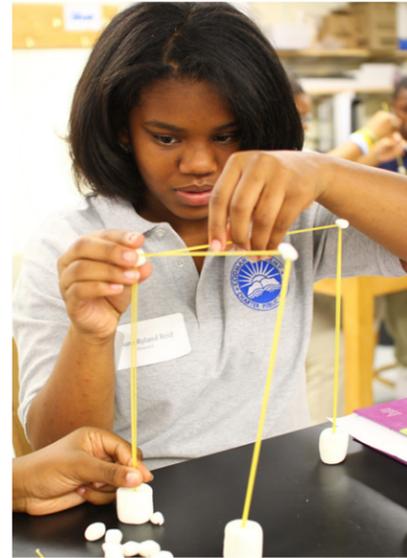


MCPSA 2012-13

YEAR IN REVIEW



**MASSACHUSETTS
CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
ASSOCIATION**



DID YOU KNOW?

Stanford's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) compared the academic performance of students enrolled in Massachusetts charter public schools to those enrolled in district schools over six academic years (2005-06 to 2010-11) and found that:

- Boston charter public schools are doing more to close race and income-based achievement gaps than any other group of public schools in America. In fact, the average growth rate of Boston charter students in math and reading is the largest CREDO has seen in any city of state thus far.
- Statewide, in comparison to district schools, the average charter public school student makes academic progress equivalent to spending two and half more months in school in math, and one and a half more months in school in English.

Dear Leaders,

This year has been an exciting one for the charter school movement and the MCPSA. During 2012-13 we launched a new statewide campaign to lift the cap, expanded our advocacy work in Gateway Cities, added 200 new business leaders to our advocacy network, helped pick a new leader for the Charter School Office, advocated for more transparency and consistency in the Charter granting and renewal process, deepened the work in our Communities of Practice, opened a new training center in Hudson, conducted the first ever comprehensive charter school facilities survey and more! Read on for details....

MCPSA joined with the Race to the Top Coalition to file legislation to promote growth in the charter sector while successfully protecting the charter school funding formula.

With sponsorship by Senator Barry Finegold and Representative Russell Holmes, legislation was filed to eliminate existing charter caps in underperforming districts and create more room to open new charters across the state. On May 7th, the Education Committee hearing for the bill was standing room only with testimony overwhelmingly in support of the bill.

As part of these efforts we expanded relationships with parents, business and community leaders, and the education reform community. The results:

- More statewide business leaders support lifting the cap than ever before, with 200 signing a letter to the legislature in support of the Holmes-Finegold Bill.

- Membership in the MCPSA's Charter Summit advocacy group grew from 22 to 30 organizations and now includes major foundations, powerful statewide business associations and many national education reform non-profits. MCPSA's ongoing leadership of this group positions us to continue our role as the leader of the Massachusetts charter school movement.

- Over 700 charter school parents, students and staff joined MCPSA for our April 11th State House Day where they met with their local legislators to express their support for charter schools.

- We doubled the number of charter school parents in our database in FY13 to 22,000!

MCPSA collaborated with the DESE to develop an agenda for change in the state's authorizing policies and procedures.



- Last summer MCPSA actively participated in the search for the new Director of the Charter School Office to ensure selection of a leader with the skills and capacity to support high quality authorizing. Cliff Chuang was appointed Associate Commissioner of Charter Schools & School Redesign in November 2012.
- A series of regional meetings with leaders about the strengths and weaknesses of the state's authorizing practices led to a set of recommendations in the CSO's infrastructure, processes, policies, and accountability. These recommendations were shared with Associate Commissioner Chuang, Deputy Commissioner Jeff Wulfson and Commissioner Mitchell Chester and have been used as an ongoing guide to our collaboration.
- Charter school leaders participated in the MCPSA CSO Assessment, a new biennial assessment tool designed to measure the CSO's progress in making improvements in the areas mentioned above. 80% of our members participated in the initial survey and the recommendations were shared with the leadership of the CSO and the ESE.
- MCPSA has built relationships with and has advocated in the interests of charter schools with other ESE offices around the implementation of the new State Teacher Evaluation System, RETELL and Special Education.

MCPSA supported school leaders and staff in addressing challenges and sharing best practices.

Nearly three hundred charter school leaders, board members and/or staff representing every member school participated in learning opportunities offered by MCPSA during the past year. These included the statewide Community of Practice meetings for Principals, CFOs/COOs & Business Managers, Special Education Directors, ELL Directors, College Placement Directors, and School Nurses and specialized sessions or webinars focused on a particular topic. We also launched the Charter Knowledge Center, a new members-only intranet where charter school leaders and staff pose questions to each other, share best practices, post resources, and view webinars.



FY13 Highlights:

- Enrollment in statewide meetings and learning opportunities nearly doubled in 2013 up from 149 participants in FY12 to 290 participants in FY13 with 100% participation across member schools. The average meeting had representation from at least 30 schools.
- MCPSA hosted twenty-four days of programming in FY13 including: statewide Community of Practice meetings, regional meetings with Executive Directors, several webinars including one on College Persistence and one on the new Discipline Law, specialized WIDA training for ELL Directors, and opportunities to engage with leaders and staff of ESE.
- With input from the CFO/COO & Business Manager Community of Practice, the 2012-13 MCPSA Annual Salary Survey was revised to provide more nuanced data regarding compensation, organizational structure and caseloads of specific positions. CFOs report that the results have been much more helpful than in previous years.

MCPSA partnered with external organizations to promote and disseminate research pertaining to MA charter schools.

