

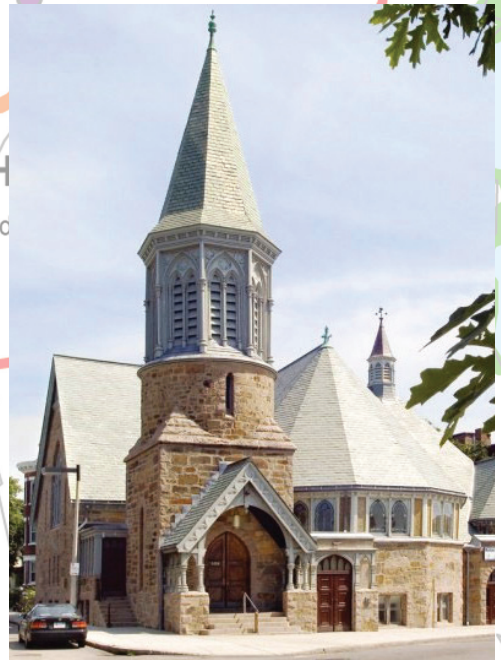
Boston Public Schools and Faith-Based Institutions

Sharing a Commitment to Help All Children
Reach their Fullest Potential



 **BOSTON**
Public Schools
Focus on Children

En The Office of Community Engagement and the Circle of Promise (CECoP) is the catalyst to expand the participation of families, students, school leaders, and faith and community members that leads to the improvement of Boston Public Schools and optimizes educational opportunities for all students.



Boston Public Schools



We take great pleasure in recognizing the shared ground between our Boston Public Schools and the Greater Boston faith community in our concern for the academic achievement of all students. We eagerly invite you to consider supporting our students in ways that keep us focused on their academic progress to high school graduation, college completion, and expansive career opportunities.

Our students and families are depending on all of us – schools, businesses, colleges/universities, secular non-profit and community based organizations, and your faith-based institutions – to work together for their success. Please join in a collaborative effort to make such success an enduring reality.

With thanks,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol R. Johnson".

Carol R. Johnson, Ed.D.
Superintendent,
Boston Public Schools

HISTORICALLY, FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS—including churches, mosques, synagogues, and other religious centers and coalitions—have been committed to helping children to reach their full potential. Boston Public Schools (BPS) recognizes that the Greater Boston faith community continues today in this legacy and, as a result, includes within the BPS Acceleration Agenda an effort to invite faith-based institutions to partner with our schools toward increased student achievement.

Our initiative begins within the **Circle of Promise**, a geographic area of Boston designated by Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Superintendent Carol R. Johnson that encompasses Roxbury, North Dorchester, some parts of Jamaica Plain, and the South End. It includes 47 schools at every level: early learning, elementary, middle, K-8, and high schools. Within this Circle, the **BPS Office of Community Engagement and the Circle of Promise (CECoP)** fosters school and faith-based institution partnerships through building relationships and aligning school needs with available or developing faith-based resources. In addition, CECOP strengthens formed partnerships through technical assistance, workshops/trainings, and collaborative school and faith-based community meetings.

This brief guide is a resource for schools and faith-based institutions alike. It relies on CECOP's cumulative learning from interviews with leaders of partnering institutions, literature reviews of cases, articles, and publications local and abroad, and practical experiences in initiating and supporting such partnerships.



Nathan Hale Elementary School principal Sandra Mitchell-Woods addresses the annual BPS School and Faith-Based Institution Partnerships meeting in May 2011 at Twelfth Baptist Church.

Circle of Promise

Partner Profile: People's Baptist Church of Boston

People's Baptist Church of Boston has held a strong commitment to partnering with and supporting Boston Public Schools in the past and present. In 2005, People's Baptist partnered with **North River Community Church** of Pembroke, Mass. for a "40 Days of Community Service Campaign," whereby together they supported the **Henry L. Higginson Elementary School** and the **Mattahunt Elementary School** through various service activities, such as clothing/uniform and book drives and beautifying the school interior and grounds.



