



Raise your **VOICE** for Racial Equity



ANNUAL REPORT
SCHOOL YEAR 2019 - 2020

Permanent mural at Wayland Middle School by
Kiarra (grade 7), which was highlighted during
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day programming in January 2020



METCO INC. LEADERSHIP

Joseph Killory 1966-67
Ruth Batson 1967-69
Robert Hayden 1970-73
Jean McGuire 1973-2016
Milly Arbaje-Thomas 2018-

 @MetcolnchHQ

 Metco, Inc. Headquarters

 metcoinchq

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METCOinc.org





LINCOLN-SUDBURY



SWAMPSOTT

METCO
works!

METCO ANNUAL REPORT

SCHOOL YEAR 2019-2020

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CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MARTIN J. WALSH

Dear METCO family,

I want to congratulate METCO's students, parents, teachers, administrators, and staff members—both here in the city and throughout Greater Boston—for your hard work and tireless commitment during these challenging times. From its beginnings with Boston heroes like Ruth Batson and Ellen Jackson to the present day, METCO has made an enormous contribution to our community, combating systemic racism by creating environments where students, parents, and teachers of different backgrounds can find common ground through shared experiences.

METCO's students are ambassadors for our city. Every day they get on their buses (or log in on their laptops) and embrace educational and extracurricular opportunities, while forming important connections between our communities. After graduating, many METCO alumni apply their school experiences while building their careers and raising families in Boston. Some serve with me in local government as some of our city's most dedicated emerging leaders.

I am pleased that METCO students and families were able to take advantage of several of the city's initiatives this year. With a grant from the Boston Resiliency Fund, METCO students are receiving social and emotional support that will help them navigate the dual pandemics of 2020: COVID-19 and systemic racism. All METCO students in grades 7-12 received a free M7 pass to improve their access to public transit. More recently, I created the Equity Cabinet to dismantle systemic racism throughout our city and empower communities to take action. I know that we will collaborate closely with many of you as we continue working together to make our city stronger than ever.

Thank you to the many supporters of METCO for the legacy you have created for our future leaders.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

BOSTON CITY HALL • ONE CITY HALL SQUARE • BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS • 02201
617-635-4500 • www.boston.gov

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO AND BOARD CHAIR

Dear friends,

METCO has witnessed a lot of history, but this year was unique. At the beginning of September 2019—for the 53rd year in a row—a few thousand Black and brown children and teenagers climbed onto buses for their first day of school in the suburbs. The Board and the Headquarters team met at the Dimock Center to talk through all the community gatherings, partnerships and programming we had planned. We were ready to complete the third year of METCO, Inc.'s new leadership, following through on the vision and strategy we had built together.

How different the school year turned out to be than what we were picturing last fall.

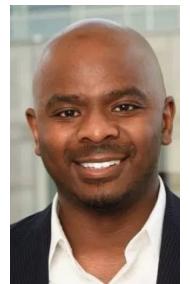
In March, the buses stopped. Students attended class virtually. The exciting in-person events METCO had lined up were cancelled. Our offices closed. Zoom meetings became the new routine.

And then, in June, the killing of a Black man in Minneapolis, George Floyd, awakened the anger and determination of people around the world. METCO students and families rose up together to demand justice, alongside their neighbors in Boston and their classmates in the suburbs.

Every day, we were awed by the resilience and resourcefulness of METCO Directors and their staff. We were spurred on by the bravery and boldness of teachers and school and district leaders. And we were inspired, as always, by the determination, creativity, and love embodied by the children and families of METCO.

You are why we are so excited for the possibilities of 2020-21—whatever it brings. Together, we will be better.

Milly Arbaje-Thomas, MSW
President & CEO, METCO, Inc.



Patrick Kimble
Board Chair, METCO, Inc.



SCHOOL YEAR 2019-20 MILESTONES



Application moved online with lottery referrals

The incoming cohort of Boston students was the first to have applied online and be referred to districts in order of lottery number: a more transparent, efficient, and equitable system than the waiting list.



Activated parent and student leaders

METCO's office continued the tradition of serving as an organizing hub for the BIPOC community of Boston, convening parents for advocacy and hiring students to tell the story of education activism.



Adapted to the pandemic

When the region shut down in response to COVID-19, METCO offered online academics and workshops, supported food and technology distribution, and even held a virtual celebration of the graduating class.



Supported antiracism across the region

As the nation galvanized in support of Black lives and against systemic racism, METCO amplified student voices and convened discussions to encourage partners to take radical action.

ABOUT METCO

METCO'S MISSION

The purpose of the state-funded METCO program is to expand educational opportunities, increase diversity, and reduce racial isolation by permitting students from Boston to attend public schools in other communities that have agreed to participate. Since its founding, the METCO program has enrolled tens of thousands of Boston students of color in participating school districts and has provided the opportunity for students in those districts to experience the advantages of learning and working in a racially and ethnically diverse setting.

HOW DOES METCO WORK?

In 1965, Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Section 12A gave city and town school committees and districts the right to "help alleviate racial isolation" and "racial imbalance" by placing children who reside elsewhere in their schools. "Racial isolation" is defined as occurring when a school population has less than 30% "minority students." METCO, Inc. (HQ) has been the service provider for this placement since 1966, and the state legislature allocates funding every year. These grants are then administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Any Boston resident entering kindergarten through 10th grade may apply to be enrolled in METCO. Partner districts select students with completed applications every year based on the number of slots available in each grade. No preference is given based on academic or athletic performance, personal relationships, or financial need.



FUNDING

PUBLIC SOURCES

Allocations for METCO by district, SY 2019-20

ARLINGTON	\$534,449	MELROSE	\$839,955
BEDFORD	\$671,827	NATICK	\$366,176
BELMONT	\$676,954	NEEDHAM	\$1,197,675
BRAINTREE	\$230,256	NEWTON	\$2,833,781
BROOKLINE	\$1,941,295	READING	\$453,509
COHASSET	\$310,931	SCITUATE	\$462,798
CONCORD	\$549,390	SHARON	\$448,990
CONCORD/CARLISLE	\$389,163	SHERBORN	\$57,595
DOVER	\$48,577	SUDSBURY	\$483,080
DOVER/SHERBORN	\$174,505	SWAMPSCOTT	\$405,729
FOXBOROUGH	\$249,200	WAKEFIELD	\$451,634
HINCHAM	\$278,823	WALPOLE	\$295,446
LEXINGTON	\$1,609,326	WAYLAND	\$908,123
LINCOLN	\$581,804	WELLESLEY	\$1,052,007
LINCOLN-SUDSBURY	\$609,876	WESTON	\$1,090,502
LYNNFIELD	\$244,913	WESTWOOD	\$317,755
MARBLEHEAD	\$501,133	HEADQUARTERS	\$1,500,000

METCO HQ REVENUE: \$1,853,000



METCO HQ EXPENDITURES



SPOTLIGHT ON LEGISLATIVE CHAMPIONS

From its earliest years, the state of Massachusetts has allocated funding to METCO's partner districts for transportation, staffing, and programming, as well as administrative and program costs at METCO's Headquarters. As the Legislature considers this allotment every year, our communities rely especially on four champions to sustain this vital funding. The Co-Chairs of the METCO Legislative Caucus—**Senator Sonia Chang-Díaz** (who represents Boston's Second Suffolk District) and **Representative David Linsky** (who represents Natick and Sherborn)—have shown consistent commitment to the program as well as leadership in mobilizing their colleagues.



The Joint Committee on Education, co-chaired by **Senator Jason Lewis** (Melrose, Reading, and Wakefield) and **Representative Alice Peisch** (Wayland, Wellesley, and Weston), has served as the other anchor at the Statehouse. They recognize the role METCO plays in breaking down racial barriers between city and suburb. We are grateful to them for their powerful support.

