2015, the mayor announced that BPS’s new superintendent would be Dr. Tommy Chang, formerly an instructional superintendent in Los Angeles Unified School District, principal and teacher.

When the new superintendent began, the foundation provided an additional \$50,000 grant to support the development of a new strategic plan for the school system. And in 2016, it convened a forum where Dr. Chang shared his goals and listened to input from a wide variety of community stakeholders. His early priorities included revising BPS’s 10-year-old achievement gap policy, launching a new program called *Excellence For All* that would provide a more challenging curriculum to students in 13 schools, expanding summer learning opportunities through an extensive public-private effort, and undertaking human capital reforms supported by funding from the Boston Foundation.

SCALING UP SUCCESS

As Grogan had emphasized upon his arrival at the Boston Foundation, large, important problems in society could not be solved without the involvement of the public sector. Sometimes this meant advocating for policy changes; other times it meant leveraging the foundation’s grant making to access public funding. In that spirit, when the Boston Foundation had an opportunity to apply for a federal Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant in 2014, it seized it. The funding was available to “proven and promising programs,” and by now, Success Boston fit that description. The foundation applied for funding to launch College for Completion,

or C4C, which would scale up the Success Boston transition coaching program to 1,000 BPS graduates annually, tripling its reach and impact.

In September 2014, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) announced that the foundation had been selected to receive a \$2.7 million SIF grant; over the lifetime of the grant, it would receive a total of \$6 million. “The Boston Foundation has selected a very interesting portfolio that will tackle the challenge of low college completion rates across diverse populations of youth,” said Lois Nembard, the fund’s acting director.

In January 2015, the foundation announced an open grant competition to organizations wanting to provide programs and services to support the high school to college transition for BPS students, starting with the Class of 2015. Fifteen organizations applied, and based on its due diligence, the foundation chose nine SIF subgrantees to receive a total of \$1.6 million in funding. (See Attachment E.) Each would receive a grant of \$100,000 or more per year over a three- to five-year period.

The SIF award was a major win for Boston and its students, but like other federal grants, it came with strings. One was a 1:1 match requirement for the Boston Foundation *and* each of its subgrantees. Moreover, Pauley explained, “all of the pre-SIF partners that had invented this coaching model with us now had to demonstrate their expertise, financial health, and so on as part of their SIF application.” Once selected, each had to submit data on a regular basis documenting program enrollment, number of coaching contacts, remediation, persistence toward degree, financial aid completion, and other indicators.

The foundation was also required to submit regular progress reports and to monitor each subgrantee’s risk over time. The SIF team used a detailed rubric²⁷ to assign ratings to each grantee, then used the results to provide targeted support and to continually refine the work. “The high level of structure was an adjustment for all of us,” Pauley observed. “Having a federal grant was like a new set of muscles that we had to develop. Much of it made sense, but it did make the work feel slightly less organic.”

THE 100 YEAR QUESTION: ARE WE ALL WE CAN BE?

In 2015, as the Boston Foundation celebrated the news of the SIF award, it was also embarking on a year-long celebration of its 100th anniversary. Over the past months, Grogan and his staff had been reflecting on the foundation’s history, much of which was captured in a thick new volume entitled *The Boston Foundation in the City of Ideas: 1915-2015*²⁸ as well as on a dedicated website.

The foundation board was determined that the centennial year not be just a time of self-congratulations; they saw it as a valuable time to reflect on the foundation’s past, present, and future. Therefore, throughout 2015, the Boston Foundation sponsored a series of public gatherings and forums where people came together to talk about challenges that Boston and the region were facing, ranging from infrastructure, climate change, and immigration to income inequality. It also prepared a progress report analyzing how the foundation had fared with respect to its previous strategic framework, *Thriving People, Vibrant Places*. And it launched a major fundraising campaign that secured \$192 million in gifts and bequests for its endowment, expanding the resources the foundation could devote to addressing Boston’s most pressing needs.

From these discussions, reflections, and analysis, a new five-year strategic framework emerged. As Grogan wrote in the introduction to *Vision 2020*, “We asked ourselves, as we have at other inflection points in the past, ‘Is the Boston Foundation fully harnessing its potential to serve and advance transformational change on behalf of the city and region? Are we all that we can be?’

No direct answer to the question was given. But the contents of the new strategic framework suggested that the foundation could do more to fulfill the promise crystallized in its branding: “Don’t Just Give. Solve.” Conclusions from its reflection and analysis included the following:

- The foundation and its partners had made significant progress in some areas of community life, especially when it had leveraged all of its roles: grantmaker, civic leader and partner for high-impact philanthropy.
- The foundation needed to stay open to new ideas and emerging issues. This would require being flexible, ramping up new initiatives and transitioning out of others in response to changes in the community.
- To amplify its impact, the foundation needed to partner even more closely with its donors, inviting them to make grants aligned with its discretionary grantmaking.
- The foundation needed to do more to tackle economic inequality and forge new partnerships to make Boston “a city that champions upward mobility.”

“Boston has created a powerhouse knowledge economy,” the new strategic framework document said, “but too many people are not benefiting from the extraordinary renaissance that has occurred here.”

WORKING ACROSS THE PIPELINE

The foundation’s new strategic framework called for it to continue investing in efforts to strengthen the city’s and region’s education pipeline from K-12 public education through college completion and career preparation. It would do so primarily by focusing its efforts in two areas:

K-12 Structural Reform – Increasing the number of high-quality schools with site-based decision making and key autonomies inside Boston Public Schools and contributing to the transformation of the public education system by raising or abolishing the charter school cap; and

College Completion – Scaling up Success Boston to serve 1,000 students annually, including all Boston students attending community colleges, with the goal of achieving a college completion rate of 70 percent for BPS graduates who enroll in college.