Today, People's Baptist and North River partner with the **James P. Timilty Middle School**, where their members provide tutoring and mentoring for students, sponsor academic-based field trips, and work to further engage parents in their children's education. Together, they also fundraise to support the costs of student computers and teacher trainings in instructional technology.

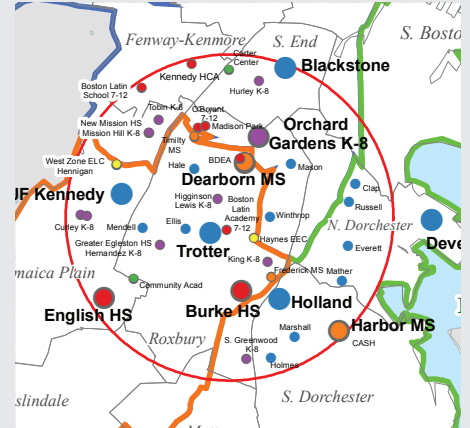
What about the separation of church and state?

Many concerns about the separation of church and state can be addressed by following a few simple guidelines:

1. Make sure that all programs and activities have a secular purpose.
2. Select student participants without regard to religious affiliation.
3. Allow students the free expression of their religion, provided the speech takes place within the reasonable limits of orderliness.
4. Refrain from participating in student-led religious activities while operating in your capacity in the educational activity.
5. Encourage civic values and positive character development without sharing directly about your faith.

Primary source: Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, "How Faith Communities Support Children's Learning in Public Schools," U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D. C., 1999

Circle of Promise Schools



Blackstone Elementary
Boston Day and Evening
Boston Latin Academy
Boston Latin School
Burke High
Carter Center
Community Academy of
Science and Health
(CASH)
Clap Innovation School
Community Academy
Curley K-8
Dearborn Middle
Dever*/McCormack K-8
Ellis Elementary
English High
Everett Elementary
Frederick Pilot Middle
Greater Egleston High
E. Greenwood Leadership
Academy*
Hale Elementary
Harbor Pilot Middle
Haynes EEC
Hennigan Elementary
Hernandez K-8
Higginson/Lewis K-8
Holland Elementary

Holmes Elementary
Hurley K-8
J. F. Kennedy Elementary
Kennedy Academy for Health
Careers
King K-8
Madison Park High
Marshall Elementary
Mason Elementary
Mather Elementary
Mendell Elementary
Mission Hill K-8
New Mission High
O'Bryant School of Math &
Science
Orchard Gardens K-8
Russell Elementary
S. Greenwood K-8
Timilty Middle
Tobin K-8
Trotter Elementary
West Zone ELC
Winthrop Elementary

* These schools are outside the Circle of Promise but are included because they have Turnaround status.

Categories of Faith-Based Institution

Academic

engaging volunteers to support academic learning: school-based tutoring and classroom support, mentoring and tutoring programs, after-school homework support, “read-ins” where adults share their favorite book with students



A volunteer from the **Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy (GBJCL)** reads with a student at the **Nathan Hale Elementary School** in Roxbury. The GBJCL of the Jewish Community Relations Council sends more than 200 volunteers to 20 Boston public schools to participate in weekly in-school tutoring and reading.



College and Career

engaging volunteers to increase student access to post-secondary education and career opportunities: support and guidance to high school juniors and seniors to submit college and scholarship applications, college tours and career days to visit professionals on the job, resume writing, and interview workshops

Pastor Sam Acevedo, Executive Director of the Boston Higher Education Resource Center (HERC) of **Congregación León de Judá** (Congregation Lion of Judah), poses with students from the **Josiah Quincy Upper School** during a college visit to the campus of the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The Boston HERC annually serves more than 1,000 students, providing tutoring, SAT preparation, college counseling, and an intensive two-year college preparation program called “Passport”.



