



Emerson Foster, MBAE Board Member and Head of Human Resources, U.S. Business Unit & People Advisory Group, **Takeda**

“Business cannot flourish without talent. MBAE’s focus on education policy helps us to address the talent needs we have in the Commonwealth and ensure our students are prepared for their careers and their future.”

From Our Executive Director

I’m proud to share highlights and achievements from 2023 in improving student opportunity and building pathways to success for *all*.

We worked on many fronts this year—improving college access, building student pathways to careers, accelerating learning to address the impacts of the pandemic, expanding computer science instruction, and, across all our work, focusing squarely on educational equity. On all of these fronts we took important steps forward. I’m also pleased to report the fiscal health of MBAE is strong, buoyed in part by our growing list of members who support us in so many important ways.

MBAE is grateful to the many partners who worked alongside us to make these achievements possible.

To our members and affiliates in the business community, thank you for your unwavering commitment to a high-quality education for each and every student. Business support and engagement over more than 35 years has made Massachusetts a leader in education, a proud distinction that requires continuous improvement and innovation to protect. We look forward to your partnership in the work ahead.



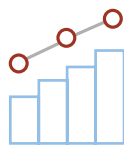
Preparing Students to Access Careers



MBAE, and the Student Pathways to Success coalition we lead, continued our work this year to expand access to economic opportunity, promote a more equitable Commonwealth, and build a more diverse, education talent pipeline by creating stronger connections between what students are learning in high school and the opportunities that await them when they graduate. We were thrilled to continue to deepen our collaboration with the Healey Administration's Workforce Skills Cabinet and Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll to advance this work and are happy to report critical wins and growing momentum.

Student Pathways to Success is a cross-sector coalition of organizations committed to educational equity and that represent students, parents, educators, and employers. It aims to universalize access to a meaningful and relevant high school education for all students that puts them on a pathway to college and career success.

Historic investment to grow Early College



Early College is more than doubling the odds of sustained college enrollment for participating students



two-thirds of whom are Black or Latino



1/2 are from low-income homes

Source: MassINC

Enrollment in Early College programs continues to grow and a historic state investment of nearly \$28 million in dedicated funding in FY24, an increase of \$8.8 million from last year's budget, will continue to fuel growth and quality. Early College, a central pillar of our focus on improving college and career pathways, is the most effective way of closing college degree gaps and addressing declining college enrollment.



Yaslee Dube was a student in the Early College program at Haverhill High School which allowed her to earn 22 college credits at Northern Essex Community College at no cost to her or her family. Yaslee is currently attending Bridgewater State University.



MBAE is a proud founding member of the Massachusetts Alliance for Early College.

Providing access to undocumented students

After years of debate and with support from MBAE and many others in the business community and beyond, Massachusetts passed legislation in August that makes undocumented high school students eligible for in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities.

Preparing Students to Access Careers

New state funding line item

The Coalition was proud to support and celebrate a new \$5 million pathways line item in the FY24 state budget that can be used to expand Early College, Innovation Career Pathways, STEM Tech Career Academies and more, and signals a commitment to growing pathways in the years to come.



A packed-house at our legislative briefing at the State House in June.

Five bills filed to bolster student learning

Five Student Pathways to Success coalition bills were filed this session that take aim at our growing workforce and equity challenges, and seek to bolster student learning and improve economic opportunity. The bills would expand high school student access to industry-recognized credentials, computer science courses, and high-quality college and career planning tools and resources as well as strengthen other state policies to ensure a more strategic, systemic approach to connecting student learning to career opportunities. A packed-house legislative briefing on the bills showed growing momentum and support for action.

Charting a path to careers in healthcare

A 2023 report by MassINC and MBAE charts a path to addressing the growing healthcare workforce crisis by building on the popular Early College health career pathways programs. *Tapping the Power of Health Pathways in Early College High Schools* lays out a plan to evolve and strengthen these programs allowing students to explore their interests in clinical professions and putting them on a firmer and faster course through postsecondary studies and into medicine, nursing, and allied health careers.

Expanding Access to Computer Science

Our March report, *Expanding Access to and Participation in Computer Science in Massachusetts*, addressed the growing need for a state level strategy on computer science education. Massachusetts has booming demand for workers in the good-paying computer science sector.