Thanks to the SIF grant, the foundation and its partners had been able to expand the Success Boston coaching program to serve many more students. And as time went on, they continued to track progress against Mayor Menino’s 2008 challenge. In 2016, PIC and Abt Associates researchers reported that 71 percent of BPS students in the Class of 2009 had enrolled in either two- or four-year college, and just over half (51 percent) of the enrollees had earned a degree within six years. This was within 1 percentage point of the city’s interim goal. Community college students who had participated in Success Boston were more

likely than nonparticipants to complete a degree (35 percent vs. 24 percent), but notably, the researchers found essentially no difference in outcomes between participants and nonparticipants attending four-year colleges.²⁹

A subsequent study conducted by Abt Associates (2017) provided even more significant evidence of the program's impact. Compared to students who did *not* participate in the Success Boston coaching program, participants:

- Were 11 percent more likely than non-coached peers to persist into their second year of college, and 21 percent more likely to persist into their third year;
- Were 9 percent more likely to renew their FAFSA;
- Had a cumulative GPA that was 8 percent higher than that of their non-coached peers; and
- Were likely to accumulate more college credits.

Yet despite these signs of progress, the latest research also revealed how much still needed to be done to eliminate disparities in outcomes by gender, race/ethnicity, and other factors.³⁰

THE CHARTER DEBATE HEATS UP

While the Success Boston work was proceeding with relatively little controversy, work in the K-12 arena was heating up not only in Boston but also statewide around the topic of charter schools. Under existing state law, Massachusetts could add another 42 charter schools before hitting its cap of 120 schools. Due to spending cap rules, however, few more could be added in Boston, where demand was highest.

In 2014, the state senate voted down a House bill to lift the charter cap, and an effort the next year looked as though it might fail too. At a meeting of the legislature's education committee in October 2015, both Governor Charlie Baker and Boston Mayor Marty Walsh testified in favor of raising the charter school cap, though their proposals for doing so differed considerably.³¹

Paul Grogan spoke too, emphasizing charter schools' positive impact on low-income students. "Something valuable is being withheld from them, and it's unconscionable," he said.

Unable to reach another solution, the legislature opted to hold a public referendum. In November 2016, Question 2 on the ballot would ask voters if they supported giving the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education authority to lift the cap to allow up to 12 new charter schools (or expansions of existing charters) each year, beginning in January 2017.

Opinions were sharply divided. Charter advocates argued that lifting the cap would improve options for parents, while opponents argued that doing so would destroy public education by draining students and money from school districts. As election day neared, polls were close, and when voters were asked how they intended to vote and why, their answers varied widely. In a WBUR poll, for example, 39 percent of respondents said they believed that charters provided a better education, while just 6 percent said school districts did. The rest were unsure.³² Meanwhile, the Boston Teachers Union and other entities were pouring many millions of dollars into the campaign trying to influence voters.

While it is a longstanding policy of the foundation not to take positions on ballot referendums, both the foundation and Grogan's position on charter schools were well known.³³ The foundation also commissioned the Boston Municipal Research Bureau to conduct a study to dispel the notion that charter schools took resources away from district schools. *The True Cost of Boston's Charter Schools*, released in spring 2016, reported that BPS's budget had continued to grow even as enrollment dropped. The district did have financial challenges, the report said, but these were due to increasing personnel costs and excess capacity, not charter schools – and regardless of the referendum results, the city and BPS would have to take steps to close its structural deficit. “BPS should continue to work with charter schools as valuable partners to increase the quality of education for Boston students,” the authors concluded.³⁴

Leading up to the referendum, Governor Charlie Baker joined many others in campaigning for Question 2. On November 7, however, the “no” side won by a margin of about two to one. Contemplating the outcome, Grogan was reflective:

It was not the charter bill I would have designed. I wish it had been a little more measured. Still, we regret the result because Boston has some of the best charter schools in the country. They also provide useful pressure that has allowed us to spread charter-like innovations throughout the system, like site-based autonomy and pilot schools.

When we got the Achievement Gap legislation through both houses, doubling the number of charter schools in the city, I thought we had won the battle. But by the time we went for a further expansion, the senate had become much more pro-union, and the union leadership had changed. The union waged a very effective campaign that charters were robbing resources from the public schools, and even though it wasn't true, that myth took hold. The pro-referendum folks didn't have the ground game the union had either. As a result, the opposition was overwhelming.

Despite the referendum's defeat, charter schools would continue to grow in Boston, but the rate of expansion would be much lower than it would have been if the referendum had passed. The outcome was difficult for Paul Grogan to accept:

It would be one thing if we didn't know what to do with these kids, but we now know the success of the charter movement. They are figuring out one of our biggest unsolved problems: the failure to equip large numbers of children to succeed. I think it is immoral to stop something that's working so well in one of the most difficult areas of American life.

With the path blocked, though, the foundation had little choice but to turn to other ways to foster school-level autonomy. As Pauley reflected:

We will keep exploring options we have not yet tried, looking for ways to seed a new generation of school redesign. We will keep talking with the superintendent and looking for ways to help advance his theory of action. And we will keep putting data out about what is happening for kids in the city, and keep talking about performance gaps – boys vs. girls, low-income vs. high, black vs. Hispanic vs. white – to maintain the sense of urgency.