This year provided numerous opportunities to promote the work of MA charter schools and partner with others to amplify the voice of the sector. Through partnerships with The Boston Foundation, Pioneer Institute, Lawrence Community Works, The Colorado League of Charter Schools, and relationship building with state and local media, charter schools were at the forefront of education reform discussions.

FY13 Highlights:

- In spring, 2013, Stanford's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) released a study that revealed groundbreaking academic outcomes of charter schools in MA and in Boston. Together with The Boston Foundation, MCPSA sponsored two public forums where school leaders, policymakers, businesses leaders and others joined a CREDO researcher to explore the findings of the study. These forums were held in conjunction with the public hearing of the Holmes-Finegold Bill; CREDO researchers were among those to testify in front of the committee.
- In partnership with the Colorado League of Charter Schools and the National Alliance for Charter Schools, MCPSA conducted the most comprehensive survey conducted to date on charter school facilities and facilities financing. The survey yielded a response rate of 90% of Commonwealth charter public schools.

These findings are being used to inform our legislative efforts, as MCPSA will continue to push for a much-needed increase in state charter school facility support.

- Through a partnership with Lawrence Community Works (LCW) and charter schools in Lawrence, MA, the State's only Level 5 public school district, MCPSA conducted extensive outreach to charter and non-charter school parents in order to understand parental perceptions of charter schools and their role in Lawrence. The resulting report, "Opening the Circle: Parental aspirations for Lawrence's schools," published by LCW showed strong support for charter schools in the city and the important role of charters in the district turnaround efforts. The report was the subject of a community forum with a panel and audience that included all members of the Lawrence state legislative delegation.
- This year charter schools and the proposed legislation made headlines across the state on many occasions. All of the major newspapers across the State have endorsed a charter school cap lift including: The Boston Globe, The Boston Herald, Lawrence Eagle Tribune, Lowell Sun, Worcester Telegram & Gazette, Springfield Republican and Fall River Herald. In addition, the New Bedford Standard Time endorsed City on a Hill's charter application in New Bedford, and the Brockton Enterprise endorsed SABIS' charter application in Brockton.

MCPSA enhanced its operational capacity to support this period of unprecedented organizational growth.

FY13 Highlights:

- MCPSA welcomed two new staff this year: Oona Kingston, Chief Operating Officer, and Julia Mejia, Parent Organizer.
- MCPSA opened a beautiful new space in Hudson that features a large meeting room, conference room, office space and open areas for networking. Leaders and staff who attended Community of Practice meetings, board meetings, the Spring Delegates Assembly, and other member functions have had the opportunity to enjoy the space. We've received wonderful feedback from members about the comfort and functionality of the office and are very happy to be able to proudly display the work of our talented charter school students. We welcome independent use by our membership so please contact Kara Brown at kbrown@masscharterschools.org if you'd like to reserve it.
- In January MCPSA launched a new and improved website (www.masscharterschools.org) to include general information for the public, detailed updates about news and events, calls to action, a student photo gallery, and an extensive database to locate and learn more about member schools and find or post jobs. The website also features the new Charter Knowledge Center, an intranet open only to member schools.

- This year MCPSA conducted a 360-member survey to get feedback on our performance and to get input on future priorities of the Association. Of the 67% of members who responded we learned the following:
 - Nearly 90% were satisfied or very satisfied with the work that MCPSA is doing;
 - Nearly 100% reported that MCPSA is effective in our efforts to raise the cap, protect the funding formula and advocate with DESE and the CSO;
 - For future goals, participants urged prioritizing of further advocacy with DESE and continued efforts to raise the cap.





STAFF MEMBERS

Marc Kenen, Ed.D., Executive Director
Janine M. Matho, MA, Deputy Director
Oona Kingston, JD, Chief Operating Officer
Kara Brown, Director of Administration
Tracey Wheatley Perkins, Program Manager
C. Trent Ramsey, State Field Director
Julia Mejia, Boston Parent Organizer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Jed Lippard, Head of School, Prospect Hill Academy Charter School
1st Vice President: Ralph Carrero, Superintendent/Director, Lawrence Family Development Charter School
2nd Vice President: Roger F. Harris, Boston Renaissance Charter Public School
Treasurer: Bill Clark, Chairman of the Board, Boston Preparatory Charter Public School
Clerk: Julia Bowen, Executive Director, Berkshire Arts and Technology Charter Public School

Amy Aaron, Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (2005-present)

Richard Alcorn, Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School (2011-present)

Beth Anderson-Mello, Phoenix Charter Academy (2010-present)

Kevin Andrews, Neighborhood House Charter School (2001-present)

Charles Cassidy, Boston Collegiate Charter School (2011-present)

Ron Griffin, Foxborough Regional Charter School (2012-present)

Eric Hieser, Sturgis Charter Public School (2007-present)

Kennedy Hilario, Community Day Charter Public School (2011-present)

AnnMarie Little, Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School (2007-present)

Jeanne Schultz, River Valley Charter School, (2010-present)

FY11-FY14 STRATEGIC GOALS

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

The governor and legislature protect the charter school funding formula from changes detrimental to charter schools

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

The governor and legislature abolish all charter school caps

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

The MCPSA provides high-quality technical assistance to its members in their pursuit of innovation and excellence

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

The Board and Department of ESE adopt regulations, policies and procedures that promote charter school quality and growth.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5

The Board and Department of ESE support and create opportunities for meaningful and high-impact charter-district collaboration.

STRATEGIC GOAL 6

The MCPSA builds internal capacity by institutionalizing policies, practices, and procedures in an era of unprecedented organizational growth.



If you would like further information or reports, including the CREDO Study, Facilities Survey, or MCPSA's current Financial Statements, please contact Oona Kingston at okingston@masscharterschools.org.

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