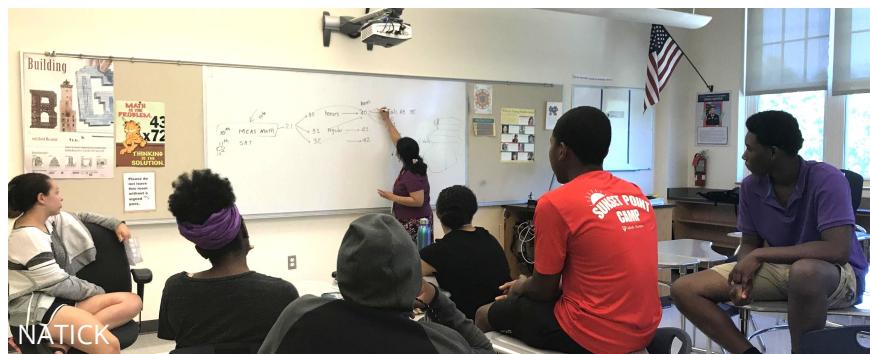
We also thank our government affairs consulting firm, **Charles Group Consulting**, for all their guidance, advocacy, and support in working with our legislators at the Statehouse to secure METCO funding.

State METCO funding, 1992-2020



FUNDING

PRIVATE SOURCES



FUNDING PARTNERS

Boston Summer Arts Institute/OTB Act 2
 The Boston Foundation
 Ernst & Young
 Hamilton Charitable Foundation
 Income Research + Management
 Liberty Mutual Foundation
 Massachusetts General Hospital
 Red Sox Foundation
 Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation

Celebrating the Legacy Event: METCO Racial Equity Sponsors

Supporter

Beloved Community

Allies

John & Mary-Beth Henry
 Quality Heating & Cooling LLC
 Concerned Black Men of
 Massachusetts, Inc. (CBMM, Inc.)

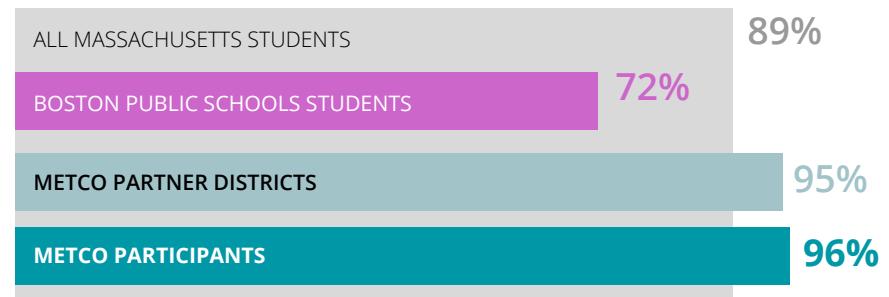
INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Alexander Ahmed	Barbara Elfman	Carolyn Mackin	Michael Samko
Cheryl Antoine	Steven Fishman	Racquel Mathurin	Jonathan Schonfeld
Sarah Baldwin	Michelle Fitzpatrick	Alixandra McAdams	Yolanda Thomas
Hilary Baldwin	Megan Fitzpatrick	Lewis McCulloch	Andrea Vasconcelos
Tamara Bartlett	Annette Fotino	Monroe Moseley	The Warren Family
Scott Barton	Emma Griffith	Zachary Ogden	Maryann Wholley
Sophie Blum	Reisa Jaffe	Nicholas Partan	Beth Williams
Nefertiti Borders	Peter Kenn	Andrew Patti	Colin Woodworth
Belkys Brady	Michael Kennedy	Heather Phelps	Jennifer Zeis
Edward Collins	Patrick Kimble	Anthony Piraino	Yihui Zhu
Lauren Crimmin	Arthur M. Krieg	Michael Prensky	
Susan Curtin	Arlene Lieberman	Alan Ricks	

IMPACT

#METCOworks

Four-year high school graduation rates, 2019



**"We as a generation are living in unprecedented times.
 So instead of going with the flow, go against the tide.
 Instead of living in the moment, live intentionally....
 Don't just tweet or post about injustice, but tear down
 these impediments to building bridges in your own
 homes, communities, and friend groups."**

**JONATHAN PIERRE
 PRESIDENT OF BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2020
 GRADUATION SPEECH - JULY 22, 2020**

STUDENTS

Racial composition of student body, 2019-20

Boston Public Schools students



METCO students



Resident students in METCO partner districts



Representations in student body, 2019-20

% economically disadvantaged



% with special needs



% English learners



METCO: 37%

METCO: 27%

METCO: 4%

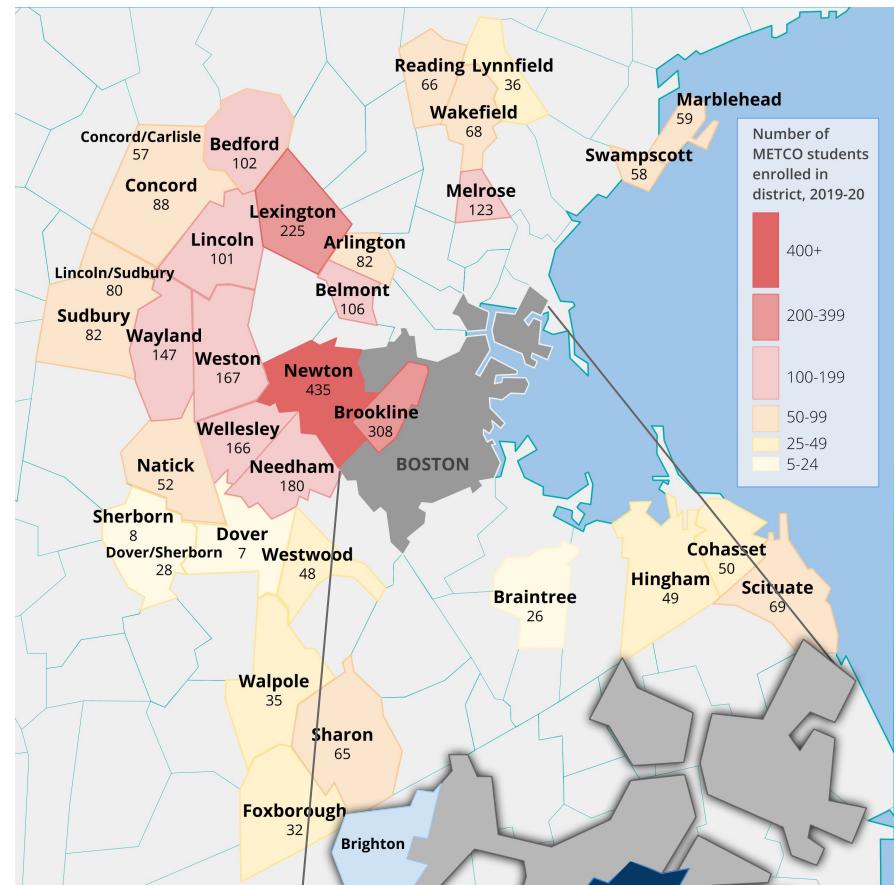
SUBURBAN: 10%

SUBURBAN: 14%

SUBURBAN: 6%



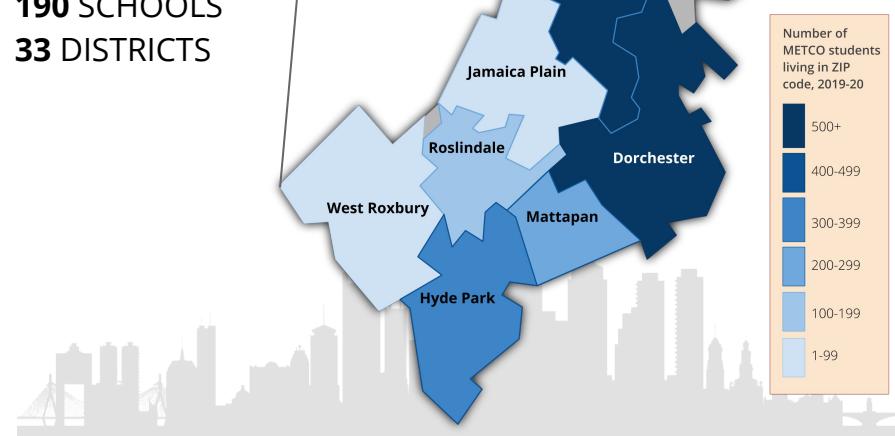
Enrollment by METCO district, SY 2019-20



