







## The Start of Something BIG

Fiscal Year 2018 was an exciting one at Boston Partners in Education, full of growth and change. Our long-time Executive Director, Pamela Civins, said goodbye after twelve years of service and we welcomed Erin McGrath, our Program Director, to fill this leadership role. We grew the number of dedicated academic mentors by over 10%, thanks to compelling new outreach strategies, including our MBTA ad campaign, The Best Hour of Your Week. As you read this report, you'll see stories from mentors about their best hours working with students in classrooms every week, and the growth and change they saw in those scholars.

As always, we supported students in every grade in the Boston Public Schools, but we sharpened our focus in two areas - early education and STEM

(science, technology, engineering and math) support. Motivate, our program focusing on early education, was in high demand from teachers across the district, increasing the number of classrooms we support and helping the youngest members of the Boston Public Schools community to build a strong educational foundation.

Aim High STEM was another program that enjoyed significant growth, preparing our scholars for a future as part of the growing technology economy in Boston and beyond. One particularly exciting partnership we began to develop this year is with the Burke High School's Science Club. Just a few vears old, the club utilizes mentors from all over the city to help its members develop projects for the city-wide science fair.

All of this growth is possible because many people worked together to make it happen. Our generous donors provided the funds we needed to create new campaigns and reach more potential mentors. School partners strengthened their commitment to helping us connect more quickly with teachers and students. Our mentors, citizens of Greater Boston who served the students and teachers of the Boston Public Schools every week, volunteered in greater numbers than ever. Through their efforts we grew the circle of support for the young people in our community and improved their chances for academic and social success. We cannot thank them enough for their commitment.

This fall, Boston Partners in Education was recognized by Harvard University's Community Action Partners (CAP) as an organization worthy of engagement. We are honored to have begun work with one of their distinguished alumni teams to develop a new three-year strategic plan, creating a road map for our future.

We hope to move into that future together with all our teachers, mentors, supporters, and partners those who believe in the power of a united community. Together we can make a difference one student, one classroom, one school at a time.

Frin M. McGrath **Executive Director**  Michael V. McKenna **Board Chair** 

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# **Our Programs**



#### Motivate Grades Pre-K-2

Motivate mentors support a whole classroom of students in grades pre-K-2, helping to run activities and smooth transition time. Volunteers get real-world classroom experience, setting positive examples for good behavior, while offering teachers the resource they need most: an extra set of hands.



Accelerate
Grades K-8

Students in grades K–8 are building their academic, social, and emotional skills – and some need extra support. Through one-on-one or small group sessions during classroom time, Accelerate mentors work with students who have been nominated by their teacher as needing to build skills, motivation, and interest in ELA and math.



Aim High Grades 9-12

To bridge gaps in skills and knowledge, Aim High volunteers support students in grades 9-12 with the extra push highschoolers need. Individualized attention, either one-on-one or in small groups of two to four offers soon-to-be graduates the self-confidence and engagement they need to finish school strong.



Power Lunch Grades K-3

Power Lunch is Boston's premier early literacy enrichment program for students in grades K-3. Power Lunch reading mentors serve as a role model and friend, providing guidance in school while encouraging an enthusiasm for books and reading. Mentors and students read aloud, play word games and, of course, have fun!



**Big Cheese Reads** 

Grades 5-8

The Big Cheese Reads initiative introduces business, community, and cultural leaders to middle school students in the Boston Public Schools through a one-time classroom visit. These "Big Cheeses" read to students and share personal experiences that emphasize the importance of literacy and learning to career success.



### **Motivate**

Former BPS teacher and current BPS Director of Teacher Development Shakera Walker stays connected to the classroom through our Motivate program. As a mentor, she volunteers once a week to work with a classroom of Kindergarten students at the Winthrop Elementary School in Roxbury. Shakera has been a Boston Partners volunteer for four years now, and has returned to work in the same classroom with the same teacher — ToRena Webb-Thomas — each year.

"Being back in the classroom gives me the opportunity to really utilize some of the skills and knowledge that I gained as a classroom teacher," says Shakera. "Serving as an academic mentor has enabled me to draw upon those things when I'm working with children. It feels like I'm actually serving in a meaningful way and investing in one of our many schools — in a way that is intended to support children and teachers as well.

