

Legislator Hosts Caucus on Charter Funding in School \$\$\$ Bill

With education advocates waiting anxiously to see how the Legislature will approach reforming the state's decades-old school funding formula, New Bedford Rep. Antonio Cabral believes it would be a missed opportunity for lawmakers to punt the question of how best to fund charter schools.

"I think we should address it in this reform. If we don't, whatever additional dollars we might receive will be siphoned off on the other end," said Cabral, the co-chair of the Gateway Cities Caucus.

On September 11, Cabral hosted a caucus briefing where Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center analyst Colin Jones discussed the competing school funding proposals and the challenges he sees as inherent in striking a deal.

The Legislature is attempting to reach agreement on an update to the current formula that would better account for the true cost of educating students, and level the playing field between wealthy and poorer communities with

higher concentrations of low-income, special education and English language learning students. Rep. Alice Peisch and Sen. Jason Lewis, the co-chairs of the Education Committee, have been working for months on an education funding bill after talks between the branches did not reach agreement at the end of formal sessions in 2018.

While it's uncertain whether the committee will recommend reforms to how charter schools are funded, the Legislature did adopt some changes as part of the fiscal 2020 budget in July.

The newest budget allocated an additional \$25 million for charter tuition reimbursements, and updated the formula to a three-year reimbursement plan for each student, with districts receiving 100 percent of the cost the first year, 60 percent the second year and 40 percent in the third year. The reimbursements are intended to ease impacts on traditional public schools when they lose students to public charter schools.

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are focus of Friday General Session

MASC is delighted to announce that educator/diversity consultant Dr. Derrick Gay will be the Keynote Speaker at the Joint Conference



Friday General Session on November 8. The focus of the interactive session will be deepening cultural competency,

cultivating common frameworks, vision and language through diversity, equity and inclusion. The program will also explore ways in which all students benefit from cultural competency and how to recognize and adapt to implicit bias and blind spots.

Dr. Gay is an international consultant with two decades

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FORMER NEW JERSEY SUPERINTENDENT NAMED TO BOARD OF ED

Gov. Charlie Baker has tapped a former New Jersey education official as the newest member of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. **Paymon Rouhanifard** recently moved to Massachusetts from New Jersey, according to the Executive Office of Education. He will succeed Margaret McKenna, a former board chair and Gov. Deval Patrick appointee whose term expired this year, on the 11-member board. Rouhanifard is the co-founder and CEO of the workforce development organization Propel America. He was the strategy and innovation officer at Newark Public Schools when New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie in 2013 appointed him as superintendent of the Camden City School District as the district entered state receivership. He spent five years as Camden superintendent, and previously served in the New York City education department's office of portfolio management. He taught sixth grade from 2003 to 2005 before stints at Goldman Sachs and AEA Investors.



An Invitation to MA School Leaders
Friday, October 4 • 8:30am-3:30pm
Worcester State University, Wellness Center

**In Pursuit of Equity, Accountability & Success:
Latinx Students in MA Schools**

The racial and income disparities in education in Massachusetts are well-known. Latinx students in particular are falling further behind despite decades of education reform and targeted programs created to improve achievement. In Pursuit of Equity, Accountability and Success (PEAS) seeks to unite multiple systems and sectors around community, policy, and practitioner-centered solutions to addressing the current system of unequal outcomes in educational attainment and institutional treatment.

Presenters: **Marco A. Davis**, Deputy Director of White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics; **Dr. Estela Mara Bensimon**, Dean's Professor in Educational Equity, USC Rossier School of Education Director, Center for Urban Education; **Dr. Pedro A. Noguera**, Distinguished Professor of Education, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, UCLA
Cost: \$25.00

For more information/register: <https://tinyurl.com/pursuit-of-equity>

MASSACHUSETTS NEWS

Educational Equity Policy for School Districts

MASC General Counsel Stephen Finnegan has drafted a sample Educational Equity policy that school committees can model when adopting policies of their own. The full text of the policy will be sent to all members and superintendents in an upcoming MASC Policy Newsletter. Check your mailbox. The Policy has been posted on the MASC website.