3,205 STUDENTS

190 SCHOOLS

33 DISTRICTS



ENROLLMENT

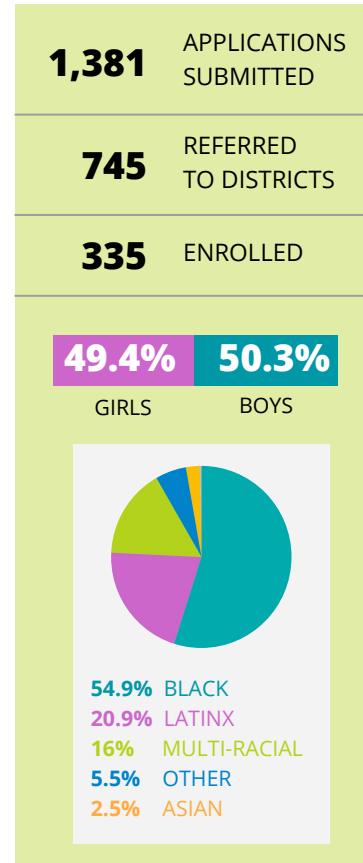
METCO'S FIRST ONLINE APPLICATIONS



METCO's new online application for Boston families went live on Wednesday, October 2, replacing the paper-based waiting list and referral system with an efficient, equitable, and transparent process and admissions policy. Instead of bringing three copies of each document in to the hard-to-reach office on Dimock Street, families could now upload their supporting documents with their phones or computers without leaving home. One mom arrived at the office, looked at our flyer, and said, "Oh, online? I can do that. That's much better!"

The SchoolMint platform boasts features such as automatic zip code verification, encrypted data security, and a way for applicants to see their status in real time. Headquarters staff visited METCO districts to let current families know about the new process, including a policy to prioritize siblings of enrolled students when space is available. Our team coached applicants in multiple languages. Then, in December, we pushed a button—and ran the first METCO lottery.

When the pandemic hit in March, the online system allowed the application process to continue uninterrupted. Virtual Info Sessions grew ever larger. The summer concluded with feedback so that we can make improvements for next year.



SPOTLIGHT ON NEW PARENT LILIAN O. ELEKWACHI

Lilian learned about the METCO program through a friend whose child attends METCO and who was very pleased with her child's experience and performance. She and her husband, James Elekwachi, liked what they heard about the program, and were able to apply quickly.

Lilian encourages Boston parents to consider METCO for the 2021-22 school year and give the "very easy" online application a try. "METCO has been wonderful for my two youngest," said Lilian. "My daughter is much happier going to school now and her performance has greatly improved. She was able to adapt easily to her new school because the environment is very friendly and welcoming. My husband and I are so pleased."



"The online application was so straightforward. It was done in no time. Someone is always there to help you any time you have a question before, during, and after the application process. It's been a really, really great experience for us."

APPLY TO THE NEW METCO LOTTERY!

For the first time, the application is online. Eligible students will be chosen by lottery for referral.

Deadline: JANUARY 3, 2020
metcoinc.org/apply
QUESTIONS? CALL 617-427-1545

APLICA A LA NUEVA METCO LOTERÍA!

FECHA LÍMITE: 3 DE ENERO DE 2020

¿Qué es METCO?
• Programa de integración escolar de Boston
• Inscribe a estudiantes en escuelas públicas suburbanas participantes
• Reduce el aislamiento racial en las aulas
• Crea oportunidades interraciales de por vida
• Prepara a los estudiantes para convertirse en ciudadanos del mundo

QUIÉN: Niños residentes de Boston ingresan a 1-10 en octubre de 2020

CUANDO: OCTUBRE 2 - 3 DE ENERO DE 2020

CÓMO: En línea a través de un teléfono inteligente/computadora o en la oficina de METCO

QUÉ NECESITO: Comprobante de tutela, residencia en Boston, y registros académicos de la escuela (consulte los detalles al dorso)

APLICAR EN metcoinc.org/apply

APLICADO ANTES?
Algunos solicitantes de años anteriores son elegibles para el ESTADO DE PRIORIDAD para la inscripción 2020. Consulte metcoinc.org/status para obtener más información.

PARENT LEADERS RAISING THEIR VOICES



Nearly a hundred moms, dads, aunties, and grandmothers from Boston, representing 25 different school districts, attended the METCO Parent Leaders Dinner in February. The primary goal was to mobilize and plan for METCO's annual Advocacy Day, which was scheduled for March.

Following inside tips about state advocacy from **Charles Group Consulting**, parents sat in groups organized by district in order to develop the specific messages to bring to legislators during their in-person appointments on Advocacy Day. **Cheryl Antoine**, longtime head of the METCO Legislative Advisory Council, concluded the evening with a call for parents to stay engaged with their children's schools.

Due to the pandemic, Advocacy Day was cancelled when it was clear that the Statehouse would not be taking up budgeting issues for many months. Nonetheless, this meeting built new relationships and provided parents an opportunity to make their perspectives known. Parents created METCO in 1966, and they remain a powerful force for influencing change for the benefit of all METCO schools. The more organized they can be, the more forceful their collective voice becomes.



SPOTLIGHT ON PARENT LEADER **TINEA ROCHELLE**

Tinea Rochelle is a 1985 METCO graduate of Wayland High School who has guided two children through the Wellesley schools via the METCO program. Daughter Keleyia is now a freshman at University of Rhode Island, where she is on the swim team, and son Malik graduated from University of New Hampshire. Their dad Kenny is a METCO Brookline High grad.

Keleyia said her METCO experience moved her "out of the box" of growing up in a Boston neighborhood. "It gave me the ability to feel comfortable with people who don't look like me, to be at ease with being a Black female in a room full of white people," she said. "METCO also helped me stay on a schedule—getting to school, swim practice, classes, homework. I learned to structure my time."

"As a parent we need to walk in our child's shoes and understand their challenges," she says. "We have to be there on open school nights or at performances where you might drive for an hour in traffic to see your child on stage for five minutes." Tinea experienced plenty of performances when Keleyia sang a capella solos at school events—and cheered poolside when, as a captain of the Wellesley High Swim Team, Keleyia led the team to victory in their division!



"METCO parents have to be involved. It's important for parents not to expect the program to do everything. Parents have to know their child, and once that child is in the door they need to represent them, to be their advocate, to make their presence known in a positive way to the teachers and administration."

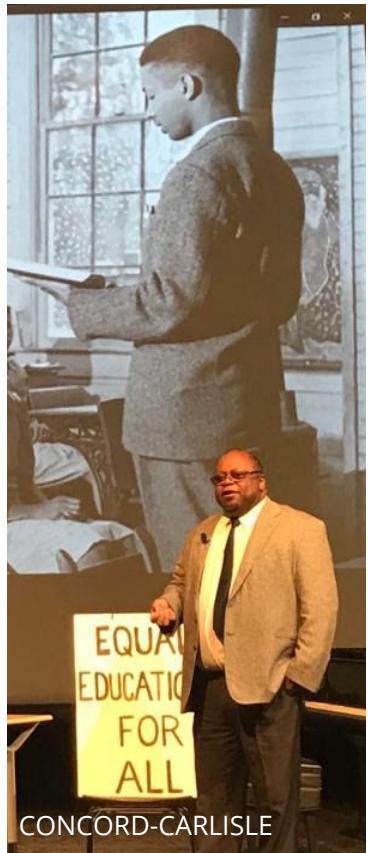
METCO PRESENTS

PERFORMANCES THAT BREAK BARRIERS



The performing arts are a powerful catalyst for overcoming bias, discovering common experiences, and celebrating differences. For the third consecutive year, **BASI/Outside the Box Act Two** generously supported building community across the METCO program through the arts. In a series called **METCO Presents**, teachers, parents, and children of all ages came together to meet, share, and appreciate performances centered on race, culture, and justice presented by **ArtsEmerson**, **National Center of Afro-American Artists Boston**, and **Boston Arts Academy** (*opposite page*). Communities gathered for receptions and panel discussions to meet one another and continue learning.