Just today a student sitting next to me said, 'I can't make a K.' I try to help them think about language that's not in a deficit mode, so it's not that you can't make a K, it's: 'I'm not yet able to make a K.' Two minutes later, sure enough, after I modeled it he was able to make two K's. I was proud to know that I helped a student build confidence in himself and motivated him to persevere despite the challenges."



We increased the number of Motivate students served by 54%, jumping from 560 to 862 in 2017-18

### **Accelerate**

Students in Kristie McElhaney's fourth/fifth grade class smile with anticipation as Accelerate mentor Peter Olive holds up math flash cards. They've practiced these problems before, so they're confident they can arrive at the answers.

Peter uses these flash cards to reinforce the students' basic math skills — ones that need to be refined before they can progress with the lesson of the day: the placement of decimal points. As the lesson begins, Peter sits with Will and Jaylen, the two students he's been mentoring for the past year. The pair are excitable, so part of Peter's role as a mentor is to ensure that they are hearing the lesson and understanding it.

The special attention Peter provides has helped him to build a rapport with Will and Jaylen that's improved their focus over the year. They're not only better able to pay attention to his flash cards, but to Ms. McElhaney's daily math lessons, too.

With Peter's help, Will and Jaylen have made tremendous progress on their classroom behavior and academic participation. "Jaylen was participating in the math lesson about 20% of the time," Ms. McElhaney estimates. "After a few weeks of tutoring with Mr. Olive, Jaylen was participating about 90% of the time."



94% percent of Accelerate teachers reported the program was "excellent" or "good" at improving students' academic performance





# **Aim High**

When Antonio left middle school to attend the Boston Arts Academy in Dorchester, the transition into high school was jarring. During his first semester, Antonio had trouble focusing on his new classwork — math especially. When things became too difficult, he was determined to take the solution in his own hands, and he knew that there was someone he could call for help.

For two years during middle school, Antonio worked with Ty Rabe, a mentor from Boston Partners in Education. Antonio recalled that Ty had given him the extra attention he needed to focus, so he reached out to Boston Partners: "I wanted to work with Ty again because I could tell that I was struggling," said Antonio. "I didn't want to lie and say that I didn't need help. So, I asked Ty if he could come back."

Antonio was reunited with Ty a few weeks later — this time through our Aim High program at his new high school. The pair quickly picked up where they left off. Their sessions together focus on building the attention skills Antonio will need to get his work done the rest of the week.

With Ty by his side, Antonio continues to make steady progress in math, too — a giant step towards getting himself back on track.



100% of Aim High students reported that their mentor made them feel like they could succeed in school



# **Big Cheese Reads**

As the Vice President of Denterlein, a public relations and strategic communications firm in Boston, Tully Nicholas is no stranger to public speaking or high-pressure situations.

But getting in front of a class of eighthgraders for the first time is a different story. "I'm not going to lie, I'm a little nervous," Tully admits before taking part in her first Big Cheese Reading at the McKay K-8 School.

Tully is one of over 100 Big Cheese Readers — corporate and community leaders from our city — to join us in the classroom this year to speak with middle school students about the importance of literacy. While the initiative is designed to give "Big Cheeses" the opportunity to introduce students to new career options, the students often make just as big an impression on the readers.

"It's such a rewarding experience, just getting to meet the kids who will be future leaders of our city," says Tully. "The best part is the Q&A.They'll ask you about college and your career, but also about your fears and doubts. You get to be real with them — if you're not, they see right through you."



95% of teachers rated the Big Cheese Reads initiative as "excellent" or "very good"





### **Power Lunch**

For nearly 15 years, Westfield Capital Management employees have been reading to elementary students in the Boston Public Schools through our Power Lunch program. Once a week, several Westfield employees trade lunch time in the office for lunch time in the classroom, where they build a relationship with students through books.

Since 2004, Westfield President and Chief Investment Officer Will Muggia has been instrumental in connecting his staff to our Power Lunch opportunities. Over the years, more than 30 Westfield employees have served as Power Lunch volunteers, including six this school year.

Several Westfield employees — like Power Lunch partners Scott Emerman and John Montgomery — have continued to serve as inclass academic mentors for over a decade!

While students and mentors typically focus on practicing reading during sessions, it's the bond that's formed at weekly meetings that makes Power Lunch truly special.

"I think more than anything else, what's rewarding is we're doing something good for kids, helping them inspire a love for reading," says Scott.



91% of teachers said that Power Lunch was "excellent" or "good" at improving students' self confidence

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"It is so rewarding to help children in need receive the extra help and attention they need that will truly affect their day to day social skills and help them to become more rounded students and ultimately successful adults."