TAKING STOCK

As the spring of 2017 turned to summer, Rahn Dorsey was thinking about the future of the city's education agenda, and from his point of view, there was much to feel good about.

Equity is now the common lens, and I believe that Boston has the right conditions for showing how it can be achieved. I am especially encouraged to see the level of collaboration. Ten years ago, a lot of people would not work with each other. But I think we have come to realize that the problems are so big, it really does take everyone working together. I am quite hopeful about what this city can accomplish if we can continue to be courageous.

Despite the outcome of charter referendum, Paul Grogan too was pleased with the progress Boston was making on the equity front. Although the city still suffered from a poor reputation as a place for minorities to thrive – “a hangover from the school desegregation crisis of the 1970s,” he said – he had seen it change enormously for the better:

Today, Boston is an infinitely more tolerant and compassionate place. The clannishness has receded, the sharp boundaries of neighborhoods have softened. . . . The whole atmosphere of the city has changed. Even so, the income gaps are still very wide. That's a national issue, but it is particularly acute here. Educational attainment is the key: if you have a bachelor's degree or higher in this economy, you are probably going to do very well. If you don't, you are going to be harshly punished.

Grogan was therefore mindful of how far Boston still had to go on the education front. “We have a school system in which half the schools are underperforming,” he said, “and there are major gaps between what district students are achieving compared to what their peers in Catholic and charter schools are achieving.”

While Elizabeth Pauley agreed the city had a long way to go, she nevertheless believed that Boston would be the first place to solve the equity challenge:

I know that sounds like Bostonian hubris, but the city is of a size that I think we should be able to solve whatever our problems are. We graduate 3,500 kids a year from BPS. Just in Success Boston, we had 38 institutions of higher education raise their hand and say “We're in.” We have \$6 million from the federal government to provide coaching, plus we matched that. We have really smart people across every high school, every nonprofit, every college – so we have got the human capital and the resources.

And without tooting our horn too much, we have the Boston Foundation. I think having a place like this that is independent and is not going to stop really makes a difference. I think if Boston can't solve some of these problems, nobody can.

Self-Study Questions

Questions to consider while reading this case:

1. What do you think of the Boston Foundation's decision to play a more assertive role in civic leadership when Paul Grogan arrived? How effective was it in exercising this larger and more public role? How does this apply to your own work?
2. What new knowledge did the Boston Foundation create regarding ways to promote educational success and equity? How would you rate the value of this new knowledge?
3. From your perspective, how effective was the foundation in engaging stakeholders and forging coalitions to improve equity in education in Boston? What else could they have done? What kinds of engagement and coalition-building might be useful for your initiatives?
4. Did the foundation adapt its strategy (e.g., grantmaking, coalition-building, civic leadership) over time in response to what it was learning? If so, how and why?
5. What do you think of the foundation's decisions regarding what to support at various segments of the education pipeline – K-12, the transition to college, higher education? What else could or should they have invested energy and resources in, based on what their research showed?
6. What do you think of the foundation's stance on charter schools as a path to educational equity? Should it have done anything more or differently amid the debate over raising the charter cap?
7. Do you think the foundation's work has had, or is likely to have, a major impact on educational equity in Boston? What else could it do to further progress?
8. What other research would you have liked the foundation to support, from the standpoint of improving equity in education?
9. What specific lessons and insights did you gain from this case? How might they apply in your future grant making?

Attachment A Profile of the Boston Foundation

Overview

Major community foundation made up of approximately 850 separate charitable funds established by donors for the general benefit of the community or for special purposes.

Mission

As Greater Boston's community foundation since 1915, the Boston Foundation devotes its resources to building and sustaining a vital, prosperous city and region, where justice and opportunity are extended to everyone. We fulfill this mission in three principal ways:

- Making grants to nonprofit organizations and designing special funding initiatives to address this community's critical challenges;
- Working in partnership with donors and funders to achieve high-impact philanthropy; and
- Serving as a civic hub and center of information, where ideas are shared, levers for change are identified and common agendas for the future are developed.

Value Statement

In everything we do, we seek to broaden participation, foster collaboration and heal racial, ethnic and community divisions.

Board

Composition

- 18 members
- 11 Caucasian, 4 African-American, 2 Hispanic/Latino, 1 Asian/Pacific Islander
- 11 male, 7 female

Terms and other information:

- Board term lengths: 5 years
- Board term limits: 2
- Board meeting attendance: 69%
- Written board selection criteria: yes
- Written conflict of interest policy: yes

Institutional representation

- Investment advisory firms (4)
- Private equity firm (2)
- Law firms (2)
- Independent consulting firms (3)
- Public university
- Community health center
- Early childhood education center
- Church
- Community volunteer
- Foundation

Staff

Composition

- 100 full-time staff, 0 part-time staff
- 73 Caucasian, 12 African-American, 4 Asian, 3 Hispanic/Latino, 8 other
- 67 female, 33 male
- Office of the President 3
- Communications/Public Affairs 6
- Strategy and Operations 13
- Programs 28
- Development and Donor Services 16
- Finance 16
- The Philanthropic Initiative 15
- Philanthropy 2
- Haiti Development Institute 3