BASI/Outside the Box Act Two also funded **Cultural Mini-Grants** program to subsidize performances in METCO districts and bring students and teachers together. Districts used grants to create cultural festivals, artist workshops, dance performances, and more, partnering with institutions like **Dialogues on Diversity** (*Living the Legacy of METCO*, right), artists like **Enzo Surin & Jamele Adams** and **Linda & Sumner McLain** (above left and right), or their own student-led experiences.



METCO PRESENTS

A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE METCO COMMUNITY

THE MAGIC FLUTE
produced by ISANGO ENSEMBLE

Saturday, November 9th at 2pm
Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre | \$10 tickets support METCO programs

ARTS EMERSON **OUTSIDE THE BOX**



METCO PRESENTS

A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE METCO COMMUNITY

RESPECT
A BOSTON ARTS ACADEMY tribute to ARETHA FRANKLIN

Students interpret a 20th century cultural icon.
Saturday, February 1st
Performance 2pm
Media Arts Center, Roxbury Community College
\$5 tickets support METCO programs

ARTS EMERSON **OUTSIDE THE BOX**



METCO PRESENTS

A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE FOR MEMBERS OF THE METCO COMMUNITY

DETROIT RED
by WILL POWER & LEE SUNDAY EVANS

Malcolm X's coming-of-age in Roxbury.
Saturday, February 8th at 2pm
Post-show reception at 3:45pm | Paramount Center | \$10 tickets support METCO programs

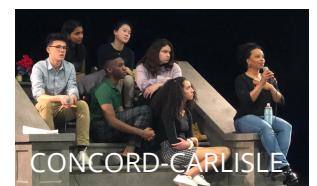
ARTS EMERSON **OUTSIDE THE BOX**



METCO PRESENTS

MR. JOY
by DANIEL BEATY

A poignant story of class, race, and learning to dream again.
A SPECIAL EVENT FOR MEMBERS OF THE METCO COMMUNITY



SPOTLIGHT ON PARTNERS

BASI/OTB2 & ARTSEMERSON



"ArtsEmerson and METCO share a vision for a region that activates, celebrates and elevates the power of our diversity. The partnership we have with METCO is one of the most important in ArtsEmerson's efforts to connect diverse communities of our region across our differences, which is the very heart and essence of our mission."

"When the METCO community arrives at one of our performances, they also transform the experience of the show for the whole audience. The diversity of METCO's staff and families, together with their openness to, and curiosity around the work on stage, creates an electric exchange between the artists and the audience, and the artists always single out the post-performance gatherings with the METCO groups as part of what makes their time with us so special."

"At ArtsEmerson, we believe the shared experience of art has the power to create a sense of belonging for all, a sense of seeing and being seen among different communities and cultures. Working with METCO and the Boston Arts Summer Institute has been powerful proof that this is true."

DAVID DOWER (*above*)
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, ARTSEMERSON

"We're proud to play a role in enabling families across the METCO system to come together through the performing arts, where personal expression, varied racial themes, and challenges to the imagination create dialogue and bridge social divides. Our partnership with METCO and ArtsEmerson is a catalyst for greater understanding of Boston's racial and cultural diversity, leading young people and families to become a more engaged and enlightened community."

ELLEN CALMAS (*below, bottom left*)
PRESIDENT, BOSTON ARTS SUMMER INSTITUTE/OUTSIDE THE BOX ACT TWO



SENIOR CELEBRATION

DISTANCED BUT UNDAUNTED



The high school seniors of 2020 experienced a very different spring than they had envisioned. Teachers and school leaders gave everything they could to stay connected and supportive, but beloved milestones were by necessity unrecognizable.

As a supplement to the ceremonies and activities provided in their schools, METCO Headquarters honored the unique achievements of METCO's graduating seniors with the first virtual celebration of the entire cohort on Saturday, June 27.

The one-hour streaming event featured video presentations from special guests, including **Devin McCourty** of the New England Patriots and **Jackie Bradley, Jr.** of the Boston Red Sox, the Mayor and the Governor, and long-time METCO leader **Dr. Jean McGuire**. METCO alum and Boston City Council President **Kim Janey** and Wayland senior **Shawn Bernier** gave inspiring keynote addresses. Then every graduating METCO student was featured in a virtual procession, including photos, quotations, and even video messages uploaded by the students themselves.



You are not the leaders of tomorrow. You are leaders right now...And we are counting on you.

KIM JANEY
METCO ALUM, BOSTON CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

264 GRADUATES

29 HIGH SCHOOLS

11 SPECIAL GUESTS

400+ ATTENDEES

SPOTLIGHT ON GRADUATE **SHAWN BERNIER**

"I knew I was going to make life-changing sacrifices. All my life I've taken small steps to enable me to soar, without fully understanding the magnitude of difficulty that I've endured. And what has inspired me to keep going on this path are those around me that have been able to be touched by my experiences."



SHAWN BERNIER
PRESIDENT OF THE WAYLAND HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2020

Seniors were invited to suggest a tagline that captured their graduating class. Here is a sample of what they submitted.

2020 vision | Must We Remind, Class of 2020 is One of a Kind!
Isolation | ZOOMZOOM2020 | The Masked Graduates
the quarantine year | Straight Outta Quarantine
If quarantine can't stop us, nothing can!!
Pushing through adversity, crossing the stage during Covid-19
we shall overcome | #resilience | Perseverance
Class of 2020: what doesn't kill you makes you stronger
Standing Strong | 2020 strong | Stronger Than Ever
Embracing the Uncertain. | Courageous to move forward!
The comeback | Beating the odds | I rise
New beginnings | Crazy ending to a new beginning!
#Breakingtradition | Unique | The unforgettable Class
Together We Can!! Class of 2020 | We are ONE

2020 ... leading with renewed vision

The generation of change | It's in our hands to improve
2020, the class of dreamers and future innovators
Keep your eyes to the sky, never glued to your shoes
Let the adventures begin... | Black Excellence
Early mornings. | Finally done | We made it !! | We out

METCO B.E.A.T.

BOSTON EDUCATION ACTIVISM TOUR

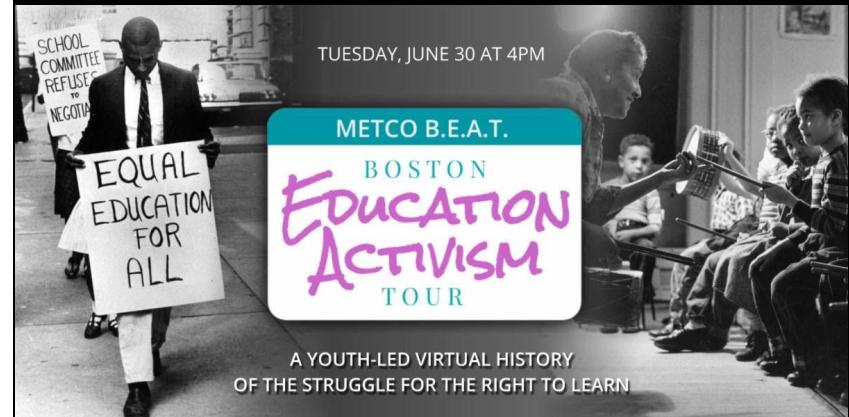


History came vividly to life in June thanks to eight METCO high school students selected for the first METCO B.E.A.T. internship. These scholars from Lexington, Natick, Newton North and South, Wayland, and Wellesley High Schools conducted their own research at archives around the city of Boston to create a guide to take their classmates through decades of activism, and introduce them to the people and stories that aren't in the history books—at least not yet.

