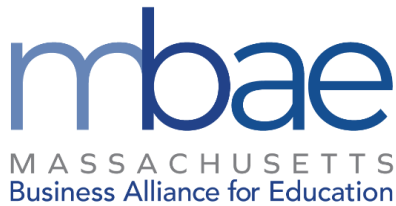


Read the report: <https://www.mbae.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Lifting-Our-Communities-Report-Final.pdf>

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The Education Trust



LATINOS
for EDUCATION

Solving Inequities in Education: Leaders of Color Speak Out

New Report Gives Insights from Business, Education Leaders & Highlights Key Solutions

October 24, 2023 (BOSTON) – Solutions to address Massachusetts’ glaring and persistent educational inequities must go beyond the classroom and connect students of color with pathways to successful careers, according to a new report from the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education (MBAE), Latinos for Education, and The Education Trust in Massachusetts. [*Lifting Our Communities: Building Education Pathways to Economic Opportunity for All*](#) features interviews with Black and Latino business and education leaders and students from across Greater Boston, detailing their personal experiences and professional insights and recommending a broad-based solutions framework to address systemic challenges.

“The firsthand experiences of these leaders on the frontlines of achieving equity in education shed light on how we can give our students a jumpstart on their future, close persistent equity gaps, and create a cooperative culture of success across our Commonwealth,” said Ed Lambert, MBAE Executive Director. “This report outlines steps we can take now to connect Black and Latino students to careers that our thriving life sciences, health, clean tech, and other sectors so urgently need to fill.”

Leaders interviewed included Turahn Dorsey, Chief Impact Officer at the Eastern Bank Foundation, Dr. Pam Eddinger, President of Bunker Hill Community College, Dr. Aisha Francis, President and CEO of Franklin Cummings Tech, Robert Lewis Jr., President and CEO of the Boys & Girls Club of Boston, and Grace Moreno, CEO and Executive Director of the Massachusetts LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

Insights gathered from these interviews uncovered pressing issues relevant to state policymakers, business leaders, and educators. Among the policy questions raised by these conversations:

- How can business leaders conduct meaningful outreach to communities of color and economically disadvantaged communities to raise awareness about opportunities in their industries?
- How can state policymakers ensure not only that college and career pathway programs are accessible to students of color but also that *all* students have opportunities to learn “durable skills,” explore a wide range of career identity options, and participate in internships and other meaningful work-based learning opportunities?
- What steps can state policymakers take to diversify Massachusetts’s educator workforce so that more students of color have teachers, administrators, and guidance/career counselors who look like them and can help them envision themselves succeeding in rigorous pathways?

“As we all work to tackle the Commonwealth’s long-standing educational inequities, it is critical to gain insight directly from the dedicated leaders of color who have personally navigated these systemic barriers and can share their experiences in the workforce and the field,” said Jennie Williamson, State Director of The Education Trust in Massachusetts. “We need to take meaningful action to respond to the issues these leaders raised in

the report if we want to ensure students of all backgrounds have the skills and supports needed to thrive after high school.”

The interviews found consensus on several key solutions, including:

- Strengthening partnerships between the business community and schools to increase awareness about opportunities and provide students with hands-on experiences in thriving industries, such as life sciences, health, clean tech, and other sectors.
- Recruiting and retaining educators and career counselors with training in cultural competency and awareness of explicit/implicit biases.
- Expanding designated pathway programs, such as Early College, Innovation Career Pathways, Chapter 74, and STEM Tech Career Academies, to ensure accessibility for all students.

“Students of color makeup 40 percent of our student population, therefore it is imperative for employers in Massachusetts who are seeking to innovate and grow their workforce to connect with students of color as early as possible - not just when they’re graduating college, but as they’re choosing their career pathways - because they will be key drivers of our economy moving forward,” said Amanda Fernandez, Founder and CEO of Latinos for Education and Student Pathway to Success Coalition partner.

These initiatives align with many of the priorities of [Student Pathways to Success](#), a cross-sector coalition of organizations committed to educational equity and that represents students, parents, educators and employers. The FY2024 state budget includes [increased investments](#) in career-connected learning, and a [bill](#) to broaden state support for student pathways is being considered by the legislature.

About MBAE

The [Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education](#) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that, together with our members, promotes and supports continuous improvement in our schools and innovation that is needed to ensure that EVERY student receives a high-quality education that prepares them for success in college, career, and citizenship.

MBAE is a member of the [Student Pathways to Success](#) coalition, a cross-sector partnership 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.

About Education Trust-Massachusetts

The [Education Trust-Massachusetts](#) is committed to advancing policies and practices to dismantle the racial and economic barriers embedded in the American education system. Through our research and advocacy, Ed Trust improves equity in education from preschool through college, engages diverse communities dedicated to education equity and justice, and increases political and public will to build an education system where students will thrive.

About Latinos for Education

The mission of [Latinos for Education](#) is to develop, place and connect essential Latino leaders in the education sector. We are building an ecosystem of Latino advocates by infusing Latino talent into positions of influence.

We believe that Latino leaders should be at the forefront of creating an equitable education for Latino students. Latinos for Education prepares nuestra comunidad to break down barriers to educational opportunity for the next generation of Latino students.