ONLY
5.8% of students are enrolled in a computer science course

Urban schools were less likely to offer computer science than suburban and rural schools

ONLY
28.4% of students enrolled in a computer science course are female

Driving a Focus on Equity

Solving Inequities in Education: Leaders of Color Speak Out

Our October event and paper, *Lifting Our Communities: Building Education Pathways to Economic Opportunity for All*, captured the personal experiences and professional insights of Massachusetts students and leaders of color in education and business and highlighted the unique challenges high school students from marginalized backgrounds face and the impact of those challenges on their postsecondary choices and readiness for college and career. The report shows how early career exposure, addressing basic student need, empowering mentorship and career counseling, and diversity and inclusion efforts

in academic and professional settings can help Black and Latino students access resources and an environment that promotes their success.

At the Equity in Education event, legislative and education leaders of color joined report interviewees and MBAE board member Emerson Foster in recommending a broad-based solutions framework to address systemic challenges. MBAE is deeply proud to have elevated Black and Latino voices through this unique project. We hope the personal accounts featured in the report will influence the way decisionmakers address persistent inequity of opportunity in the state.



Darien Johnson from the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and DESE's Phylitia Jamerson discuss the impact of mentorship and diversity at the October event.

We are thankful to Education Trust in Massachusetts and Latinos for Education for their partnership on this important project.



Chelsea Superintendent Dr. Almi Abeyta, Worcester Polytechnic Institute's Rev. Dr. Jackson, and Eastern Bank Foundation's Turahn Dorsey at our Equity in Education event.

Ensuring a Multi-Million Dollar Funding Increase Closes Gaps

As a result of MBAE's relentless advocacy and partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the state is strengthening guidance to districts on how to use increases in state funding to close socio-economic and racial achievement and opportunity gaps. MBAE was a leading champion in 2019 of substantial increases in state funding for the students and districts most in need. Equally critical is our vigilant and under-the-radar advocacy around how that money gets spent in the best interest of students.

Accelerating Recovery from the Pandemic



Dennis Duquette, *Head of Community Responsibility—President & CEO, MassMutual Foundation*

“MBAE provides a highly effective model for businesses throughout the commonwealth to support an education ecosystem that challenges and inspires students and prepares them for productive, happy futures. Furthermore, as quality education is foundational to contributing to a vibrant economy and quality of life, MBAE is working tirelessly on our behalf to drive innovation in education so that students—and their communities across Massachusetts—are well-equipped to thrive in the 21st century. MassMutual is delighted to support this critically important work.”



Sen. Jason Lewis, Mary Bourque, Lisa Lazare, and Commissioner Jeffrey Riley at our December event.

Leading the Call for Bold State Action

Following another year of data detailing pandemic-related student achievement decline, MBAE and the [Massachusetts Competitive Partnership \(MACP\)](#) released a report in December outlining policy recommendations and state budgetary investments that would most likely accelerate student learning in Massachusetts. The report, “[Accelerating Student Learning: The Need for Urgency and Innovation](#),” provides evidence for different policy strategies, as well as best practices across the country, in developing detailed recommendations to state leaders.

The report was released at an event hosted by MBAE and MACP that featured opening remarks from Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll and a panel discussion that included Commissioner Jeffrey Riley of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and State Senator Jason Lewis, chairman of the Joint Committee on Education.



MA Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll speaks at our Accelerating Student Learning event

Amplifying the Voice of Business

MBAE Business Survey Finds Hiring Skilled Workers Remains Top Challenge

The survey underscores a vital need to forge stronger connections between our students and the good-paying careers available now in our growing health, life sciences, clean tech, and other sectors. Conducted by Lincoln Park Strategies, the survey had 141 respondents, half of whom were executives or business owners and a majority of whom are heavily involved in hiring. Respondents represented a wide range of industries across the state.

EDUCATION

95% say it should be the **top (26%)** and among the **top (69%) priorities** of Gov. Healey's administration to **make improvements** to our education system to ensure that more **students are better prepared** for college and/or careers

Teaching **essential, real-world skills**

such as communication, collaboration, and creativity ranked as the **top education priority**



<1/2 think the **state's education system** is doing a good job in **getting kids ready** for a career

A majority said it's **difficult to establish partnerships with schools**, but most have participated in at least one and an overwhelming majority believe these partnerships are worthwhile

WORKFORCE

87% say **It is difficult to find people with the right skills**

OF THAT...

VERY
35%

SOMEWHAT
52%

73% say **Hiring is a top challenge**



OF THAT...

