



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tricia Lederer, 617-737-3122  
tlederer@mbae.org

## Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education Statement on **The Student Opportunity Act**

**(Boston) September 19, 2019** – The Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education appreciates the hard work of the legislature to reach consensus on this very important issue. Lawmakers have been under enormous pressure to write a blank check for public education of unprecedented size, with no strings attached. [MBAE has consistently called on state leaders](#) to ensure that new money injected into the system be directly and accountably aimed at finally, and decisively closing the racial and socio-economic achievement gaps that rob students of potentially life-changing opportunities to secure good jobs.

Although we still have concerns, we are very pleased to see that The Student Opportunity Act rightly increases funding for our state's low-income and English Language Learner students, and also includes some of the accountability MBAE and our partners have been fighting for to ensure the money is used to efficiently and effectively to address the persistent inequity in our schools. The bill requires districts to create and publicize detailed plans for how funds will be used to serve students and close gaps. Importantly, these plans must include goals and metrics to track success. The state is also required to set goals for closing achievement gaps and report annually to the legislature on progress.

We're also very pleased to see the bill's inclusion of an innovation fund that we have been advocating for to foster a more innovative and adaptive education system that quickly identifies ideas that work and brings them to scale to reach more students. Following the principles of innovation embedded in common business practice, the fund will incentivize and support those educators who are bringing new, potentially game-changing ideas to the classroom.

Yet, we are deeply concerned that the bill doesn't include funding to support the expansion of the kinds of career-connected learning initiatives that prepare students for the jobs our companies create. This is a major missed opportunity to better align our education system with

the demands of Massachusetts' modern workforce and will surely lead to the Commonwealth falling further behind other states that have made career-connected learning a top-priority, potentially hindering the state's long-term economic prosperity.

As it has for 30 years, the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education will continue to fight to help build an education system that prepares students to thrive at work, and in life, in the Commonwealth.

**About the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education**

The Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education (MBAE) was founded in 1988 by employers concerned about the educational attainment and skills of graduates entering the workforce. Driven by the business community's commitment that all students graduate high school prepared for success in college, career and citizenship, our core work is influencing state education policy to improve the quality of all public schools in Massachusetts.

###