Together, the **Roxbury Presbyterian Church Social Impact Center (SIC)**, **Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO)**, and **Trinity Boston Foundation** organize parents at the **Henry Dearborn Middle School** for increased involvement in their students' education. These institutions also support the Dearborn in STEM learning, Saturday programs, tutoring programs, and the Trinity Education for Excellence (TEEP) summer program.

Parents and Family

engaging volunteers to support parents and increase their engagement with school: encouragement for parents to become more deeply involved in school parent councils and decision-making, provision of childcare at schools during meetings, organization of parent workshops to support student learning, clothing drives, food pantries, adult basic education/ESL opportunities, job training, and free and reduced-priced youth and recreation programs in faith-based settings

Partnerships with Schools

Health and Wellness

engaging volunteers to promote the social and emotional wellbeing of students: crisis-intervention during family and community emergencies, youth mentoring programs, gender-based guidance groups, conflict resolution, and positive behavior role modeling



Generation Excel, Inc. of Bethel A.M.E. Church partners with **The English High School** to provide cultural support groups and therapeutic group services to enhance students' healthy decision making and life management skills. Topics explored in these groups include positive masculinity, self-identity, and personal accountability.



Volunteers from **St. Stephen's Episcopal Church** label books for the **Blackstone Elementary School's** Annual Service Day. St. Stephen's partners with the Blackstone on a number of projects, including creating and staffing the school library, maintaining the school greenhouse, organizing reading celebrations, and hosting an after school program at their church site which extends the daytime curriculum and homework expectations.

Resource and Capacity

engaging volunteers to provide material, financial, service, and human resources and service projects, to build the school's capacity to educate students: development and staffing of a library, fundraisers and event planning, beautification and landscaping of playgrounds and outdoor learning spaces, sharing of space at faith institution facilities for gatherings or programs, sharing of vans for student transportation to learning activities



After-school and Recreation

engaging volunteers to provide enrichment and positive alternative activities for students: enrichment and after school programs, including music and arts, sports and recreation, and hosting "teen cafés" on weekend evenings offering movies, games, and poetry jams

GRASP, Inc., an affiliate site of the **Black Ministerial Alliance Victory Generation Out-of-School Time Program**, provides opportunities for many high quality after school activities at the **Marshall Elementary School**. These include academic enrichment, tutoring, and recreational activities such as arts and crafts, performing arts, and sports and recreation. The BMA Victory Generation manages a network of after-school programs to provide academic, enrichment, and healthy programming for BPS students.

Creating a Faith Institution /

STEP 1 Assess Your Institution

Assess...

- Interest and source of motivation to partner
- Any questions regarding school and faith-based institution partnerships
- Your existing or developmental capacity to provide support and resources to schools, students, and families (for faith-based partners) or your pressing needs for resources and support toward increased academic achievement (for schools)
- Your internal capacity to build and sustain a healthy, long-term partnership

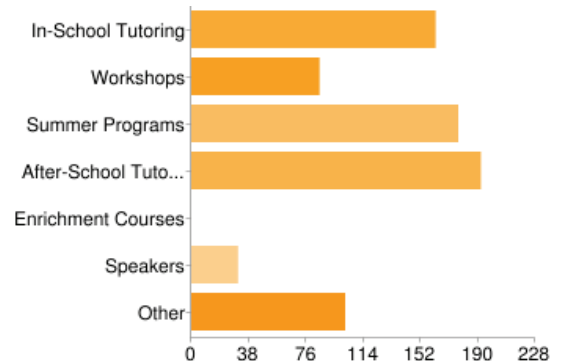
STEP 2 Identify And Communicate With Potential Partners

1. Identify schools/institutions that reside in the immediate vicinity of your institution, have an aligned match between your school needs or your available institution resources, and/or have members who are also a part of your institution.
2. Initiate contact with the identified potential partner and schedule a meeting for the leaders of the institutions to meet to learn about each other's institution and to consider partnership. Be sure to have completed an assessment of your own institution first.
3. Discuss again school needs and faith-based resources to discover existing common areas for support or to consider resources that the faith-institution may develop to target existing school needs. Evaluate the leadership style of each institution to determine whether there is reasonable congruence to accommodate working together.
4. Following this initial meeting and after a period of consideration, schedule a subsequent meeting to determine whether to partner. Begin drafting the content of the agreement between the school and the faith institution describing how they will work together.

