

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



2014 GOVERNOR'S RACE

*EXCERPT; PROGRESSIVE MASSACHUSETTS ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
RESPONSES (SECTION II, PART B)*

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EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

[Section B.] Public education has always been a gateway to opportunity and mobility for all, regardless of economic circumstances, a cornerstone of the American dream for all residents. However, the soaring price of higher education over the last several decades has made access to this opportunity increasingly out of reach, at the very moment when higher education makes a greater difference to one's economic future. Meanwhile, powerful corporate interests have been steadily undermining public school teachers and unions and siphoning money from our public K-12 system.

Statement/Experience

[Questions B1/B2] Please share your personal values and principles regarding public education and workforce training. SUGGESTED TOPICS: What value does public education and workforce development have in improving our economy as well as in addressing matters of economic justice? What measures should the Commonwealth take on these issues? You might address, for example, charter schools, school vouchers, standardized testing and federal programs like No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top.

DON BERWICK

Education is the cornerstone for a successful Commonwealth. No matter what you care most about – health, job growth, civic responsibility, livable communities, or public safety – the cause-and-effect pathways will lead you back to our schools. And the core moral values that I want to help nurture – social justice, equality, fairness, mutual respect, and compassion – find foundation in the way we educate ourselves and our children.

The key to success in education is clear to me. It is a proud, capable, respected, and fully supported teacher workforce. Teachers want to be agents of improvement, and I will ensure that they have every resource and support necessary to be that. In health care, commerce, and education, alike, excellence surfaces only in institutional cultures built on teamwork, collaboration, and total involvement, not on “carrot-and-stick” management or enforced compliance with simplistic standards.

Among other initiatives, I have outlined the following specific proposals:

- **Universal access to pre-kindergarten:** ensuring that children enter school ready to learn. Early support programs need to be available to every single Massachusetts child who can benefit from them. Research says that such programs, when properly run, return \$4 to \$9 in economic benefit for every dollar invested.
- **Improvement in the preparation of new teachers:** strengthening teacher certification programs with strong hands-on components, and stronger teacher preparation models that put beginning professionals in contact with seasoned experts over a multi-year period of apprenticeship.
- **Creation of a new, cabinet-level position:** to facilitate total cooperation among state agencies, cities and towns, and families in fostering child health and wellbeing to the age of five – the most critical years.
- Finding innovative solutions to raise college completion rates in low income communities—I will implement a program based on best practices from around the nation that provides college counseling in high school



and “last dollar” scholarships to college for low income students who work hard and stay in school. Such a program will show low-income students that the promise of higher education is within their reach, provide them the skills and supports they need to succeed in a post-secondary environment, and then deliver on the promise to supply the resources that are not available elsewhere.

MARTHA COAKLEY

I am proud to be from Massachusetts, where our students routinely lead the world in academic achievement, but there are still far too many young people who are left behind and not given the opportunity to realize their full potential. If we want to ensure the long-term success of our Commonwealth, and give every resident the opportunity to thrive, it is critically important to improve our public education system so that every student has the best possible chance to succeed.

There are a number of steps we can take to create real improvements in educational outcomes for every student:

1. We need to provide universal access to high-quality early education, because we know that the foundation for success is laid early;
2. We need to extend the school day and school year, because schools need the flexibility to incorporate more time for targeted instruction, student enrichment, and professional development;
3. We need to work together with educators, industry leaders, and non-profits to better align school curricula with workforce needs and give students hands-on experiences; and
4. We need to do more to make higher education accessible for every young person.

Coakley/Related Experience

As Attorney General, we identified unfair and deceptive practices in the for-profit college industry. At a time when students are going further and further into debt, we brought actions against multiple for-profit colleges and proposed regulations to help students receive the benefits of their education that they were promised.

During my time as Attorney General and District Attorney, I have worked closely with coalitions of teachers, principals and school personnel to develop strategies to address bullying and help ensure a safe learning environment for our kids.