Attachment B
Highlights from the History of the Boston Foundation

*Key education grants and events in boldface*³⁵

- 1915 Banker Charles E. Rogerson of The Boston Safe Deposit and Trust Company, and his son Charles M. Rogerson, establish The Permanent Charity Fund.
- 1917 Businessman John Longley's \$4 million unrestricted bequest enables fund to become the first community foundation in the U.S. to make grants; separate entity is formed to manage disbursement of funds for charitable purposes
- 1960 Businessman Albert Stone makes \$20 million bequest (largest contribution ever made to a community foundation in the U.S.)
- 1970 Foundation makes a grant to launch Massachusetts Advocates for Children, leading to a new state law guaranteeing education for children with disabilities**
- 1975 Foundation funds Tri-lateral Task Force for Quality Education**
- 1982 Foundation brings school, business, and civic officials together to sign first Boston Compact**
- 1984 Foundation begins offering donor-advised funds
- 1984 Boston Plan for Excellence in the Public Schools is established at the fund**
- 1985 Anna-Faith Jones becomes President/CEO of the fund
- 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Act creates charter schools**
- 1995 The first pilot school opens in Boston; the state's first charter schools open**
- 1997 Foundation support for Boston Plan for Excellence helps it win \$10 million Annenberg Challenge grant; convenes hundreds of people to develop first Boston Indicators Report**
- 1998 Boston Globe publishes expose on fund's weak investment returns and resulting negative impact on grantmaking; Jones leads transition from trust to new corporate structure; foundation becomes fully vested nonprofit corporation and revamps investment strategy
- 2001 Jones retires; Paul Grogan becomes President/CEO of the Boston Foundation
- 2002 Foundation begins funding charter and Catholic schools; provides grants to 13 schools to begin pilot planning; BPS approves conversion and new pilot schools the following year**
- 2007 Foundation holds forum on pilot schools and provides pilot school implementation grants**
- 2008 Boston Indicators Project releases its first education report card, highlighting achievement gaps**
- 2009 Foundation issues Informing the Debate report showing that charter schools outperform traditional public and pilot schools; convenes Race To The Top coalition**
- 2010 Foundation plays lead role in state education reform legislation aimed at closing achievement gaps by doubling the number of charter school seats and establishing Innovation Schools**
- 2010 Foundation plays key role in forging Boston Opportunity Agenda partnership involving city and major charities in multifaceted work to strengthen education pipeline**
- 2010 Massachusetts places first in Race To The Top grant competition
- 2012 Foundation merges with The Philanthropic Initiative, a strategic philanthropy consulting firm
- 2015 Foundation's 100th anniversary; launches Campaign for Boston to increase endowment
- 2016 Living Cities names Paul Grogan one of 25 Disruptive Leaders working to close racial opportunity gaps

Attachment B (continued)

Projects in Which the Boston Foundation Played an Instrumental Early Role

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Hospitals & Community Health Centers

Brigham and Women's Hospital
Tufts Medical Center
South Cove Manor
Community Health Centers and
Mass. League of Health Centers

Alliances for Health Equity

Boston AIDS Consortium
Boston Urban Asthma Coalition
Health Care for All
Healthy People/Healthy
Economy Coalition

Innovation in Prevention

Samaritans
Health Leads
Playworks Massachusetts
Mass in Motion

HUMAN SERVICES

Support for Individuals & Families

United South End Settlements
Action for Boston Community Development
Roxbury Multi-Service Center
Bridge Over Troubled Waters
Victory Programs
GreenLight Fund
Social Finance

Access to Food & Shelter

The Greater Boston Food Bank
Massachusetts Housing and Shelter
Alliance On Behalf of Newcomers
Massachusetts Immigrant and
Refugee Advocacy Coalition
English for New Bostonians

ARTS & CULTURE

Cultural Institutions

WGBH-TV
New England Aquarium
Boston Center for the Arts

Performing Arts

American Repertory Theater
Commonwealth Shakespeare Company
Boston Landmarks Orchestra
Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA

Advocacy & Service

ArtsBoston
Arts & Business Council
of Greater Boston
Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund
MASSCreative

Youth

Community Music Center of Boston
Young Audiences of Massachusetts
Boston Children's Chorus
ZUMIX
Urbano Project

CIVIC LEADERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT

The Future Imagined

Boston Indicators Project
John LaWare Leadership Forum
Carol R. Goldberg Civic
Engagement Initiative
Commonwealth Summit

Diversity in Action

The Partnership
Commonwealth Compact
Commonwealth Seminar
Greater Boston Interfaith Organization

Nonprofit Resilience

Institute for Nonprofit
Management and Leadership
Massachusetts Nonprofit Network

EDUCATION

Early Education

Reach Out and Read
Bessie T. Wilson Initiative for Children
Strategies for Children

Community Involvement & Advocacy

Massachusetts Advocates for Children
The Boston Compact
Boston Plan for Excellence [BPE]
Boston Schoolyard Initiative
EdVestors
Boston Opportunity Agenda
Race to the Top Coalition

Excellence in Teaching

Achievement Network
Teach Plus
Breakthrough Greater Boston

Out-of-School Time

BELL
Boston After School & Beyond

Transformative Models

Massachusetts Charter
Public School Association
Pilot Schools
UP Education Network

Higher Education Success

uAspire
Success Boston
BATEC
Coalition FOR Community Colleges

URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Restored Waterways

Boston Harbor Cleanup
Save the Harbor/Save the Bay
Charles River Conservancy

Vital City Spaces

Faneuil Hall Marketplace
Boston GreenSpace Alliance
Boston Nature Center

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & JOBS

Skills Training

YouthBuild Boston
Boston STRIVE
Year Up
SkillWorks
New England Center for
Arts & Technology