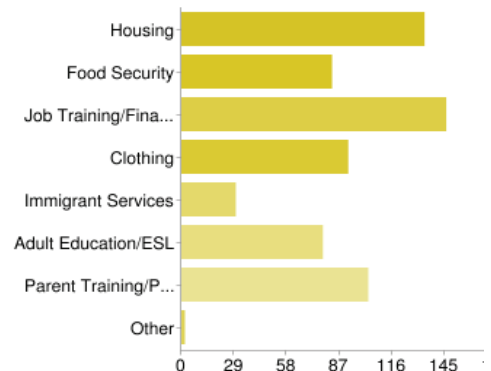
Fall 2011 Family Needs Survey Results

In the fall of 2011, CECop asked Boston Public Schools families, "What type of supports and resources would be most helpful for your child?" The following survey results represent the responses

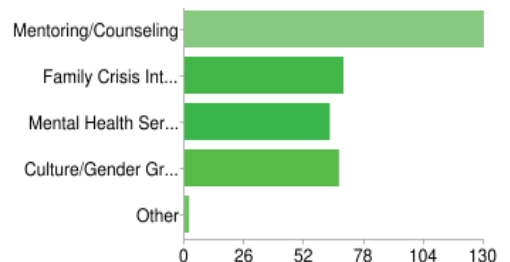
ACADEMIC



PARENT & FAMILY



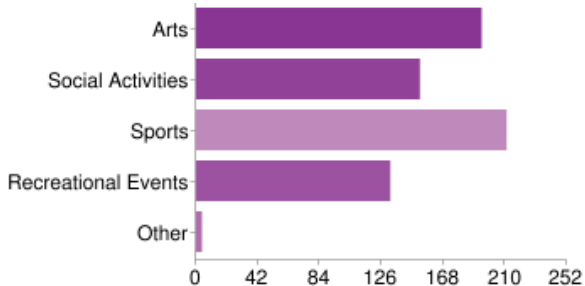
HEALTH & WELLNESS



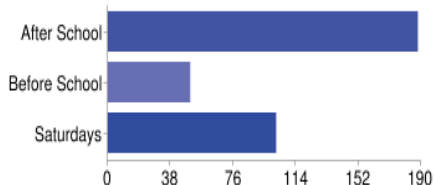
School Partnership, Step by Step

of approximately 400 families from various schools, grade levels, ages, racial demographics, and neighborhoods.

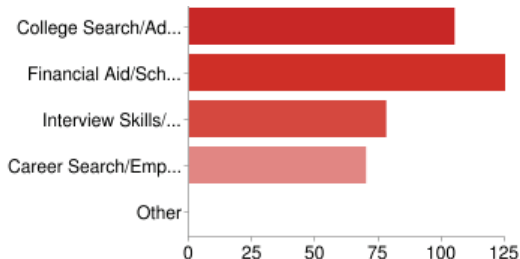
PROGRAMS & RECREATION



Please also indicate:



