



Massachusetts Secretary of Education Jim Peyser meets with MBAE Affiliates

MBAE grows business affiliate network

Acting on their members' concerns about education and the workforce, 29 chambers of commerce and industry associations collectively representing more than 26,000 employers across the Commonwealth have joined the fast-growing MBAE Affiliate Network since it launched.

"The number one concern of our member businesses, regardless of the size or the sector, is workforce," said Worcester Chamber President and CEO, Timothy Murray.

Thanks to the generous support of **Strategic Grant Partners**, MBAE brought on a full-time Director of MBAE Affiliate Network Growth and Strategy who consults with affiliates to identify shared goals and opportunities to work together to achieve them. Ryan Flynn comes to us from the World Bank in Washington, DC where he worked on workforce development research and projects.

Ryan shares updates with affiliates about legislation, leads webinars to educate and engage groups in important topics, and provides customized district-level information and advice as well as opportunities to share best practices in school partnerships. Through the network, MBAE is expanding our impact at the local level and leveraging our collective voice to bring about the statewide change we need to close achievement and skills gaps.

AFFILIATE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Defeated legislation and budget amendments that threatened progress.
- Successfully advocated for state action to expand access to computer science.
- Defended critical district and school accountability measures.

A big win on expanding access to computer science

In June, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education acted on MBAE's recommendation of several years voting to let school districts count computer science courses for graduation. Importantly, the courses must include rigorous mathematical or scientific concepts in order to be substituted for a math or science course required in high school.

This major change signals to districts that computer science is a foundational course of study that they should ensure students have opportunities to pursue and we are confident these actions will lead to increased access for students at schools not even offering this course as an elective.

"This achievement is yet another indication of MBAE's professionalism, hard work, and effective advocacy!"

Brian Burke, Senior Director,
U.S. Government Affairs, Microsoft

MBAE Affiliates helped us achieve this victory by joining us in urging the Board to take this action. It is an important achievement, but there is still more work to do to ensure equitable access to computer science education. MBAE is turning its focus to raising awareness about the gross inequities that currently exist and generating solutions to ensure that every student, especially underserved populations, acquire basic knowledge and have opportunities to pursue advanced study in computer science.

Laying important groundwork on school funding

In the final weeks of the legislative session, MBAE was deeply involved in negotiations on a school funding bill that would have helped cover the costs of health insurance, special education, English Language Learners and low income students.

Although lawmakers were unable to reach agreement on a bill, effectively postponing action until the 2019–2020 session, MBAE was encouraged by the role we played and the foundation we set for further discussion.

We expect school funding will be a major area of focus in the year ahead. This issue will remain a top legislative priority for MBAE. We will continue to advocate for provisions that we were successful in getting added to the House bill **to ensure that state funds allocated for needier students are actually spent on those students; require evaluation of where funds are being used effectively and where they are not; and, require transparent reporting to the public about school spending.**

Increased K-12 education funding **must be coupled with reforms** that address the many acknowledged shortcomings of the current funding system and reverse our failure to close racial and socio-economic achievement gaps and a widening college and workforce readiness gap.

Matching grant challenge a success

MBAE was thrilled to meet a matching grant challenge from the **Walton Family Foundation** in February **turning a \$150,000 grant from Walton into \$300,000 in new funding.** This infusion allows us to ratchet up our work advocating for policies that ensure all students, regardless of their zip code, receive a high quality education that prepares them for success.

An increased focus on preparing students for careers

In response to employers' concerns about students' readiness for the workforce, MBAE has increased its focus on initiatives that prepare students for success in careers.

CREDENTIALS FOR SUCCESS

With the help of our **Future Ready Advisory Council**, made up of senior

human resource executives, MBAE is leading a campaign to expand opportunities for high school students to earn industry-recognized credentials. Over the past year, we looked at successful models in other states and crafted a proposal for Massachusetts that dovetails with current state initiatives. MBAE will formally launch the **Credentials for Success** initiative in the coming year calling for legislation that incentivizes schools to offer students opportunities to earn high-value, in-demand credentials.

CLOSING THE DIGITAL EQUITY GAP

We will continue our focus on ensuring **ALL** students have access to computer science education and digital learning, an increasingly essential area of study in the 21st century. MBAE's **Emerging Leaders Advisory Council** collected data that show gross inequities in access to computer science coursework for students of color, students in urban school systems, and from low-income communities. With guidance from our **Digital Equity Advisory Council**, we are planning a series of Digital Equity Walks—highly interactive and visual presentations of data which highlight where access to computer science coursework is inequitable, demographic disparities exist, and how Massachusetts prepares students for opportunities in our technology centric, knowledge-based economy. The goal is to build awareness about lack of access, develop solutions, and create demand for action.