They complemented their dive into the past with skill-building for their future, including wisdom from METCO legend **Dr. Jean McGuire** and community leader **Leonard Lee**, and financial literacy workshops from volunteers from **Santander Bank**. Oran Andrews, who is a Senior Associate Digital Product Owner at the bank's national headquarters in Cambridge, revealed how experts manage budgets and what goes into online marketing.

In the students' final presentation, converted to a video format since the pandemic prohibited groups from convening, they recounted the creative and groundbreaking solutions (including METCO itself) that were built by ordinary people demanding their children's right to learn. They made clear that the movement to end school segregation may have reached a peak 54 years ago, but the struggle continues.

8	STUDENT SCHOLARS
700+	PAID HOURS
4	ARCHIVES VISITED
7	GUEST SPEAKERS
150	ATTENDEES OF VIRTUAL TOUR



ACADEMIC SUPPORT

HELPING CHILDREN LEARN FROM HOME



While school communities planned a fall semester full of uncertainty, METCO HQ also explored ways to mitigate the loss of academic learning that has disproportionately affected students of color in urban communities. After two years of partnership with the tutoring company **Livius**, including a college boot camp program, we worked to offer students a robust online summer program at a substantial discount—including some full and partial scholarships.

Twice a week, students in grades K-12 participated in small-group English and math classes. Pre- and post-assessments ensured that instructors could tailor the learning to the specific gaps in students' understanding, and parents received notes after each session to keep them in the know.

A parent of a rising third grader appreciated the thoughtful approach to supporting her child: "Although the tutoring was online due to COVID-19, my daughter made progress in her reading and math. Meeting twice a week was a great opportunity for her. I love that the teacher also assigned homework outside of the tutoring hours as well!"

110	STUDENTS
10	DISTRICTS
8	WEEKS
56%	STUDENTS INCREASED MATH SCORE
89%	STUDENTS INCREASED READING SCORE
79	AVERAGE POINT INCREASE IN SCORES

SPOTLIGHT ON PANDEMIC FUNDERS

The pandemic forced virtually every institution to adapt dramatically, and METCO HQ was no different. To meet the rapidly changing needs of our students and families, we had to develop and implement supports that we had never offered. Suddenly, online learning and supports needed to become a core competency.

METCO's funders allowed us the flexibility to shift to a new norm. With a grant from the **Red Sox Foundation**, we offered parenting classes to help families build resiliency. With funding from **The Boston Foundation**, we were able to offer expert online tutoring. And with the support of **Liberty Mutual Foundation**, we were able to buy Chromebooks for students needing to shift to online learning (*middle right*).

Sherilla Lestrade (*bottom right*), a Boston parent with Reading Public Schools, donned her safety gear and picked up a Chromebook for her son Jeremiah. "And Scituate 7th grader Akheerah (*bottom left*) was grateful for her Chromebook because "without it I would have to use my cell phone and it is too difficult to type on!"



METCO UNIVERSITY

SHARING KNOWLEDGE



As the COVID-19 pandemic raised concerns about educational gaps for Black and brown kids, HQ shifted all of its programming online, designing some of our own and partnering with experts for others. METCO University, Headquarters' series of workshops for adults, went virtual.

METCO offered *The Power of Parenting*, the signature, six-week program of **Families First Parenting Programs**, to strengthen parents' knowledge of child development and help them build new skills to promote their children's learning, confidence, and self-esteem (*above left*). Two trainings focused on higher education: *College Planning 101*, led by **Yanitza Medina** (*above right*), helped parents of juniors and seniors fill the gaps in knowledge that may have been left when schools closed; and our partners at **Livius** coached students on catching up academically over the summer months.

In house, METCO's Director of Racial Equity Initiatives, **D. Farai Williams**, offered her unique, body-focused social-emotional workshops, *The Felt Sense* and *The New Norm*, to two groups of teachers from Cohasset, Natick, and Scituate, providing experiential learning to help them manage their own stress—and that of their students.



15 PARENTS

8 DISTRICTS

"I believe this class will be very helpful to parents when dealing with stressful moments with their child and learning their child's personality."

METCO UNIVERSITY
PARTICIPANT

SPOTLIGHT ON FAMILY THE HENRYS

Ayanna Henry graduated from Natick High in 2019, where she was a cheerleader and top student with many suburban friends. "Ayanna was always welcomed in her Natick classmates' homes—and I made friends with the parents," says her mother **Yves Marcelin**. Ayanna is now a sophomore at Westfield State College, pursuing a career as a physical therapist.

But Yves and her husband **Patmore Henry Sr.** are still a METCO family: Patmore Henry Jr., known to all as "PJ," is a 7th grader in Natick's Wilson Middle School. He has been a METCO kid all the way, starting in Marblehead and now in Natick.

"To me, METCO means a great learning experience," says PJ. "There is always help after school if you need it. The teachers are nice and there are many opportunities." PJ has always participated in summer enrichment classes, most recently in the METCO Livius Summer Program. Even attending classes from home twice a week, PJ was totally engaged.

Yves praises the Natick administration and teaching staff, especially **Anna Nolin**, Superintendent of Schools. "Anna goes above and beyond for our METCO kids," she said. She also thanks **Rasheedah Clayton**, Natick's METCO Director, and Headquarters' **Deb Ward**, for their tireless support.

Yves is now a member of the Wilson Middle School Council. As she wrote in her application, "I want to ensure that the Council is representative of ALL of the students at Wilson, and not just those from Natick."

"METCO means a lot to our family. We are fortunate to have this opportunity in Boston—and I think it should be available in every city, every community, nationwide!"

YVES MARCELIN HENRY AND PATMORE HENRY SR.



ANTIRACISM

STANDING UP FOR BLACK LIVES



The movement to dismantle racism in the United States gained historic momentum this summer, and towns that are METCO partners mobilized in support. Rallies and marches were organized from Brookline to Wellesley.

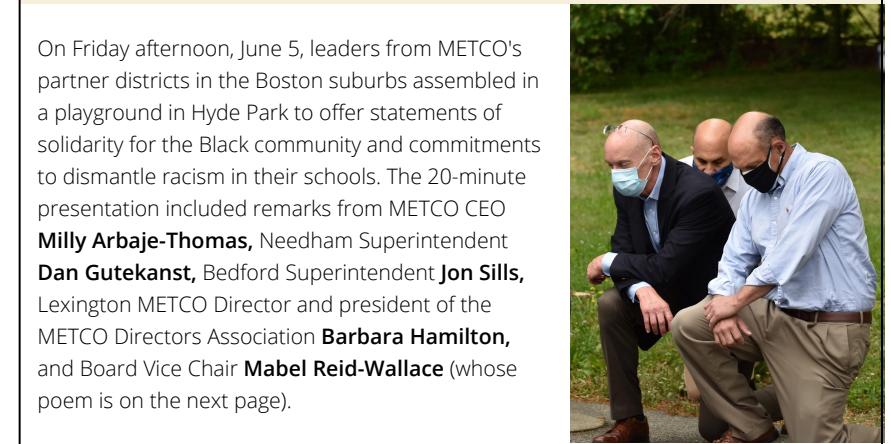
The METCO Headquarters team supported students, families, and districts in making calls to action through forums, dialogues, and listening sessions. As schools moved into the final phase of preparation for re-opening, we sent a broad survey to Boston parents and held a focus group of parent leaders, revealing trends about what priorities and concerns are shared by METCO families overall. We hosted a meeting with METCO Directors and Superintendents to have a conversation about re-opening with an antiracist focus, featuring a panel of students sharing their experiences and insights.

We have a lot of work to do, but we are inspired in knowing that districts are committing to dismantling the racism that exists within all structures in America, including educational institutions.

