



Line Item 7010-0012

\$32.2 million for METCO

METCO is at the forefront of the renewed national efforts to address racial equity in education. In its 57 years of existence, METCO has opened doors of opportunity for tens of thousands of diverse urban students. Its participants across the 33 partner communities in Boston’s suburbs have challenged the structures and habits of racism that limit our society’s potential.

Thought leaders and researchers cite METCO not only as one of the few remaining and largest voluntary school integration programs remaining in the country, but as **a model approach to addressing segregation**, a longstanding crisis that causes unjust disparities and limits children’s exposure to diverse people and points of view. **The proven track record of METCO—and the promise of the evolution underway—has led to increasing calls to expand.**

METCO’s Boston Headquarters has become a hub of innovation, coordination, and connections—from bold policy and process reforms, to conferences and retreats for district leaders, to student and community programming. Thanks to the Commonwealth’s increasing investment in recent years, METCO’s partner school districts have formed a unique community of practice to support their ongoing commitment to racial equity.

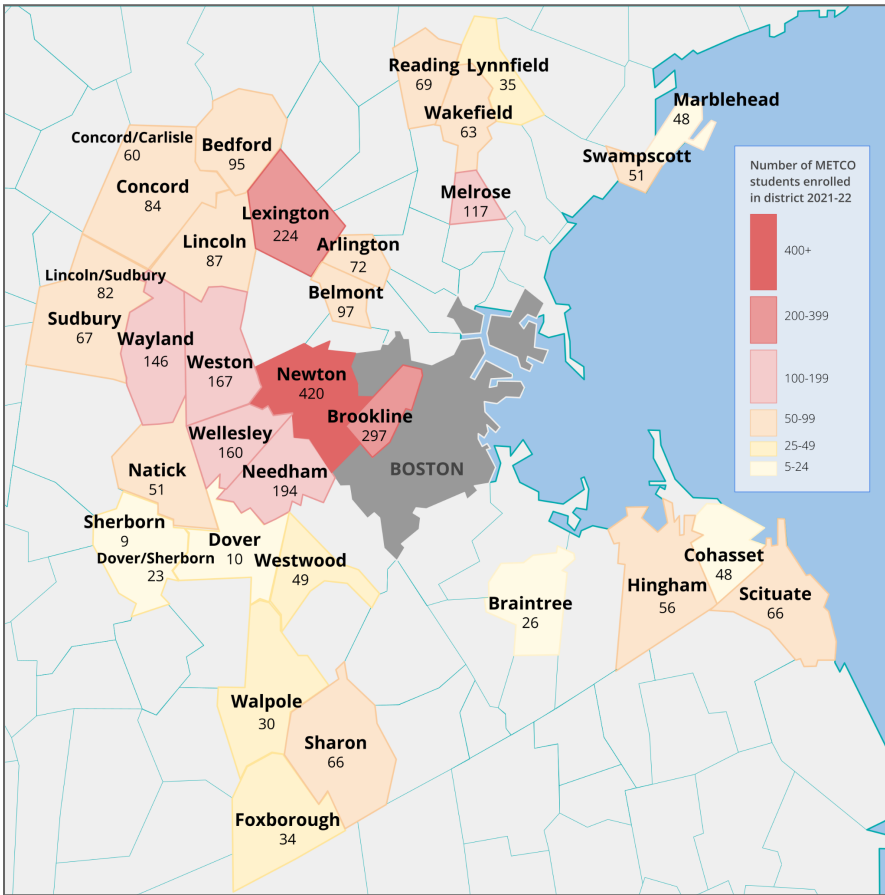
Please endorse funding in the amount of \$32.2 million (a \$2.8 million increase over last year) to support students, deepen equity work, meet increased expenses, and expand enrollment in participating districts.

MEET INCREASED EXPENSES	4.5% inflation adjustment
Professional, well-trained, and reliable staff are central to METCO’s success. Major workforce shifts due to COVID, transportation contract increases, and the ongoing rise in costs due to inflation mean that retaining existing staff and filling open positions continues to be competitive and expensive. We are requesting a 4.5% inflation increase over last year’s funding to align with other education funding annual adjustments in the state. We are also seeking “Prior Authorization Continued” (PAC) language to allow METCO funds to be spent through the end of the calendar year . The ability to use funds that went unspent due to unforeseen circumstances (such as labor shortages) will allow districts to plan for and implement early summer and fall programming to address needs.	
SUPPORT STUDENTS	
Being a METCO student is both rewarding and challenging. While students are getting an excellent education, they are often lacking additional support to mitigate the gaps created by geography and life experiences. That plus the documented progress lost to COVID has created notable academic and social/emotional setbacks affecting student success. Enhanced academic support before, during, and after school will help alleviate that learning loss and improve educational achievement. Access to clinical mental health professionals will enable youth to navigate across these divides while forming a positive identity of their own.	
DEEPEN EQUITY WORK	\$500k
Last year, METCO districts used pilot funding from the Commonwealth to launch programming specifically designed to target racial gaps within our network of 33 school districts. METCO Headquarters engaged consultants to formulate network-wide assessment tools and best practice systems . With those in place, the vital next step is implementation. Continued funding will support racial equity initiatives and programming aligned with the newly created METCO Blueprint and Continuum of Practice , which includes equity audits and professional development in antiracism, anti bias and culturally responsive teaching.	
EXPAND ENROLLMENT	\$1 million
Six partner school districts have expressed a desire to expand their METCO program by 116 additional seats , pending increased funding to add buses and hire additional support staff. Some districts have previously only accepted students in middle school and want to start integrating classrooms in elementary school grades, giving students a more diverse learning community early on. Other districts have unused available seats across all grade levels and want to fill these openings with diverse students to improve racial isolation among suburban communities.	



Line Item 7010-0012

\$32.2 million for METCO



NUMBER OF METCO STUDENTS

3,103

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IMPACTED BY INTEGRATION IN ALL TOWNS

136,434

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

33

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

198

DEMOGRAPHICS

Black	64%
Hispanic/Latinx	26%
Asian	3%
White	1%
Other	6%

METCO Works!

METCO's track record speaks for itself.

The graduation and college attainment rates of METCO students are far above state averages. But METCO's impact extends beyond the classroom:

- Students, parents, and teachers of different backgrounds appreciate diversity and find common ground through shared experiences
- Lifelong friendships form between diverse students
- Young people are prepared to become global citizens
- Tens of thousands of METCO alumni are community leaders in business, government, and non-profit organizations

4-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE, 2022