State Ethics Commission Seeks MASC Member Input on New Online Training Programs

The State Ethics Commission is working to develop new conflict of interest law online training programs. The Commission is asking for any feedback MASC members might have concerning the existing online training programs. A new voluntary survey has been created and the responses will help them learn more about what is important to MASC members and other public employees as they work to develop new programs. Responses are due by October 25. You may take the survey by visiting <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/state-ethics-commission>.

Please contact State Ethics Commission Public Information Officer Gerry Tuoti at Gerry.Tuoti@mass.gov with any questions.

TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS

Responicity[®] is an innovative educational SEL initiative designed to empower youth with 21st century skills through project-based, civic municipal engagement. The program is housed on an advanced digital platform that integrates municipal, personal and digital worlds and enables worldwide learning, collaboration and data-sharing. Its mission is to empower millions of teenagers with character-building values and skills by enabling them to solve challenging, real-life problems and implement municipal projects through civic engagement.

Over the past six years, over 13,000 students in Israel in grades 7-12 have participated in the program. Over 500 projects have been implemented in 67 municipalities with significant impact.

The program is now going global and will be introduced to Massachusetts school leaders at the upcoming Joint Conference in Hyannis.

Education Hearing Update

The Joint Committee on Education held a hearing on a variety of bills on Wednesday, September 4. Among the bills drawing the largest amount of testimony were those which would codify a recess requirement, those which would require expansion of school nutrition programs in coordination with USDA direct certification, those on translation services in school districts, and those on protecting students from sexual assault.

Teachers testified about changes in recess and playtime available to children over their careers; several spoke of the loss of childhood. **Rep. Andy Vargas** of Haverhill noted the importance of community eligibility in his own community, while other supporters decried policies that, they said, led to shaming of students whose families have unpaid bills with the district. The Multistate Association for Bilingual Education spoke of their concern around parents who speak languages other than English being able to give true informed consent to special education and other services their children are provided. **Sen. Joan Lovely** of Salem and other survivors of childhood sexual abuse spoke of their own experiences and asked for better protection of children. Child Advocate for the Commonwealth **Maria Mossaides** said "there is nothing more important to me" in the monitoring of the thousands of children she oversees.

For more information and updates on Legislation, check the Public Policy Updates section of masc.org

School \$\$\$ Bill

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Despite the additional funding, an increase in charter school enrollment has left the formula even more underfunded than last year. According to Jones, the gap grew from \$70 million in fiscal 2019 to \$92 million in fiscal 2020.

The MassBudget analyst explained that as upward adjustments are made to foundation budgets, Chapter 70 aid will be boosted but so will the cost to each district for students that enroll in local charter schools. Jones followed up with a recap of the center's most recent research on the impact of the two main education funding reform proposals.

The Promise Act, filed by Sen. Sonia Chang Diaz and others, would result in about \$1.4 billion in additional spending on public education after seven years compared to \$450 million under Gov. Charlie Baker's plan.

The main difference between the two proposals, he said, was in the approach to low-income students. While Baker has proposed a maximum of \$4,800 in aid for the most economically disadvantaged students, the Promise Act would boost that number to \$8,400 per student.

The maximum aid in fiscal 2019 for low-income students was \$4,000, according to Jones, but the newest state budget boosted that figure to \$4,600. Jones also acknowledged that another challenge to improving educational outcomes is getting an accurate count of low-income students.

Currently, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education tries to match students against Health and Human Services databases of children enrolled in food stamp, welfare, foster care or MassHealth programs, but problems arise with spellings or families that might be eligible to assistance but are not enrolled in those programs.

Nine resolutions to be considered at Delegate Assembly

Delegates to the MASC Annual Meeting will be debating nine separate resolutions submitted by districts and forwarded to the Resolutions Committee to the Board of Directors for approval. The resolutions, which are printed in full in the 2019 Delegate Manual that is being mailed to all MASC members and Life Members and are posted on the MASC website, will address the following issues: (1) Banning Polystyrene from Schools; (2) Educator Diversity and Professional Licensure; (3) School Transportation; (4) Climate Change; (5) Full Funding of Transportation Costs for Students in Foster and State Care; (6) Universal Quality Pre-Kindergarten Access; (7) Poverty and Children; (8) Access to Menstrual Supplies; and (9) Charter School Reform.