Lowell Matthews Jr. of ExcelinEd joins MBAE's Linda Noonan and Jackney Prioly Joseph to discuss credentials at the work+EDU conference

MBAE NEWS BRIEFS

Executive Director Linda Noonan had the honor of serving on the **screening committee for a new DESE Commissioner** to replace the late Mitchell Chester. One of only ten people invited to participate, Linda was the only representative of a business advocacy group on the committee.

Jackney Prioly Joseph, MBAE's Director of Career Readiness Initiatives, is serving on the **New England Board of Higher Education Advisory Committee** for their New England High Value Credentials Project; is a member of the **Massachusetts ECEP Alliance** (Expanding Computing Education Pathways); and, represents MBAE as a member of the **Career Advising Steering Committee** established to build capacity for implementing Six-Year Career Plans (ILPs) for students in grades 6-12 across the Commonwealth.

MBAE's Director of Affiliate Growth and Strategy, Ryan Flynn, served as a **reviewer for the 2018 Massachusetts STEM Summit**. He reviewed proposals for sessions showcasing innovative STEM programs involving collaboration between businesses, schools and colleges. Last year's summit was attended by over 1,400 educators, policymakers and business representatives.

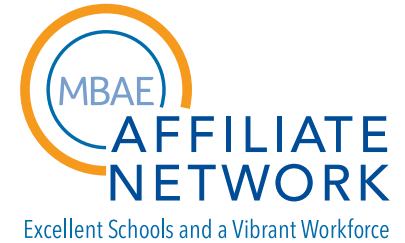
Success protecting key education reforms

With the help of a united business voice from our growing Affiliate Network, **MBAE defeated bills and budget amendments** successfully thwarting a well-organized effort to gut the

state's accountability system, place a moratorium on MCAS testing, and roll back teacher evaluation requirements that lead to meaningful and actionable improvements in instruction.

New regulations for the accountability system were approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), however, in response to pressure from districts and education groups. Fortunately, the Board acted on several concerns MBAE and ten of our Affiliates expressed in public comments adding clarity about which measures would be reported annually and more details about the levels used to classify schools and districts. In addition, rather than giving the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education broad power to change the rules in the future, revisions to the accountability regulations will continue to require public input and a BESE vote.

MBAE was one of only three organizations that weighed in on this important issue. The others were the two teachers' unions. The state's accountability system is a critical tool to inform action to improve schools and ensure equity in educational opportunities. MBAE will continue to monitor and weigh in when necessary.



MBAE Board elects four new directors



ROBERTO CABRAL EMERSON FOSTER REBECCA FRACASSA AXEL VIGO

The MBAE Board elected four new Directors in July. The new directors are **Roberto Cabral**, *Global Product Manager, GE Healthcare and Life Sciences*; **Emerson Foster**, *Vice President of Human Resources, Sodexo*; **Rebecca Fracassa**, *Director of Community Impact, Comcast*; and, **Axel Vigo**, *Senior Cybersecurity Consultant, Ernst & Young*. Roberto Cabral and Axel Vigo come to us from the Latino Board Fellow Program, an initiative of Latinos for Education that seeks to prepare Latino leaders for board membership in education and non-profit organizations.

OUR AFFILIATES

MBAE Affiliates share our commitment to driving education improvements that will ensure all students get the education they need to be successful in college and career.

1Berkshire

Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce

Bristol County Chamber of Commerce

Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce

Concord Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development Council of Western Mass.

Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce

Greater Holyoke Chamber of Commerce

Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce

Lynn Area Chamber of Commerce

Massachusetts Competitive Partnership

Massachusetts High Technology Council

Mass. Technology Leadership Council

Massachusetts Society of CPAs

MetroWest Chamber of Commerce

Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce

National Federation of Independent Business Massachusetts

Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce

Newton-Needham Regional Chamber

North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce

Orleans Chamber of Commerce

The Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce

Retailers Association of Massachusetts

SouthCoast Chamber

Springfield Business Leaders for Education

Springfield Regional Chamber

Stoneham Chamber of Commerce

TechNet

Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce

OUR PARTNERS



Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation

OUR FUNDERS

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MASSACHUSETTS



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