METCO PARENTS' MAJOR REQUESTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INCREASED TEACHER DIVERSITY• REPRESENTATIVE CURRICULA• CULTURAL COMPETENCY
DISTRICTS' MAJOR CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MEETING WIDE RANGE OF NEEDS• BURNOUT AND EXHAUSTION• VARYING READINESS• LIMITED TIME AND RESOURCES

SPOTLIGHT ON EVENT STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY

On Friday afternoon, June 5, leaders from METCO's partner districts in the Boston suburbs assembled in a playground in Hyde Park to offer statements of solidarity for the Black community and commitments to dismantle racism in their schools. The 20-minute presentation included remarks from METCO CEO **Milly Arbaje-Thomas**, Needham Superintendent **Dan Gutekanst**, Bedford Superintendent **Jon Sills**, Lexington METCO Director and president of the METCO Directors Association **Barbara Hamilton**, and Board Vice Chair **Mabel Reid-Wallace** (whose poem is on the next page).



"Do your students understand the injustices that came before us and those we are living now, especially in the Black community? And are those students breaking apart from the vicious cycle of racism, bigotry, bias, stereotypes and discrimination? Because if this is not happening, then we are drastically failing at creating a brighter future for us all."

MILLY ARBAJE-THOMAS
PRESIDENT & CEO





EMMETT, TILL!

By MABEL REID-WALLACE
METCO Board Vice Chair

Till the soil Emmett!
Unleash the voices of the souls, so longingly dormant
Release their cries for justice, and let others heed their call
Rise up and till the earth
Create a new surface of equity and humanity
A surface which will breathe new life into our world of darkness
New soil that will welcome a new way of living
Living, not existing in a world of fear and seemingly disguised oppression

Till the soil Emmett!
Bring the souls to the party of reform
Breathe life into Medgar, Martin, Marcus, and Malcolm
Speak their truth to the powers that be, but are no longer powerful
Lift off the veil that has too long shrouded our thinking of who holds the power
Guide this uprising into a new platform of empathy, understanding and true peace
Remove the wicked, so that they may no longer walk among us
Let them languish under the newly overturned earth
The earth to which you were all sent to Rest in Peace

Till the soil Emmett!
How can one rest in peace when one's soul has been assaulted?
How can one find peace when they were faced with madness as their last view?
For too long peace has been the reward of the oppressor, not the oppressed
Peace that was not earned, but stolen and privately owned
Owned and cultivated as wealth, that we have been taught to covet
Teach us to reject this notion, as it is a false reality
A reality based in greed and white supremacy that has permeated our soil

Till the Soil Emmett!
No Justice, No Peace!



ANTIRACISM INITIATIVES

The public school districts that partner with METCO have a special obligation to cultivate an inclusive, welcoming, and equitable learning community for the Black and brown children who make the journey to their classrooms. The tables below document some of the approaches they have taken in the past year to get ever closer to this goal.

INITIATIVE	DISTRICTS THAT ENGAGED IN SY 2019-20			
AFFINITY GROUPS				
<i>Opportunities for students and/or educators to build community among other members of their racial group</i>	Bedford Belmont Brookline Lexington Lincoln	Natick Needham Newton Scituate Sharon	Swampscott Wayland Wellesley Weston Westwood	
BOOK CLUBS				
<i>Shared learning across multiple students, educators, and/or families through literature or non-fiction</i>	Belmont Cohasset Concord-Carlisle Hingham Lincoln	Melrose Needham Newton Scituate Sharon	Sudbury Swampscott Wellesley Weston Westwood	
COMMUNITY EVENTS				
<i>Shared experiences centered around Black or Latinx culture for the benefit of all</i>	Cohasset: Downland screening, MLK breakfast Marblehead: Culture Feast Needham: Black Lives Matter event Natick: MLK celebration Newton: HBCU Fair, conference Reading: Rallies, Juneteenth Scituate: Reintroducing METCO event Sharon: Rally for Equity Swampscott: Cultural Fair Walpole: Juneteenth, Cultural Performance Wayland: MLK Celebration in Boston Weston: Black Lives Matter community march			
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS				
<i>Programs that transcend the school walls and forge relationships among town and community organizations</i>	Arlington: Elevating Suppressed Voices with town Bedford: Boston Bridging Initiative with Parent Diversity Council; discussions with police department Belmont: Antiracism trainings with PTO Cohasset: Black Lives Matter vigil with town Natick: Community forum with Natick is United Swampscott: Restorative Justice circles with town, broadcast publicly			

INITIATIVE	DISTRICTS THAT ENGAGED IN SY 2019-20			
CONFERENCES				
<i>Offsite professional development focused on antiracism</i>	Dover-Sherborn Marblehead	Newton Scituate	Swampscott Westwood	
CONSULTANTS				
<i>Experts from outside the organization hired to offer training, coaching, research, or other professional work</i>	Arlington: Dr. Dena Simmons Bedford: Jamil Adams Dover-Sherborn: Dr. Gayl Crump Swaby Lincoln: NCBI, Evolution Lincoln-Sudbury: The City School Natick: Dr. Dena Simmons Needham: Gary Bailey, Monique Vogelsang Scituate: Dr. Gayl Crump Swaby Sharon: Equal Opportunity Schools Swampscott: Center for Collaborative Education Wakefield: Raúl Fernandez Wayland: TNTP Wellesley: Diversity Directions			
DISCUSSION GROUPS				
<i>Diverse groups assembled to listen to each other's unique experiences</i>	Arlington Bedford Cohasset Concord-Carlisle	Foxborough Lincoln Marblehead Needham	Scituate Walpole Wayland Westwood	
GUEST SPEAKERS				
<i>Presentations from experts brought to educate and inspire assemblies of educators, families, and/or students</i>	Arlington: Cedric Douglas Brookline: Rachael Rollins, Rebekah Splain Salwasser Cohasset: Adam Mazo & Ben Pender-Cudlip, Adrian Walker Dover-Sherborn: Mykee Fowlin Lincoln: Dr. Nicole Christian-Brathwaite Melrose: Speaker Series Natick: Dr. Dena Simmons Newton: Shawn Ginright Scituate: Enzo Surin & Jamele Adams Sharon: David Johns, Clint Smith Wayland: Christina Brown Wellesley: Dr. Dena Simmons, Kwame Alexander, Paul Gorski Westwood: Dr. Dena Simmons			

ANTIRACISM INITIATIVES

continued

INITIATIVE	DISTRICTS THAT ENGAGED IN SY 2019-20				INITIATIVE	DISTRICTS THAT ENGAGED IN SY 2019-20			
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT					STATEMENT/RESOLUTION				
<i>Trainings and workshops designed to build specific skills for educators and school leaders</i>	Arlington Belmont Concord-Carlisle Dover-Sherborn Foxborough Hingham Lexington Lincoln	Marblehead Melrose Natick Needham Newton Scituate Sharon Sudbury	Swampscott Walpole Wayland Wellesley Weston Westwood		<i>Public commitment to antiracism by the official leadership body of a school, district, or town</i>	Arlington Belmont Concord-Carlisle Dover-Sherborn Hingham Lexington	Lincoln Lynnfield Marblehead Melrose Natick Needham	Reading Scituate Sharon Sudbury Wayland Wellesley	
RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES					STUDENT-LED ADVOCACY GROUPS				
<i>Increased investment in targeted efforts to hire educators, administrators, and staff of color</i>	Concord-Carlisle Dover-Sherborn Lincoln-Sudbury Melrose	Needham Newton Sharon Wayland	Wellesley Westwood		<i>Youth-led efforts to educate peers and adults and instigate change</i>	Concord-Carlisle Natick Needham	Reading Sharon Swampscott	Wayland Westwood	
REPRESENTATION WITHIN LEADERSHIP					TOOLS FOR BUILDING EQUITY				
<i>Structural changes to ensure that those most affected by disparate policies have power in decision-making</i>	Brookline: METCO staff and parents on town committees Dover-Sherborn: student meetings with leaders Hingham: School Committee METCO Liaison Lincoln: METCO Director on AIDE Advisory Group Marblehead: School Committee METCO Liaison Melrose: METCO Director on leadership team Natick: METCO Director on leadership team Scituate: METCO Director on leadership team Swampscott: METCO Director on leadership team Wellesley: Student advisory council Westwood: METCO Director on leadership team				<i>Development and adoption of mechanisms to assess baseline and progress of equity efforts</i>	Arlington: analyzing achievement and discipline data Brookline: Data tracking before and after COVID Dover-Sherborn: culturally responsive classroom indicators for observations Hingham: equity audit, SWOT analysis Lexington: equity audit Lincoln: Surveys and focus groups led by consultants Lincoln-Sudbury: School Climate Needs Assessment Natick: equity audit Swampscott: data collection on racial incidents Wellesley: educator and staff experience survey			
REVIEW OF BOOKS AND CURRICULA					WEBSITE WITH RESOURCES				
<i>Audit and revision of texts, lessons, assignments, etc. to expose students to more representative stories, norms, and references</i>	Arlington Bedford Concord-Carlisle Dover-Sherborn Lexington	Lincoln-Sudbury Melrose Natick Needham Scituate	Sharon Swampscott Westwood		<i>Public online hub of curated readings, viewings, and activities to support antiracist learning</i>	Lincoln Lexington Sudbury			
REVIEW OF HANDBOOK					WORKING GROUPS/TASK FORCES				
<i>Identification and revision of policies that have disparate impact on students of color</i>	Reading Scituate Swampscott				<i>Convening of diverse experts from within the organization to identify and/or address specific racial equity challenges within a defined time frame</i>	Arlington Braintree Concord-Carlisle Hingham Lincoln Lincoln-Sudbury	Lynnfield Marblehead Melrose Needham Newton Scituate	Sudbury Swampscott Wellesley Westwood	