STEVE GROSSMAN

Educational achievement is the pathway to long-term economic growth and security. I will advocate for more funding for K-12 education along with increased funding for public higher education to aid our college students who are drowning in debt. I will also work to reduce class sizes and implement a longer school day for communities that want it. We also need to place greater emphasis on investing in our vocational-technical high schools, which are central to our plan to enhance advanced and precision manufacturing. We need to close the skills gap between our schools, our workforce, and our job market. I will address the challenge that far too often, government stands as a barrier to economic growth because it operates within



strict divisions of authority without first trying to build consensus and develop common-sense solutions across multiple agencies.

I will also launch a universal pre-kindergarten program for every four-year-old in Massachusetts, providing all students, no matter where they live and how much money they have, a fair shot at reading by the third grade.

Grossman/Related Experience/Record

As chairman of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), I recognize the importance of school building needs. Most of the Commonwealth's vocational-technical regional schools are more than 40 years old, and many lack high quality state of the art programs capable of serving youth and adults in an ever-changing economy.

In addition to great teachers, students also need great schools with great technology. I want to make every school in the Commonwealth digital learning ready by 2016 to bring every student, in every neighborhood, the 21st century learning environment they deserve.

When I took office as treasurer, we set out to drastically expand the state's financial literacy program. My colleagues in the legislature created the Financial Literacy Trust Fund in 2011. Soon after, we established a board to leverage public-private partnerships, attract contributions, and advance citizens' financial empowerment. We've set a priority to serve K-12 students, veterans, senior citizens, and low and moderate-income families.

JULIETTE KAYYEM

Our education system must not only prepare children for college, but needs to push further towards educating them for a career. With over 100,000 available jobs and over 240,000 unemployed residents, it is clear that our workforce is not prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow. To address public education in Massachusetts I would first work to better align learning objectives by promoting innovative instructional and school management practice, and promoting ambitious school quality standards from Pre-K through post secondary education. In addition to this I would create partnerships between school systems, higher education, business, and civic institutions that move education beyond school walls to create "anywhere, anytime" learning and developmental opportunities for Massachusetts students. Lastly, and most importantly, I would focus on closing the achievement gap (which I describe below).

Achievement Gaps

[Question B3.] What would you do to address persistent racial and economic achievement gaps in education?

Don Berwick

We can be proud of Massachusetts' high national ranking for performance in education. But major inequities exist among schools – especially between those in wealthy and disadvantaged communities, and I am committed to closing those gaps. Education in Massachusetts should be world class, across the board, and accessible to all.



We can't fire and hire our way out of this. Instead, I am committed to working with school districts and teachers' unions to invest in the support and continuing education necessary to make our teacher workforce the best in the world.

There are real examples of successful collaboration that led to turnarounds in Massachusetts. For example, through a partnership between the school district and the teachers' union, the Murkland Elementary School in Lowell transformed from underperforming to a level one school in 18 months. By working to nurture such partnerships, we can help struggling schools turn around.

I also support expanding pathways to graduation through vocational and technical education, on-the-job training, and increased access to early college.

Martha Coakley

In addition to the steps I mentioned above (universal access to early education, extended learning time), I believe it is critical that we provide schools with dedicated support counselors who can help students deal with out-of-school issues that can negatively impact their academic achievement, including hunger, homelessness, and violence.

In places where student achievement consistently lags behind, cities like Springfield, Lawrence, and Fall River, too many students are dealing with challenges associated with poverty and violence that make it nearly impossible to succeed in school. Giving students a resource in school whose only job is to help them deal with the challenges they face outside of school has a range of positive effects: it will enable students to focus more attention on school, it will take the burden off of teachers, many of whom currently serve as de-facto social workers, and it will improve outcomes in other areas, including health and violent crime.

Steve Grossman

First, I will launch a universal pre-kindergarten program and provide those children too often left behind – children with a single parent, children from immigrant families, and children from low-income families – with the resources they need to get ahead.

Second, I'll work to reduce class sizes and recruit talented teachers into our gateway cities, which suffer from low levels of educational attainment paired with high levels of unemployment. I'll also partner with educational leaders to provide basic financial education to every high school student in the Commonwealth.