- Boston Partners in Education donor

# Supporters, Continued

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# **Greg Mahar: Modeling the Steps to Success**

Greg Mahar's height is written on the whiteboard in front of Stephanie Tham's third grade class at the Josiah Quincy Elementary School. It's being used as a way to create a word problem for the students, but it's also a sign from Ms. Tham that Greg has become an important and trusted member of the class. Despite only being in the room for one hour a week, Greg has become an essential element to Ms. Tham's work as an educator; as a model academic mentor, Greg has the proven ability to take students who are falling behind and help them achieve. In fact, last year, Greg's student, Anna, went from being unable to solve simple multiplication problems to earning the highest test scores in her class.

What makes Greg a valuable member of the classroom is that, as an experienced mentor and older brother, he intuitively understands the steps that can most help his students excel:

#### 1. Work closely with the teacher.

Before Greg sits down with his student, Ms. Tham takes him aside to go over the day's activities. This brief check-in goes a long way towards making sure everyone is on the same page.

There are several ways to approach math problems, so Greg and Ms. Tham work together to ensure that what he is teaching the children is consistent with Ms. Tham's lesson. "What I like about Greg is that he's using the same strategy that I am," says Ms. Tham. "So, if I'm using a number line, and I'm asking the kids to use the same strategy, he'll remind the kids to use the number line. He's reiterating what I'm trying to teach. He, in a sense, is also a student in here."

#### 2. Meet the student where they are.

An academic mentor with Boston Partners since 2016, Greg has worked with a number of students who have faced very different challenges. One of his previous students was talkative and easily distracted, which meant Greg was there to help her focus on her work. The following year, Greg was matched with Anna, who was very shy and lacked confidence. Greg focused instead on teasing out the knowledge, and letting Anna find joy and confidence in success.

Finding out what a student needs is an important step, and that means building a relationship. Greg says it's important to be careful and avoid discouragement. "If you throw too much at them too quickly or give them too difficult a problem, or if you make it seem like you're disappointed in them when they give a wrong answer, it will discourage them. I keep pulling back little by little. They don't need to get it all on their own

right away. It's important to be positive and keep their spirits up."

When talking about his mentoring approach, Greg emphasizes that friendship and respect are at the core of his philosophy:

"Students will take what you're telling them a lot more seriously if you show you value them, if you treat them with respect. You have to treat them like adults. You have to treat them as equals."

#### 3. Build their confidence.

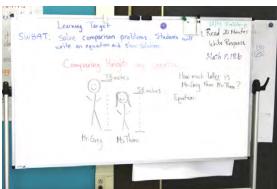
Both Greg and Ms. Tham agree that building confidence is the most crucial step to student achievement. Greg uses Anna as an example to show how building confidence can unlock the knowledge that is already there: "She needed help with her multiplication tables, so I started with multiples of 4. She was having trouble with 4 x 2. I was trying to ease her into it and it seemed like she knew the answer."

Greg began to bring flash cards to the class and used them when he and Anna were done with the day's work. Gradually, Anna began to get used to giving the answers more quickly and confidently. "She found the confidence in her own skills and realized that she did know these answers."

Ms. Tham elaborates on how Greg accomplishes this with his students: "He's just so encouraging. He's always giving them high fives and saying, 'you got it!' The kids are much more confident and comfortable, because they know they are going to get help. They know that whatever the problem is, it's going to be solved and it's going to be right."

By mastering these steps, Greg has established the type of mentoring relationship with students that pushes beyond academics. "At the end of last year my student gave me a card which she made on her lunch break," he recalls. "I still have it on my desk. It says 'Dear Mr. Greg, thank you for helping me with my math!"









By working closely with Ms. Tham and paying careful attention to her students' needs, Greg Mahar has become a model academic mentor in her third grade class.







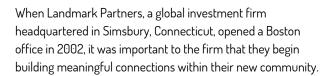
Since 2016, Boston 25 News has helped raise the profile for our academic mentoring services as the official media partner of Boston Partners in Education. More than ten Boston 25 employees have served as Big Cheese Readers to middle school students, while notable reporters like Kerry Kavanaugh, Crystal Haynes, and Litsa Pappas have committed to visiting the classroom each week as in-class academic mentors.

"Being a volunteer is one of the best hours of my week," said Kerry. "I think every student is smart, every student has a voice. Sometimes they just need a little help finding it."