COLLEGE & CAREER



STEP 3 Build A Sustainable Partnership

1. Form a partnership committee within each institution led by a person other than the chief executive of the institution (a person other than, for example, the rabbi, pastor, priest or principal)
2. Form a partnership steering committee with members from each institution to create a vision for the partnership that also honors the individual school and faith institution that support the goals of the Boston Public Schools Acceleration Agenda.
3. Set short- and long-term goals for the partnership. Build trust and capacity through beginning with small projects and expanding your engagement in scope and number as you experience successes.
4. Organize teams responsible for the operations, resource development, communication, and program evaluation of partnership activities.
5. Compile a memorandum of understanding among the school, faith institution, and BPS Office of Community Engagement and Circle of Promise to ensure that each is clear on the expectations and boundaries of the partnership in moving forward.
6. Implement effective and high quality program activities:
 - Sufficient request and allocation of human, financial, and material resources
 - Adequate marketing and public relations
 - Timely monitoring of program activities
 - Reporting on the development of the partnership to the BPS Office of Community Engagement and Circle of Promise
7. Conduct ongoing evaluation of the partnership:
 - Measure and report progress towards the achievement of planned outcomes and objectives.
 - Modify plans based on results and feedback.
 - Expand the scope and/or number of activities based on successful implementation of activities.

STEP 4 Professionally Develop Other Schools/Faith Institutions

- Reach out to other schools and faith-based institutions to share the history, successes, challenges, and best practices of your partnership.
- Invite additional faith-institutions to partner with the same school to increase the level of resources to support the school, students, and families, toward increased student academic achievement.

The Acceleration Agenda

The Acceleration Agenda is the Boston Public Schools' ambitious, five-year strategic plan to ensure all students achieve MCAS proficiency, close access and achievement gaps, and graduate all students from high school prepared for college and career success.

Targets by 2014 include:

- Reading by the end of Grade 1
- Reading to learn in Grade 3
- Skillful, analytical writing in Grades 4-12
- Algebra 1 in Grade 8
- English Language Learners acquire academic language mastery and fluency
- Significant academic growth for students with disabilities
- "On-track" to graduate by the end of Grade 10
- College-ready and success-bound



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The Many Faces of Boston Public Schools/ Faith Institution Partnerships

ACADEMIC

Hale Elementary School holds a partnership with **Twelfth Baptist Church** of Roxbury, whereby the partnership includes the school showcasing student's learning and academic achievements to the church's large audience. **First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church** of Dorchester partners with the **Mather Elementary School**, whereby members participate in a daytime tutoring initiative led by a UU community minister and donate learning materials and resources to designated classrooms.

COLLEGE AND CAREER

Boston Higher Education Resource Center partners with the **Jeremiah Burke High School** to provide the college preparatory "Passport" program, and with the **Higginson-Lewis K-8 School** to lead the City Passage Mentoring program. Volunteers from **Old South Church** of Boston tutor students at **Snowden International High School** to both support their work in high school and help them to prepare to excel in college

PARENT AND FAMILY

Dominion Christian Church of Boston partners with the **John P. Holland Elementary School** to encourage and support family gatherings, along with participating in the "Real Men Read" program which brings men from the community to read to Holland students in various classrooms to promote literacy.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Charles Street A.M.E Church of Roxbury, in collaboration with **Wellesley Congregational Church** of Wellesley, MA, partners with the **Martin Luther King, Jr. K-8 School** to lead the "Kings of the King" boys' mentoring program. This joint partnership also includes organization of a reading program where church members, community participants, and elected officials read their favorite books to the students of the King K-8 on designated days.

RESOURCE AND CAPACITY

The **Maurice Tobin K-8 School** partners with **Boston Jewish Spirit**, where synagogue volunteers participate in the annual Tobin Spring Clean-Up days and manage the "Tobin Reading Buddies" program. Similarly, the **City Mission Society** provides the **William Russell Elementary School** with tangible resources, including clothing for families during the school's annual coat giveaway.

PROGRAMS AND RECREATION

Fourth Presbyterian Church in South Boston runs an after school theater program in partnership with the **Perkins Elementary School**. Many students from the **Jeremiah Burke High School** are a part of the **Catholic Charities Teen Center** located at St. Peter's Catholic Church, where students participate in sports, dance, fashion shows, cultural activities, community service projects, and special field trips.