PREPARING TO MOVE A HOME IN THE HEART OF NUBIAN SQUARE



METCO Headquarters is on the move, but not quite on the timeline we planned. In May, the organization vacated the office at 40 Dimock Street, METCO's home since 1973, to avoid the spread of the coronavirus. Fortunately, we had transitioned all of our systems online over the last two years, so staff could access all of their work from home. More importantly, the thousands of families hoping to enroll their children in METCO when schools resume could upload their documents from home and get all the support they need from our team via phone or even virtual Info Sessions.

One of the most frequently heard requests from METCO families for many years has been "Get a new space!" Now, we are excited to share that our wish is coming true thanks to efforts led by Board Chair and METCO alum **Patrick Kimble**. This summer, we began renovating a spacious and conveniently located office in the heart of Nubian Square in Roxbury. In addition to providing a comfortable and modern location for METCO Directors and HQ staff to meet and work with students, families, and partners, the space will open with a brand new computer lab for students to use, funded by a generous grant from **The Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation**.

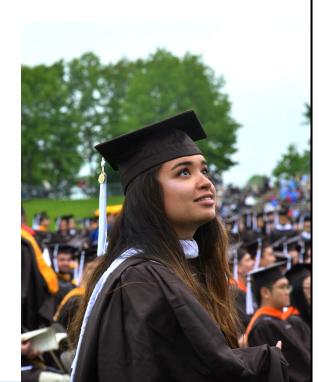
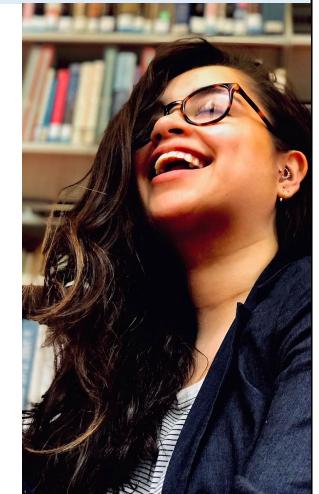


SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMNA **VANESSA RODRIGUEZ VARGAS**

Vanessa Rodriguez Vargas grew up in Brighton with her mom. From elementary school on, she was up at 5am to make the METCO journey to the Needham schools. She remembers always wanting to achieve academically, but she also sought out leadership roles, serving on the student council, organizing fundraisers and trying to be a role model for other METCO students. "I just really wanted to do well in school," she said. "I loved academics."

The Needham METCO staff helped students through the college application process. "They sat you down and said, This is how you apply; this is how you get the application fees waived; these are the references you will need.' It was invaluable. Like so many METCO students, I was the first in my family to go to college."

Her drive has not lessened since her 2013 graduation from Needham High. Vanessa has earned two more degrees, from Lehigh University and Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis. Today she is en route to a doctorate there, while serving as president of the Student Association Board. Her future plans include working with patients and teaching.



"It was often hard to be part of the 'other,' to fit in when you felt you didn't quite belong, to be the only METCO kid in an entire classroom. But I was always academically inclined, and the Needham schools gave me academic opportunities. Because I took AP French, I went to France and lived with a French family. Because of an inspirational AP Psychology class, I became passionate about psychology. My life was enriched by METCO."

METCO IN THE MEDIA

STORIES WORTH TELLING



TeachLab with **Justin Reich**, a new podcast from MIT, featured METCO President and CEO Milly Arbaje-Thomas.

The Boston Globe's Great Divide series profiled the METCO program at Newton South High School, featuring teacher **David Weintraub** and sophomore **Jada Pierre**.

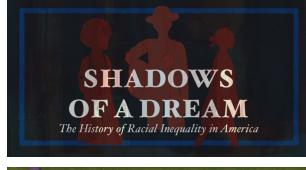
Emerson College radio's "You Are Here" podcast centered an episode of their series *Shadows of a Dream: The History of Racial Inequality in America* on METCO.

WGBH's Basic Black host **Callie Crossley** discussed Boston education equity with Milly alongside Boston Public Schools Superintendent **Dr. Brenda Cassellius**, Black Educators' Alliance President **Edith Bazile**, and veteran journalist **Phillip Martin**.

Local CBS, FOX, and ABC affiliates covered the June 5 METCO solidarity event for racial justice featuring superintendents and METCO Directors (see page 31).

Boston Herald columnist **Joyce Ferriabough Bolling** addressed the class of 2020: "METCO is so far ahead of the curve when it comes to diversity and inclusion. Be proud of the wonderful legacy you have inherited."

Fourteen Wellesley High School alumni, including former METCO Board member **Brendan Brooks**, wrote an editorial for the *Wellesley Townsman* calling for expansion of the program.



The Boston Globe

**Dorchester
Reporter**



wbur

**Encuentro
latino**

SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEER FUNDRAISER **JOANNA OWEN SCHMERGEL**

Throughout his life, Wadsworth "Waddy" Owen was committed to antiracism. As a nine year old in 1940's Jacksonville, Florida, he witnessed a car crash between Black and white families. He would never forget watching as an ambulance came to get the white family, and left the injured Black family alone on the side of the road. "It was the only time I ever saw him cry, when he told me that story," recalls his daughter Joanna Schmergel, who has followed in her late father's footsteps in Lincoln, Massachusetts.

As Fundraising Lead for **Lincoln's METCO Coordinating Committee** (MCC), Joanna has volunteered since 2017, raising a total of \$84,581 for METCO student camp scholarships and late buses. Lincoln's MCC was founded in 1966, and has operated continuously by volunteer parents deeply committed to the program's success.

For Joanna, it all started with American Girl dolls, which were donated, refurbished, and resold to great success. That enterprise evolved into a full-scale online estate sale endeavor, all to support METCO students who attend school in Lincoln. Today Joanna obtains and resells antique furniture, artwork, and anything of value from private donors living in over 40 towns. "I've become a bit of an expert in pricing valuable items, and when I don't know, I have a community of support that jumps in to help," Joanna says.

With her focus on the estate sales, Joanna has now passed the American Girl doll project on to Lincoln's METCO Director **Marika Hamilton**. Marika has added a social entrepreneurship component: through reselling the dolls, students develop skills in marketing, sales, home economics, and philanthropy.



METCO DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATION



The METCO Directors' Association (MDA) was founded in 1975 to provide educational leadership in the areas of school desegregation, integration, equity, academic achievement, and multicultural education for students of color. Membership is comprised of concerned professionals who serve as METCO Directors and/or Coordinators in more than thirty suburban communities in the metropolitan Boston area.