Urban Economic Development

Initiative for a Competitive Inner City
Massachusetts Life
Sciences Collaborative
Commonwealth Kitchen
Bornstein & Pearl Food Production Center
Smarter in the City

HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing Developers

The Community Builders
Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción
Urban Edge
LISC Boston
Metro Boston Housing Partnership
Neighborhood Development
Support Collaborative
Fairmount/Indigo Line CDC Collaborative

Resource Builders

Boston Community Capital
Mass. Affordable Housing Alliance
Home Funders
Neighborhood Stabilization Loan Fund
Family Independence Initiative, Boston

Public Policy Alliances

Citizens' Housing and Planning
Association
Mass. Association of Community
Development Corporations
Commonwealth Housing Task Force

YOUTH

Character Building & Mentoring

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston
Partners for Youth with Disabilities
City Year
Citizen Schools

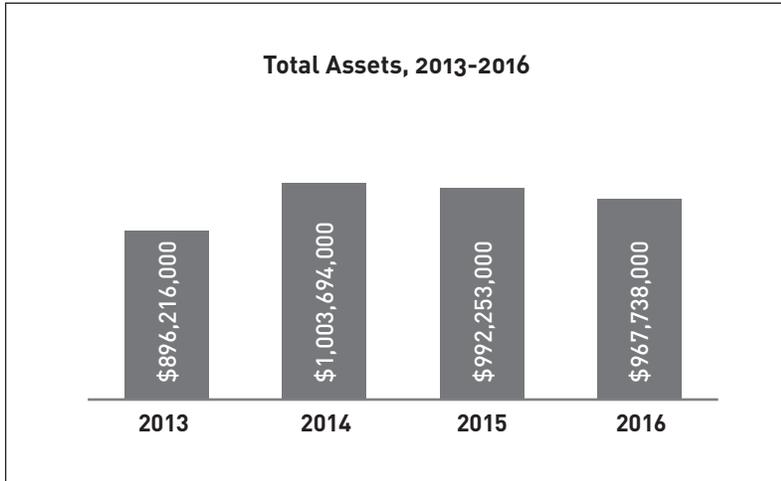
Peace & Safety

Boston TenPoint Coalition
Center for Teen Empowerment
Hyde Square Task Force
StreetSafe Boston
Mothers for Justice and Equality

Skills Development

WriteBoston
More Than Words
The BASE

**Attachment C
Financial Information for the Boston Foundation³⁶**



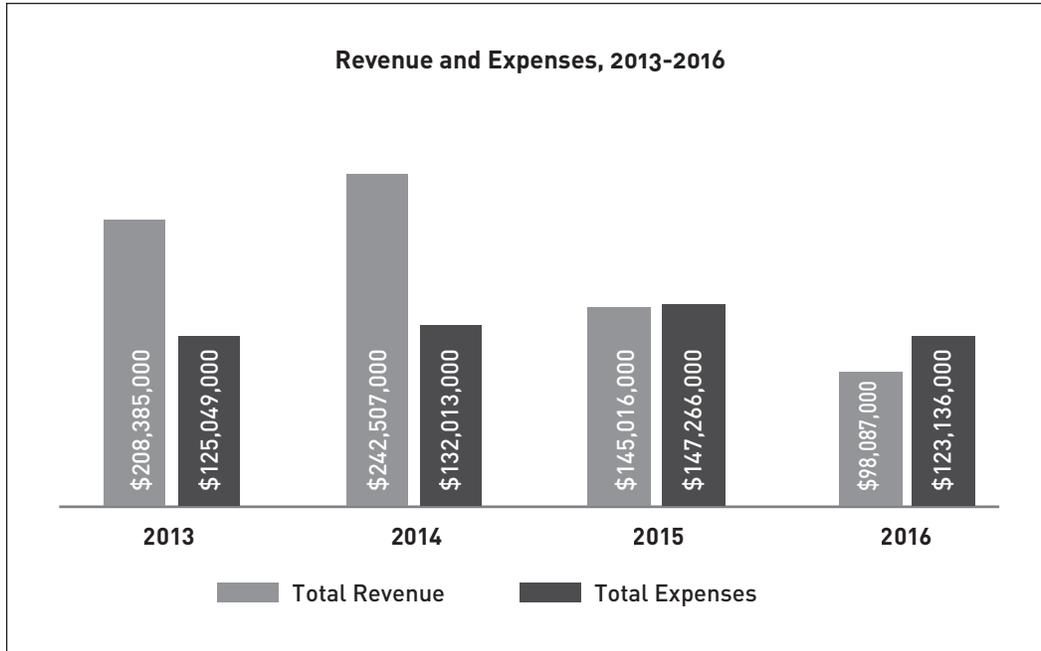
Assets and Liabilities, 2013-2016				
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total Assets	\$896,216,000	\$1,003,694,000	\$992,253,000	\$967,738,000
Current Assets	\$35,798,000	\$31,143,000	\$33,112,000	\$39,591,000
Current Liabilities	\$18,769,000	\$15,753,000	\$6,562,000	\$7,096,000
Total Net Assets	\$877,447,000	\$987,941,000	\$985,691,000	\$960,642,000

Endowment Value: \$410,188,000

Short-Term Solvency, 2013-2016				
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Current Ratio: Current Assets/ Current Liabilities	1.91	1.98	5.05	5.58