Please remember to register your delegate to attend the annual meeting and note that the meeting this year will be on Friday, November 8 at 3:15pm. The meeting will be followed by the Life Member reception and Life Member/Leadership dinner.

MASC/MASS Conference Friday General Session

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of experience as a classroom teacher, musical director, senior administrator, and educational consultant. He has partnered with hundreds of businesses, schools, education, arts and philanthropic organizations, both in the U.S. and abroad. In this capacity, he collaborates with thought leaders to cultivate cultural competency, promote empathy, and deepen inclusion.

Dr. Gay began his career in Groton, MA and has partnered with dozens of schools in the state, most recently having worked with the Concord-Carlisle district. He has been featured in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Huffington Post, NPR and on 60 minutes. He has also produced two TEDx talks: one exploring "The Double-Edged Sword of Diversity" and a second on the nature of racial discourse in the United States. Developmentally, his work spans the full educational spectrum from pre-kindergarten to doctoral students. He currently serves as Senior Advisor of Content and Curriculum for Sesame Street, while also serving as an adjunct professor at the University of Pennsylvania

where he teaches cultural competency to doctoral students. He has consulted internationally (Colombia, Brazil, Chile and France).

His resume reflects his own diverse background. In addition to his academic credentials, Dr. Gay is a trained operatic baritone, violinist, violist, and conductor who has collaborated with music and artistic organizations including the Peabody Conservatory in Philadelphia, the Young People's Chorus in New York City, the Boston Children's Chorus, and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra. He received a B.A from Oberlin College where he studied Romance Languages (he is fluent in Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese and can make his way around German, Korean and Latin!). He also received a Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin Conservatory where he studied Opera Performance; a Master of Arts in Independent School Leadership from Columbia University; and a Doctorate in Education from the University of Pennsylvania.

We invite you to join your MASC colleagues and Dr. Gay on Friday, November 8 in Hyannis. To register for the conference: www.masc.org.

MASC Lifetime Achievement and All-State School Committee Award Winners Announced

Awards to MASC Lifetime Achievement and All-State School Committee members will be presented at the Thursday, November 7 Joint Conference Awards Banquet in Hyannis. The following members will be recognized for their contributions to the Association and to their students and school communities.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Margaret Albright, Newton
Richard Allan, Quabbin Regional
Eileen Hsu-Balzer, Watertown
Aaron Dean, Northern Berkshire Voc. Tech.
Dennis "D.J." Deeb, Methuen
Thomas Romeo, Lenox
Joseph Martins, Fall River/Greater Fall River Reg. Voc.
Peter Stephens, Fitchburg
W. Allen Thomas, Jr., Chelmsford
Melissa Texeira Prince, Gloucester

ALL-STATE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Division I: **M.J. Burnes**, Wilmington
Division II: **Tino Capobianco**, Winthrop
Division III: **Denise Schultz**, Franklin
Division IV: **Jason Palitsch**, Shrewsbury
Division V: **Daniel Hayes**, Shutesbury
Division VI: **William Cameron**, Pittsfield
Division VII: **Jim Dever**, Sandwich
Division VIII: **Michael Cahillane**, Smith Agricultural and Tech.
Division IX: **Bruce Oliveira**, New Bedford
Minority Caucus: **Alexandria Oliver-Davila**, Boston

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, September 28

Workshop: Becoming More Engaged & Inclusive Educational
Leaders: Pathways for Supporting LGBT Students
Meline Kasparian Learning Center, Springfield
9:00am-Noon (no charge)

Saturday, October 5

MASC Charting the Course
Taconic High School, Pittsfield
8:00am-4:00pm

Wednesday-Saturday, November 6-9

MASC/MASS Joint Conference
Resort & Conference Center, Hyannis

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