Each member of the MDA brings a unique combination of cultural sensitivity, expertise, creativity, and professional experience. Together, they are committed to providing a quality educational and social experience for all students, strengthening their own personal and professional development, and ultimately creating avenues for positive change and growth among all with whom they interact.

These objectives are achieved daily through ongoing collaboration with school districts, as well as through an annual METCO Directors Educator Conference, Youth Conferences, Middle School Conference, and Parents' Conference.

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Rasheedah Clayton
STUDENT CONFERENCE CHAIR

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CHAIR

DISTRICT BY DISTRICT, SCHOOL YEAR 2019-20

Superintendent and METCO Director

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Margaret Credle Thomas

LEXINGTON

Dr. Julie Hackett
Barbara Hamilton

SCITUATE

Ron Griffin
Michelle Crawford

BEDFORD

Jon Sills
Akil Mondesir

LINCOLN

Rebecca McFall
Marika Hamilton

SHARON

Dr. Victoria Greer
Claire Jones

BELMONT

John Phelan
Rosa Inniss

LINCOLN-SUDBURY

Dr. Bella Wong
Shelly Hinds

SUDBURY

Brad Crozier
Sandra Walters

BRAINTREE

Frank Hackett
Justin Wilson

LYNNFIELD

Jane Tremblay
Curtis Blyden

SWAMPSCOTT

Pamela Angelakis
Latoya Ogunbona

BROOKLINE

Ben Lummis (interim)
Dr. Keith Lezama

MARBLEHEAD

William McAluff (interim)
Jasmine Boyd-Perry

WAKEFIELD

Doug Lyons
Glavia Smith

COHASSET

Dr. Patrick Sullivan
Aleisa Gittens-Carle

MELROSE

Cyndy Taymore
Amy Jackson

WALPOLE

Dr. Bridget Gough
Jesenia Castro

CONCORD/CARLISLE

Dr. Laurie Hunter
Andrew Nyamekye

NATICK

Anna Nolin
Rasheedah Clayton

WAYLAND

Dr. Arthur Unobskey
Dr. Tony Laing

DOVER/SHERBORN

Dr. Andrew Keough
Monique Marshall-Veale

NEEDHAM

Dr. Daniel Gutekanst
Dr. Joanne Allen-Willoughby

WELLESLEY

Dr. David Lussier
Doreen Ward

FOXBOROUGH

Amy Berdos
Jesenia Castro

NEWTON

Dr. David Fleishman
Lisa Gilbert-Smith

WESTON

Dr. Marguerite Connolly
La Toya Rivers

HINGHAM

Dr. Paul Austin
Carols Perez

READING

John Doherty
Grant Hightower

WESTWOOD

Emily Parks
Lateefah Franck

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Darnell Billings
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Michelle Crawford
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Jackie Daley
Principal, Lexington



Dr. Daniel Gutekunst
Superintendent, Needham



Shelly Hinds
METCO Director/alumna



Betsy Lipson
Community member



A. Keith McDermott
Community member



Wayne R. Ogden
Community member



Hiten K. Patel
METCO parent



Stephen G. Pereira
Community member



Jon Sills
Superintendent, Bedford



Chuck Walker, Esq.
Community member



Douglas Wohin
METCO parent

SPOTLIGHT ON BOARD MEMBER **JON SILLS**

Jon Sills was an anti-racist activist as a teenager. He spent time as a union organizer, taught in a primarily African-American parochial school in Boston's South End, and worked for thirty years in METCO districts. In his 20 years with the Bedford Public Schools as the principal of the high school and as superintendent, he has wanted to help kids grow in ways that encouraged them to think deeply and systemically about racism and other civic issues.

In Bedford, Jon convened teachers, administrators, and students in an Equity and Diversity Committee that implemented ways to help underrepresented students succeed. He formed a Parents Diversity Committee to build cross-racial bridges between families and students. He is most proud of the creation of the **Tenacity Challenge**, a statewide academic scholarship competition for teams of Latinx and African-American students.

Jon retired on August 31, from his Superintendency and from the Board of METCO, where he served for six years. He continues his anti-racism work as a facilitator and coach in the New Superintendents Induction Program and through courses on equity at Boston University. He says, "I am blessed to have had the opportunity to serve alongside such caring and committed METCO board members, the tirelessly working HQ team, and the heart and soul of the METCO program in our districts, the directors, educator allies, and of course, our outstanding students and their families."



"Jon has always gone above and beyond for METCO. We thank him for his strong presence on the Board and his sensitive, seasoned counsel and support. He has been a true partner in helping to bring about the real integration and racial equity that METCO pursues. We will miss him."

MILLY ARBAJE-THOMAS
METCO PRESIDENT & CEO



"I believe we have to move beyond passive integration. Genuine integration only happens when real understanding takes place, when schools build robust anti-racism cultures, and take deliberate steps to help students and families come together across race. METCO is making that happen."

METCO HEADQUARTERS STAFF



Milly Arbaje-Thomas, MSW
President & CEO



Josie Butler
Executive Assistant to the CEO



Susan Kooperstein
Public Relations Consultant



Kim Houston
Director of Finance & Administration



J Sultan
IT Manager



Lance Carter
Transportation Manager



Wilmary Tejeda
Director of Enrollment



Kenlyne Exume
Enrollment Coordinator



Shirley Porcena
Office Manager



Deborah Ward
Director of Student Support



D. Farai Williams
Director of Racial Equity Initiatives



Kristen Fumarola
Director of Fundraising & Development



Colin Stokes
Director of Communications,
Outreach, & Engagement



Ivette Melendez
Engagement Coordinator



Ruth James
SCI AmeriCorps Volunteer
Outreach Coordinator

SPOTLIGHT ON STAFF MEMBER **DEBORAH WARD**

"Hi Mrs. Ward! I'm in METCO too! That was the greeting I often received from white students in the halls of Wellesley High where I was METCO Coordinator. METCO kids would bring their Wellesley friends to my office, and when they asked if they could come in, I would say: 'This is a METCO school—so everybody is in METCO!' It brought us all together."

That attitude of inclusion—long before the word gained everyday use—helped METCO succeed in bridging racial gaps at Wellesley High. And it has characterized Deb's work and life.

Deb grew up as the oldest of seven children. She began teaching preschool in Roxbury and Cambridge before coming to Wellesley High School in 2000. She loved every minute of her ten years there, helping develop the first African American Studies class and teaching it in partnership with a white teacher. "We did *Othello* in the school courtyard with student actors on the ground and hanging out of the windows. It was powerful."

She served as METCO Director in Sharon next; then three years ago, Deb postponed retirement to serve as Director of Student Support Services with the new CEO of METCO, Inc. Here she continued to support students and families directly; oversaw social workers, summer school, and after-school programs; and managed partnerships to bring scholarships and educational resources to students. Now she feels it's truly time to retire, telling CEO Milly at a recent METCO retreat: "Chief, you've got this!"



"Deb has worked tirelessly with passion and vigor to broker essential services and opportunities for students. Supporting students and families is embedded in her soul. She will always be part of the METCO family!"

MILLY ARBAJE-THOMAS
METCO PRESIDENT & CEO



"I always felt connected not only to the METCO kids, but to all students who might feel marginalized. I wanted them to know that adults cared about them."

SPECIAL THANKS

TO OUR PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS



ABCD, Inc.
ArtsEmerson
Beloved Community
Boston Center for Youth & Families
Boston City Archive
Boston Public Schools
Boston School Finder
Boston Schools Fund
Boston University Summer Journalism Institute
Boys and Girls Club of Roxbury
Celebrity Series of Boston
Charles Group Consulting
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Monica Concepcion
Creative Lumens: Brent Sandrock &
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Dillaway Thomas House
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Foley Hoag

Harvard RIDES: Re-imagining Integration
Diverse and Equitable Schools
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University of Massachusetts Archive
YMCA of Greater Boston
...and every METCO family, Director,
teacher, classmate, and advocate.



Written by Colin Stokes
with Susan Kooperstein

Designed by Colin Stokes

Photo credits

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Lilian Elekwachi: *Page 15*
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