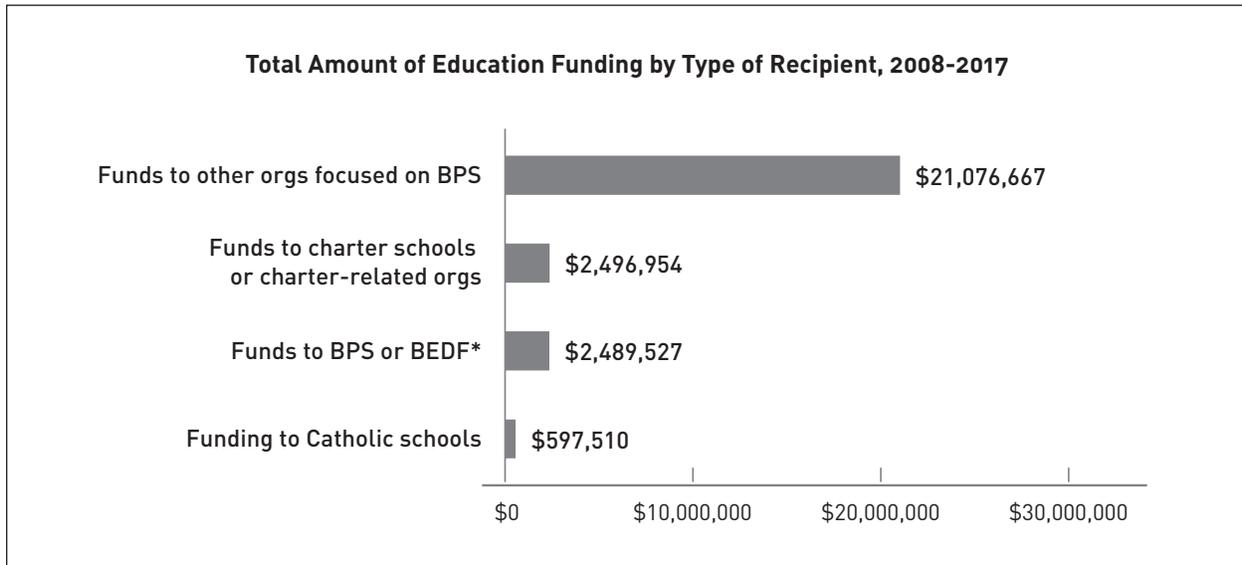
Long-Term Solvency, 2013-2016				
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Long-term Liabilities/ Total Assets	0%	0%	0%	0%

Attachment C (continued)
Financial Information for the Boston Foundation



Sources of Revenue, 2013-2016				
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Individual contributions	\$81,956,503	\$72,364,085	\$93,671,424	\$69,060,412
Investment income, net of losses	\$76,102,000	\$128,662,000	\$20,589,000	(\$10,664,000)
Foundation and corporation contributions	\$47,471,086	\$38,273,650	\$28,077,535	\$36,011,529
Earned revenue	\$1,801,000	\$1,954,000	\$1,896,000	\$1,582,000
Government contributions	\$858,000	\$894,000	\$616,696	\$1,960,822
Other	\$196,410	\$359,265	\$165,345	\$136,025
Expense Breakdown				
Programs: 92% Administration: 5% Fundraising: 3%				

Attachment D
The Boston Foundation's Funding for Education, 2008-2017
(Includes Discretionary Grants and Donor-Advised Funds)



Education Funding Details, 2008-2017			
	Total amount	Average amount	Examples
Grants and funding to BPS or BEDF*	\$2,489,527	\$55,323	\$600,000 to BPS for human capital initiative \$150,000 to BPS to increase college and career readiness \$150,000 to BPS to support BPS Innovation 2016 \$100,000 to BEDF for Achievement Gap effort \$85,000 to BPS for communications strategy
Grants and funding to other organizations focused on BPS	\$21,076,667	\$292,731	\$2,000,000 for Opportunity Agenda \$1,400,000 for Success in Boston in FY2014 \$1,255,000 for Boston Plan for Excellence \$900,000 to EdVestors for BPS arts initiative \$825,000 to Playworks for recreational initiative \$225,000 to Northeastern for BPS tracking study
Subtotal	\$23,566,194		
Grants and funding to charter schools or related orgs	\$2,496,954	\$37,268	\$1,187,954 in operating support to MATCH Foundation \$402,500 in operating support to Excel Academy Charter School (and Friends) \$300,000 to MA Charter Public School Association for campaign to raise charter cap
Grants and funding to Catholic schools	\$597,510	\$9,637	\$524,000 to Catholic Schools Foundation \$58,510 to Boston College High School
Subtotal	\$3,094,464		
TOTAL	\$26,660,658	\$108,309	

Attachment E



Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) postsecondary coaches connect students to valuable campus and community resources, develop college and career goals, and navigate deadlines and requirements, while balancing the demands of school, life, and work. The Boston PIC's offices are located both Downtown and in Jamaica Plain. www.bostonpic.org



Bottom Line is dedicated to helping students get in to college, graduate from college, and go far in life. Full-time counselors provide students with on-campus, one-on-one guidance at 25 colleges in Massachusetts that continues for up to 6 years. Bottom Line counselors work with students on building campus connections, developing strong academic skills, increasing career readiness, connecting to internships and full-time jobs, and completing the financial aid renewal and bill payment process each year. Offices located in Jamaica Plain. www.bottomline.org



College Bound Dorchester believes that every young person can graduate from college with the right support. With a mission to equip students with the attitude, skills and experience to graduate from college, our College Readiness Advisors (CRAs) help students finish financial aid paperwork, use resources on campus and make sure that students are taking the right classes to earn a degree and start a career. Offices located in Dorchester. www.collegebounddorchester.org