In addition, Boston 25 News continues to leverage its platform as a trusted local news source to help Boston Partners promote the value of in-class mentoring through media.

Boston 25 anchor Vanessa Welch has twice served as emcee at our annual Big Cheese Reads Gala. Vanessa and Kerry have also filmed public service announcements in support of academic mentorship. This year, meteorologist Sarah Wroblewski helped us highlight the role mentors play in preparing students from the Burke High School Science Club to compete in the city-wide Science Fair.

# LANDMARK PARTNERS



Ira Shaw, a Partner at Landmark, was working to create an environment that promotes volunteerism and community engagement when he learned about Boston Partners in Education in 2013. He began volunteering in the classroom and quickly encouraged his employees to get involved, too.

Today, seven professionals from all ranks of Landmark's 20-member Boston-based team volunteer as academic mentors to Boston Public Schools students. Landmark continues to serve as a model example of companies supporting workday volunteerism from the top down. In 2018, Landmark further supported its employees and Boston Partners in Education through its first corporate sponsorship of our annual Big Cheese Reads Gala.

Through our partnership, Landmark has found a unique opportunity to establish meaningful roots within the Boston community, invest in the academic achievement of BPS students, and support the volunteer efforts of employees.



In 1999, Salesforce pioneered the 1-1-1 Model of Integrated Philanthropy that still dictates their giving today: pledge 1% of corporate time, earnings, and product to the community. Since establishing a partnership with Salesforce in 2006, we've been a beneficiary of all three.

Initially, Salesforce Executive Vice President John Durocher connected our organizations — when he joined Boston Partners' Board of Directors in 2006, he helped Boston Partners secure a product donation from Salesforce.org to upgrade our database system. Yet what began as an implementation of the Salesforce CRM has blossomed into one of our most impactful corporate partnerships.

John has since leveraged support from the highest levels of the company. More than 20 Salesforce executives and employees — including Co-CEO Keith Block — have donated their time volunteering as Big Cheese Readers in middle school classrooms.

In 2018, Salesforce expanded its generous financial support for our mentoring services as the presenting sponsor at the 14th annual Big Cheese Reads Gala.

# **Financials**

### BOSTON PARTNERS IN EDUCATION, INC.

Statement of Activities For the Year Ended August 31, 2018

Assets		Change in Net Assets	Unrestricted	Temp. Restricted	Total
CURRENT ASSETS		SUPPORT AND REVENUE			
Cash and cash equivalents Promises to give, current portion Fundrasing inventory Total Current Assets	\$ 478,979 \$ 73,365 \$162,500 \$ 714,844	Grants and contributions In-kind operating support Program fees Special events Less: direct costs	\$487,132 \$16,630 \$70,400 \$659,773 (\$151,361)	\$287,500 - - - -	\$774,632 \$16,630 \$70,400 \$659,773 (\$151,361)
NONCURRENT ASSETS		Net revenue from special event	\$508,412	-	\$508,412
Promises to give, net of current portion FIXED ASSETS		Other income Interest Total Support and Revenue	\$236 <u>\$920</u> \$1,083,730	- - \$287,500	\$236 \$920 \$1,371,230
Equipment Less: accumulated depreciation Net Fixed Assets	\$30,488 (\$22,962) \$7,526	EXPENSES  Program services:	\$239,818		\$239,818
INTANGIBLE ASSETS  Web site  Less: accumulated amortization	\$88,330 (\$52,998)	Accelerate Aim High The Big Cheese Reads Motivate	\$241,406 \$144,723 \$100,432 <u>\$119,512</u>	- - - -	\$241,406 \$144,723 \$100,432 \$119,512
Net Intangible Assets Total Assets	\$35,332 \$957,702	Power Lunch Total Program Services	<u>\$845,891</u>	-	\$845,891
Net Assets NET ASSETS		Supporting services:  Management and general  Fundraising	\$96,712 \$241,176	- -	\$96,712 \$241,176
Unrestricted Temporarily restricted	\$670,202 \$287,500	Total Supporting Services Total Expenses Change in Net Assets	\$337,888 \$1,183,779 (\$100,049)	- - \$287,500	\$337,888 \$1,183,779 \$187,451
Total Net Assets	\$957,702	Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$770,251	-	\$770,251
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$957,702 	Net Assets End of Year	\$670,202	\$287,500	\$957,702





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