TOP
13%

NEAR TOP
60%

Protecting Transparency and Accountability in Education

MBAE proudly joined other nonprofit and community leaders representing classroom educators, school leaders, parents, and advocates in the Voices for Academic Equity Coalition to present a united voice of support for preserving MCAS, highlight the importance of it as a critical tool for ensuring educational equity, and call for improvements to it that make it a more helpful and efficient tool for students, families and educators. The Coalition's report, [Toward a Better MCAS: Consensus Recommendations from Organizations Serving the Commonwealth's Students](#), argues "without data to reveal wide disparities in opportunities, we weaken our ability to demand better opportunities for the students who are entitled to a high-quality education and have not historically received it."

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tricia Canavan
Tech Foundry

J.D. Chesloff
Massachusetts Business Roundtable

Nick Christ (Treasurer)
BayCoast Bank

Christopher J. DeLorey
Alera Group

Henry C. Dinger, Esq. (Clerk)
Goodwin Procter LLP

Joseph E. Esposito, CPA (Emeritus)
Ret. Dassault Systemes/Solidworks

Patricia Filippone
Suffolk Construction

Emerson Foster
Takeda Pharmaceuticals

David R. Gagnon
KPMG LLP

Dr. Nicole Glazer
Bristol Myers Squibb

Doug Howgate
Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation

Alicia Matthews
Comcast

Peter Nessen
Nessen Associates, Ltd.

Eileen Rudden
LearnLaunch, Inc.

Brooke Thomson
Associated Industries of Massachusetts

William Triant
Talent Ventures

Axel Vigo
Ernst & Young

William Walczak (Chairman)

Around MBAE

Ed Lambert continues to serve on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Accountability & Assistance Advisory Council.

Ed was selected to serve as a Regional Advisory Committee member for the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive Center Program on which he will advise on the educational needs for the Northeast and Islands region.



MBAE is pleased to announce that **Patricia Filippone**, Vice President of Business Development at Suffolk Construction, was elected to our Board of Directors.

MBAE Board Member Emeritus **Joe Esposito** is representing MBAE on the state's Data Advisory Commission.



MBAE Board Member and CEO of the Tech Foundry, **Tricia Canavan**, served on the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2023.

MBAE's long time Board Chair **Bill Walczak** continued his service on the Board of Trustees of Bunker Hill Community College and as a member of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education.



OUR AFFILIATES

MBAE Affiliates share our commitment to ensuring EVERY student gets the education they need to be successful in college and career. We are grateful for their support.

1Berkshire

Associated Industries of Massachusetts

Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce

Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce

Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce

Charles River Regional Chamber

Concord Chamber of Commerce

Cranberry Country Chamber of Commerce

Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce

Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce

Greater Lynn Area Chamber of Commerce

Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce

Massachusetts Biotechnology Council

Massachusetts Business Roundtable

Massachusetts Competitive Partnership

Massachusetts High Technology Council

Massachusetts Society of CPAs

Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation

Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council

Metro South Chamber of Commerce

MetroWest Chamber of Commerce

NAIOP Massachusetts

Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce

National Federation of Independent Business Massachusetts

Neponset River Regional Chamber

North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce

One SouthCoast Chamber

Orleans Chamber of Commerce

Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce

Quincy Chamber of Commerce

Retailers Association of MA

Salem Chamber of Commerce

South Shore Chamber of Commerce

Springfield Business Leaders for Education

Springfield Regional Chamber

Stoneham Chamber of Commerce

Taunton Area Chamber of Commerce

TechNet

United Regional Chamber of Commerce

Western Mass Economic Development Council

Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce

mbae

Improving Our Schools.

Ensuring Success for All Students.

Creating a Stronger, More Equitable Economy.

CORPORATE MEMBERS



INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Rick Burnes, Tricia Canavan, Chris Delorey, Henry Dinger, Esq., Joseph Esposito, Chris Gabrieli, David Gagnon, Tony Helies, Chuck Longfield, Peter Nessen, Eileen Rudden, Bill Walczak

MBAE STAFF

Edward M. Lambert, Jr.

Executive Director

elambert@mbae.org

Tricia Lederer

Director, Communications and Advocacy

tlederer@mbae.org

James Mikolowsky

Director of Policy

jmikolowsky@mbae.org

Pam O'Donnell

Director of Membership

podonnell@mbae.org

Michelle Harrington

Director of Operations

mharrington@mbae.org

Liz Anderson

Project Manager

eanderson@mbae.org

mbae.org | [@MBAENews](https://www.instagram.com/MBAENews) | 617.737.3122

10 Post Office Square, Suite 800 South, Boston, MA 02109