Freedom House's Preparing Urban Students for Success in Higher Education (PUSH) removes barriers to education by providing students with college-level learning opportunities, intensive summer college preparation, and ongoing coaching throughout college. We inspire students to complete college, become gainfully employed and give back to their communities. Offices located in Dorchester. www.freedomhouse.com



Hyde Square Task Force believes our youths' educational success is key to their active civic engagement and leadership. Starting in the summer before their first year of college, youth participate in our Summer Academy workshops focusing on the critical components of their transition to college, and receive one-on-one coaching to ensure that they are prepared for their first day on campus in September and beyond. Offices located in Jamaica Plain. www.hydesquare.org



Sociedad Latina works with youth and families to create the next generation of Latino leaders who are confident, competent, self-sustaining and proud of their cultural heritage. The Academy for Latinos Achieving Success (ALAS) provides students with bilingual transition coaching through the first two years of college or career via monthly 1-on-1 meetings with mentors, work readiness training, and social-emotional support. Offices located in Mission Hill. www.sociedadlatina.org



The Steppingstone Foundation develops and implements programs that prepare underserved students for college success. Each year, Steppingstone provides academic, social-emotional, college readiness, and college success services to more than 1,600 Boston students. Steppingstone's College Services offers personalized guidance, workshops, mentoring, and more to help Scholars get the most from their college experience. Offices located in the South End. www.tsf.org



West End House is an independent Boys & Girls Club in the City of Boston that provides outcomes-driven programs to 1,500 youth. These high-impact programs provide opportunities in critical areas of youth development, ensuring that young people are succeeding academically, exploring the arts, developing career readiness skills, and adopting healthy lifestyles. Offices located in Allston. www.westendhouse.org



uAspire is a nonprofit organization that works to ensure that all young people have the financial information and resources necessary to find an affordable path to – and through – a postsecondary education. To accomplish this mission, uAspire partners with schools and community organizations to provide free financial aid advice and advocacy to young people and families to help them overcome the financial barriers to higher education. Offices located Downtown. www.uaspire.org

