

METCO LEGISLATIVE ALERT

Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity, Inc.

METCO, Inc.

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METCO Legislative Alert #1 – 2017/18

Thursday, February 1, 2018

TO: METCO Superintendents, METCO Directors, School Committee Members, Parents, Students, Alumni and Supporters

From: Milly Arbaje-Thomas, Chief Executive Officer

Cc: METCO Board Members, METCO Staff, METCO Alumni, MPALC and Supporters

Subject: **Governor Baker's FY19 Budget Level-Funds METCO Line Item – IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUESTED**

Governor Charlie Baker released his House 2 budget to the legislature this week. The METCO line item, 7010-0012, was funded at \$20,642,582, which reflects level-funding to the FY18 allocation. Although level funding is a good starting point, it is not sufficient to fully fund the program. So, we have work to do.

We encourage METCO parents, students, superintendents, directors, supporters and alumni to submit letters/emails, place phone calls and make appointments with your Representative and Senator IMMEDIATELY. Please express your support of the METCO program and ask your legislator to support full funding of \$23.8M for METCO in the FY19 state budget. Ask that they communicate this request to the House or Senate Ways and Means Committees as one of their top budget priorities.

In the FY18 GAA, the 37 participating communities received \$4,066 per student in education funding plus a transportation allotment for the 3,182 METCO students they educate. Between FY01 and FY17, Chapter 70 funding (the funding that each student is allotted by the state) has increased by over 58% compared to an increase of only 34% for METCO funding in the same time period. The METCO Advisory Committee has recommended \$5,000 per student plus transportation. The program's transportation and education costs continue to rise every year, while state funding for METCO has remained relatively stagnant. There has been no increase in the transportation allotment for METCO since 2008. Without adequate transportation, METCO students are not able to take late buses to participate in their district after school activities, leaving them at a disadvantage and preventing them from fully engaging in their school community. The METCO program is in need of this level of funding in order to continue to maintain its high level of success.

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR AND REQUEST THAT THEY SUPPORT FULL FUNDING OF \$23.8M FOR METCO IN THE FY19 BUDGET.

ACTION STEPS:

- 1. Contact your State Representative and State Senator by email, letter or phone call. You can find who your legislators are by going to www.wheredoivotema.com.**
- 2. Contact our Legislative Caucus Co-Chairs, Rep. Jay Kaufman, and Senator Chang-Diaz and thank them for their continued leadership and advocacy of the METCO program.**
- 3. Be part of our METCO March for Equity (Lobby Day) on Thursday, March 15, 2018 from 9 - 12:30 PM.**
- 4. Sign the online petition at <https://www.change.org/p/massachusetts-state-house-we-have-work-to-do-support-full-funding-of-23-8m-for-the-metco-program-in-fy19> and share on social media.**
- 5. Urge your children to submit letters about what METCO means to them.**

Please call Milly Arbaje-Thomas, Chief Executive Officer of METCO, Inc. at 617-427-1545 ext. 113 regarding the content of this legislative alert.