**Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2024**

***Roxbury Preparatory Charter School***

# → Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

## Which student groups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?

Roxbury Prep operates three middle schools and a high school for total enrollment of 1,598: the Mission Hill Campus serves grades 5-8; the Lucy Stone Campus serves grades 5-8; and the Dorchester Campus serves grades 5-8. The High School serves grades 9-12, and in the 2019-2020 school year, graduated its second senior class.

To review 2019-2020 student enrollment data for Roxbury Prep please utilize the following link: [http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=04840505&orgtypecode=6&](http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=04840505&amp;orgtypecode=6)

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| Student Race and Ethnicity |  |
| Race/Ethnicity | % of School |
| African American | 57.7 |
| Asian | 0.7 |
| Hispanic | 39.2 |
| Native American | 0.3 |
| White | 1.3 |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 0.4 |
| Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic | 0.4 |

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| Selected Populations | % of School |
| First Language not English | 39.6 |
| English Learner | 14.7 |
| Students with Disabilities | 16.5 |
| High Needs | 76.0 |
| Economically Disadvantaged | 59.5 |

Roxbury Prep Charter School’s mission is to prepare its students to enter, succeed in, and graduate from college. This mission is deeply felt throughout the entire Roxbury Prep community and is used as a guiding force for decision-making on everything from curriculum development to family engagement to school systems. Roxbury Prep strongly believes that when provided with supportive structures and appropriate resources, all students can achieve this mission.

Roxbury Prep provides services for students with disabilities and student with limited English proficiency in accordance with state and federal special education laws, M.G.L. c.71B, M.G.L. c.71A , the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the regulations associated with those laws. The primary model of instruction for students is an inclusion/ co- teaching model for most content areas. However, through MCAS results as well as internal interim assessments, a disparity between students with disabilities (SWD) and their general education peers has been demonstrated. This achievement gap has been seen across both the middle school and the high school grade spans.

Furthermore, as our high school campus has grown to incorporate all four grades and provide a continuous path to graduation for all students, we have developed a substantially separate program at the high school level. In order to educate and prepare these unique learners for life beyond high school, a need to grow our Substantially Separate (Sub- Sep) program and college readiness services has become evident.

Thus, the following student groups have been identified as requiring focused support.

* Students with Disabilities (SwD)

# → Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps

## What evidence-based programs will your charter school adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will be allocated to these programs?

### Evidence-based program #1: Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities

Roxbury Prep provides services for students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal special education laws. The primary model of instruction for students is an inclusion/ co-teaching model for most content areas. Currently, our middle schools each have three learning specialists and one ESL teacher for grades 5-8. These teachers provide co- teaching services in ELA and Math, along with pull-out instruction, and other phonics services. We would like to expand our program to four learning specialists per middle school campus in order to be able to provide co-teaching in Science and History. Students with disabilities have historically struggled in these content areas largely due to the reading demands and Standard for Mathematical Practice embedded in these courses, respectively.

Additionally, at the high school level, our sub-separate program at the Hyde Park Campus (9-10th) grades has expanded from only offering Math and ELA to including History and Science in SY 20-21. The Hyde Park Campus’s Substantially Separate (Sub-Sep) program currently operates with two teachers, whose time is divided between services of the inclusion program and the Sub-Sep program. With an increase in two Substantially Separate teachers, these teachers will be able to be fully devoted to the intense work of the Sub-Sep instruction and services. Strengthening this program will allow our students who are in our Sub-Sep program in our middle schools, remain with Roxbury Prep and thus have continuity of community and service provision throughout their high school careers.

Roxbury Prep would like to increase the quality of their service providers, not just the quantity. To that end, funds would be set aside so three different staff each year could receive support towards completing either their ESL or SPED state certification. Preference could be given to veteran staff with a demonstrated commitment to Roxbury Prep, interest in increasing their instructional capacity for students with individual needs, as well as Roxbury Prep Alumni who have become employees. This professional development funding would support better understanding of our students with disabilities and how to meet their unique needs, thus leading to stronger student outcomes.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category1** |
| Learning Specialist for MS (3) | 225,000 | Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Employee Benefits / Fixed  Charges |
| Substantially Separate Program Teachers for HS (2) | 170,000 | Classroom & Specialist Teachers, Employee Benefits / Fixed Charges |
| SPED and ESL Leadership development pipeline | 204,000 | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities |
| **SOA program categories:** | | D (hiring school personnel)  E (Professional Development) |
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1 The foundation categories are: Administration; Instructional Leadership; Classroom & Specialist Teachers; Other Teaching Services; Professional Development; Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology; Guidance and Psychological; Pupil Services; Operations and Maintenance; Employee Benefits/Fixed Charges; and Special Education Tuition.