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Boston Higher Education Partnership (2007). From *College Access to College Success: College Preparation and Persistence of BPS Graduates*, p. 20.
- ² Riggs, L. (2014, Jan. 13). "What it's like to be the first person in your family to go to college," *The Atlantic*.
- ³ LaMar, T. (2015). "Do I belong here? The struggles of our first generation students," *Kaleidoscope: Educator Voices and Perspectives*, 2(1), pp 11–14.
- ⁴ Sum, A., Fogg, N., Khatiwada, I., McLaughlin, J., Palma, S. with Motroni, J., and Tobar, P. (2008). *Getting to the Finish Line: College Enrollment and Graduation—A Seven Year Longitudinal Study of the Boston Public Schools Class of 2000*, p. 1.
- ⁵ Hindley, B. (2015). *The Boston Foundation in the City of Ideas, 1915-2015 – Responding to Need, Seeding Innovation, Changing the Game*. The Boston Foundation.
- ⁶ Grogan, P. (2013). *Changing the Game: Civic Leadership at the Boston Foundation, 2001-2012. Duke Essays in Contemporary Philanthropy*, p. 14.
- ⁷ Interview with Paul Grogan (2017, June 16). Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from Mr. Grogan are from this interview.
- ⁸ Founded in 1997, the Boston Indicators Project engages community members in collaborating to define what aspects of community well-being they perceive as important and wish to measure. The Project aims to "democratize access to information, foster civic discourse and track measures of progress and shared goals" in ten sectors: Civic Health, Cultural Life and the Arts, Economy, Education, Environment, Housing, Public Health, Public Safety, Technology and Transportation. More information on the indicators can be found on the Boston Indicators Project website: www.bostonindicators.org
- ⁹ Gose, B. (2011, May 30). "A Boston fund mixes research and advocacy with writing checks," *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*.
- ¹⁰ Vaznis, J. (2009, July 22). "Menino, teachers union grow further apart," *The Boston Globe*.
- ¹¹ Center for Collaborative Education. (2007). *Strong Results, High Demand: A Four-Year Study of Boston's Pilot High Schools*, p. 36.
- ¹² Center for Education Research & Policy at MassInc. (2003). *Mapping School Choice in Massachusetts: Data and Findings 2003*, p. 7.
- ¹³ Center for Collaborative Education. (2007). *Op cit*.
- ¹⁴ Abdulkadiroglu, A., Angrist, J., Cohodes, S., Dynarski, S., Fullerton, J., Kane, T., and Pathak, P. (2009). *Informing the Debate: Comparing Boston's Charter, Pilot, and Traditional Schools*.
- ¹⁵ An Innovation School is an in-district public school authorized by the local school committee that can have greater autonomy and flexibility in six areas (curriculum, budget, schedule and calendar, staffing, professional development and district policies) in exchange for meeting annual goals.
- ¹⁶ Interview with Elizabeth Pauley. (2017, June 12). Unless otherwise indicated, all quotes from Ms. Pauley are from this interview.
- ¹⁷ Interview with Neil Sullivan. (2017, June 14). Unless otherwise indicated, all quotes from Mr. Sullivan are from this interview.
- ¹⁸ Sum, A., Fogg, N., Khatiwada, I., McLaughlin, J., Palma, S., Motroni, J., Tobar, P., Sullivan, N., Smith, C. (2008, November). *Getting to the Finish Line: College Enrollment and Graduation – A Seven Year Longitudinal Study of the Boston Public Schools Class of 2000*.
- ¹⁹ The Mayor's Office, City of Boston (2009, Apr. 16). *College Success Task Force Meets to Increase College Completion Rates for BPS Graduates*. <https://www.cityofboston.gov/news/Default.aspx?id=4173>
- ²⁰ Boston Public Schools (2010, May). *Acceleration Agenda, 2009-2014: A Five-Year Strategic Direction to Transform Boston Public Schools*.
- ²¹ Gurwitt, R. (2013, May). Boston Public: Carol Johnson's tenure as superintendent of schools," *Boston Magazine*.
- ²² The Boston Foundation (2012). *Changing Lives: The Boston Foundation 2011 Annual Report*.
- ²³ These refer to *high school* graduation years.
- ²⁴ Sum, A., Khatiwada, I., McHugh, W., Palma, S. (2013). *Getting Closer to the Finish Line: The College Enrollment and Completion Experiences of Graduates of the Boston Public Schools*, pp. 6-7.
- ²⁵ Alssid, J., Goldberg, M., and Schneider, J. (2011). *The Case for Community Colleges: Aligning Higher Education and Workforce Needs in Massachusetts*.
- ²⁶ Interview with Rahn Dorsey (2017, June 16). Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from Mr. Dorsey are from this interview.
- ²⁷ The rubric included questions such as: Does the organization have a theory of change for supporting students in the transition to college? Is it meeting its recruitment, persistence and performance goals? Has it been an active participant in the Success Boston network? Does it have robust partnerships with priority higher education institutions? Does it have low staff turnover? Have previously reported problems with programming or operations been resolved? Are coaches entering accurate student interaction data? Are reports submitted completely and on time? Is its SIF spending rate reasonable?
- ²⁸ Hindley, B. *Op cit*.
- ²⁹ McLaughlin, J., Sullivan, N., Van Eaton, A., Linkow, T., Didriksen, H., Gamse, B., and Furey, J. (2016). *Reaching for the Cap and Gown: Progress Toward Success Boston's College Completion Goals for Graduates of the Boston Public Schools*.
- ³⁰ Linkow, T., Gamse, B., Unlu, F., Bumgamer, E., Didriksen, H., Furey, J., Meneses, M., Sami, M., and Nicols, A. (2017). *Success Boston Coaching: Interim Outcomes Report*.
- ³¹ Governor Baker advocated allowing up to a dozen new charter schools to open each year in low-performing school districts, letting charter schools give admissions preference to high-needs students, and allowing partnerships between failing district schools and charter schools. Mayor Walsh, on the other hand, advocated a slower pace of charter growth, allowing charter schools access to state funding for school facilities, and changing the state's school funding formula.
- ³² Mosley, T. (2016, Sept. 13). "Should Mass. expand charter schools? A look at ballot question 2," *WBUR*.
- ³³ Cohodes, S., Setren, E., Walters, C., Angrist, J., and Pathak, P. (2013). *Charter School Demand and Effectiveness: A Boston Update*.
- ³⁴ Boston Municipal Research Bureau (2016, Apr. 3). *The True Cost of Boston's Charter Schools*, Special Report No. 16-2.
- ³⁵ For more information, see: Hindley, B. (2012). *There For Education Reform*. The Boston Foundation.
- ³⁶ The Giving Common, <https://givingcommon.org/profile/1075393/the-boston-foundation-inc/>

PRINCIPLES FOR

Effective Education Grantmaking

principle
no.

1

Discipline and Focus

In education, where public dollars dwarf private investments, a funder has greater impact when grantmaking is carefully planned and targeted.

principle
no.

2

Knowledge

Information, ideas and advice from diverse sources, as well as openness to criticism and feedback, can help a funder make wise choices.

principle
no.

3

Resources Linked to Results

A logic-driven “theory of change” helps a grantmaker think clearly about how specific actions will lead to desired outcomes, thus linking resources with results.

principle
no.

4

Effective Grantees

A grantmaker is effective only when its grantees are effective. Especially in education, schools and systems lack capacity and grantees (both inside and outside the system) may require deeper support.

principle
no.

5

Engaged Partners

A funder succeeds by actively engaging its partners – the individuals, institutions and communities connected with an issue – to ensure “ownership” of education problems and their solutions.

principle
no.

6

Leverage, Influence and Collaboration

The depth and range of problems in education make it difficult to achieve meaningful change in isolation or by funding programs without changing public policies or opinions. A grantmaker is more effective when working with others to mobilize and deploy as many resources as possible in order to advance solutions.

principle
no.

7

Persistence

The most important problems in education are often the most complex and intractable, and will take time to solve.

principle
no.

8

Innovation and Constant Learning

Even while acting on the best available information – as in Principle #2 – a grantmaker can create new knowledge about ways to promote educational success. Tracking outcomes, understanding costs and identifying what works—and what doesn’t—are essential to helping grantmakers and their partners achieve results.

Grantmakers for Education is a national network of hundreds of education philanthropies, united by a passion and commitment to improve public education and learning for all students of all ages, cradle to career. Grantmakers for Education is a force multiplier, harnessing the collective power of education grantmakers to increase momentum, impact and outcomes for this nation's learners. We are proud to promote a culture of learning among education funders and provide a forum for interaction and engagement that builds upon and deepens the impact of our member's individual investments. Grantmakers for Education and its members believe in the power of what we can all achieve when we work together and learn from each other's successes and challenges.