Juliette Kayyem

As a state, we must ensure that all families make living wages and have access to the supports that they need to succeed. In my education plan, *Providing Education from Birth to Career*, I dive deeply into this issue, and propose several actions to tackle this problem. Below you'll find a section from my plan where I specifically discuss closing the achievement gap.



- Develop statewide guidelines for local school choice systems and school governance practices to increase equitable access to quality schools and ensure equitable participation by all parents in matters pertaining to their children's education.
- Support the development of robust summer learning opportunities to stem learning loss and offer families and students a broader spectrum of learning and developmental opportunities than might be accessed during the school year.
- Focus on and improve student attendance by meeting children where they are to incorporate all child and family support systems to immediately and efficiently address truancy problems.
- Offer more support to low-income parents so they can better navigate the services (including government and non-profit) available to them and their children to improve school performance.
- Increase and expand the Innovation Schools program.
- Increase support and provide tailored help for students coring in warning/ failing and needs improvement on the mathematics, English language arts and science/technology and engineering MCAS.
- Expand on the existing Massachusetts Model for Comprehensive School Counseling Programs, which drives a proactive, collaborative, and comprehensive approach to raising student achievement and enhancing career development for all students.
- Create mandates for shared accountability across school types to promote local education systems that are unified and seamless.

Policy Proposals

Universal Pre-K

[Question B4.] Do you support creating universal, free Pre-K, accessible to any resident of Massachusetts, integrated into the public school system?

- SUPPORT: Berwick, Grossman, Kayyem
- COAKLEY: I am steadfastly committed to providing access to high quality pre-k for every child in the Commonwealth. When it comes to pre-K, we should have two primary goals: 1) providing universal access and 2) ensuring a consistent level of quality across all pre-k programs. We need to explore all available options to realize these two goals, including expanding the state voucher program to give the thousands of low-income children currently on waitlists the resources to enroll in high-quality pre-k, developing strategies to better assure the quality of private pre-k programs, and formally integrating pre-K into our public school system.

Universal higher-ed

[Question B5.] Do you support a program that provides free, publicly funded higher education for every student who wants it?

- SUPPORT: Berwick
- OPPOSE: Grossman
- BERWICK: I will implement a program based on best practices from around the nation that provides college counseling in high school and "last dollar" scholarships to college for low-income students who work hard and stay in school. Such a program would show low-income students that the



promise of higher education is within their reach, provide them the skills and supports they need to succeed in a post-secondary environment, and then deliver on the promise to supply the resources that are not available elsewhere.

- **COAKLEY:** Cost should not be a prohibitive barrier for anyone who wants to go to college. I will encourage proposals about how we could significantly reduce the cost of higher education, or make it free even. I believe, right now, we need to focus on concrete ways of reducing costs, including bringing more transparency to high executive salaries at non-profit colleges and universities, increasing funding for grants and other forms of student assistance, and pushing for federal action to further decrease the long-term costs of student loans. I also believe we should explore programs that provide loan forgiveness for public service.
- **GROSSMAN:** Despite its obvious merits, free higher education is not an attainable goal in the foreseeable future. I strongly support funding and policies to ensure that Massachusetts public colleges and universities are as widely affordable and accessible as possible.
- **KAYYEM:** I support residents having access to affordable higher education. This includes linking high schools to higher education institutions to reduce the need for remedial classes.

Funding structure

[Question B6] Do you support changes to the Chapter 70 Education formula, including the Foundation Budget, to incorporate proper state funding for ELL students, Special Education students, transportation costs, charter school reimbursements to sending schools, and class size reduction?

- **SUPPORT:** Berwick, Grossman, Kayyem

COAKLEY: I believe our first priority should be to increase funding for Chapter 70 (the overall pool of money that is distributed to schools and districts based on the formula). I also believe that we need to examine the funding formula, both to make it more transparent and to determine if it still adequately addresses the needs of schools. After all, the formula has not been updated in two decades even though, over that same time period, schools and districts have seen tremendous changes in student demographics, educational requirements, and best practices. We must also work together with teachers, administrators, businesses, and the non-profit community to find other innovative solutions to improve our schools and give them more resources, including realignment of our spending priorities.



EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT [excerpt]
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