### Evidence-based program #2: Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs

The following related services are provided to Roxbury Prep students with IEPs based on the educational needs of currently enrolled students with disabilities: individual, family, and small group counseling (via a school counselor); evaluations; speech and language therapy; and occupational therapy. Additional related services are secured through outside service providers. As the Roxbury Prep campuses have grown and awareness of SEL supports along with it, Roxbury Prep has increased its provision of social work services by adding an additional school counselor at the high school and partnering with Boston College school of social work to utilize social work interns. Roxbury Prep has identified a need to hire a Social Work Supervisor to provide professional development and oversight to the staff and direct services to students and families. In addition to providing experienced, skill-based support to the social work team, this individual will build and deepen partnerships with community-based organizations that provide services and support to meet the holistic needs of students. The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the need for our network to better engage and coordinator with community partners to increase students’ and families’ access to needed services and programs.

Additionally, Roxbury Prep started its high school in 2015 and 93% of School Year 19-20’s graduating class entered four- year colleges and universities in the fall. All other members are attending two-year colleges, college preparation programs, or are still engaged in completing their high school education. Roxbury Prep is immensely proud of these students and of the entire school community’s support and dedication to the school’s mission. Given this untraditional year, the percentage of students persisting has dropped from 93% (2019) to 59% (2020). As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Roxbury Prep identifies a growing need to widen our scope of services and programs for post-secondary transition. Our broad range of student learners now necessitate a wider skill set for our college/career readiness coordinators to provide. The Transition Coordinator role would increase the team’s ability to partner with community- based organizations and employers providing career awareness and readiness activities, programs, and opportunities.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Social Work Supervisor | 110,000 | Guidance and Psychological; Employee Benefits / Fixed Charges |
| Career Specialist | 110,000 | Pupil Services; Employee Benefits / Fixed Charges |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the** | | Increased personnel and services to support holistic student |
| **SOA program categories:** | | 1. Social services to support students’ social-emotional 2. Hiring school personnel |

### Evidence-based program #3: Facilities Improvements to create healthy and safe school environments

Roxbury Prep is planning to build a new state of the art high school to properly serve all our 650 students in the next two years and to add an additional 150 students. Our current high school is split across two separate campuses. Our 9th and 10th graders attend school in Hyde Park and our 11th and 12th graders attend school at a converted office building in Roxbury. Neither school has adequate facilities for a proper high school. There are no science labs, no cafeteria large enough to accommodate the whole student body and no gymnasium at either facility. Students each lunch at their desks and walk to the local YMCA for gym. Students and staff have moved locations three times in the past four years and our younger students miss out on the mentorship provided by our juniors and seniors.

Our plan for a new high school would accommodate up to 800 students with cutting edge science and computer labs, special education spaces, and a full-sized gymnasium and cafeteria. This new facility would benefit all student groups in grades 9-12. There is a large body of evidence that shows improved school facilities are directly associated with improved student achievement outcomes (Filardo, Vincent & Sullivan, 2019)

In 2014, the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education wrote…

“Structurally sound and well-maintained schools can help students feel supported and valued. Students are generally better able to learn and remain engaged in instruction, and teachers are better able to do their jobs, in well-maintained

classrooms that are well-lit, clean, spacious, and heated and air-conditioned as needed.”

According to the U.S. Department of Education, a good facility can improve the teacher’s experience as well and reduce teacher turnover. ([Buckley, Schneider, & Shang, 2004](https://www.reynolds.k12.or.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/bond_projects/page/5596/school_facility_quality_and_teacher_retention.pdf))

The Student Opportunity Act funds could make up this difference and help Roxbury Prep create a high school facility which would improve both student outcomes and improve teacher retention.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| High School Facility Capital | $651,000 | Operations and Maintenance |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Facilities Improvements to create healthy and safe school |
| **SOA program categories:** | | (J) |

# → Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets

## What metrics will your charter school use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of Department metrics or provide your own.

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| 1. **Department outcome metrics:**    * Improved MCAS ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP) for all groups identified above (Programs 1-3)    * Improved MCAS Mathematics mean SGP for all groups   identified above (Programs 1-3)   * + Improved four-year cohort graduation rate for all groups identified above (Program 1-3) | 1. **Custom metrics (must include targets as well):**    * Increase number of SPED and/or ESL   certified staff members year over year. (Program 1) |

→ **Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

**How will your charter school ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the charter school regarding their students’ needs?**

Roxbury Prep Charter School recognizes that family engagement is critical to ensuring successful outcomes for all students. Given our focus on student subgroups, it is particularly important that we find ways to effectively engage our families of students with disabilities.

We recognize that existing family engagement opportunities at our school may not be effective in reaching all families. Therefore, in addition to our ongoing Family Councils, Advisor-family relationships, quarterly parent-teacher conferences, and monthly newsletters for each campus, we are also committing to:

* Decentralizing our SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) meetings from one for the whole region to separate meetings for each campus so parents have a relationship with the facilitators—Individual Needs Coordinators and Learning Specialists
* Piloting the whole school version of the “Talking Points” app at one middle school campuses to increase communication flow between families and the school. Many of Roxbury Prep’s students with disabilities also come from non-native English-speaking families. This app provides increased access to the multi-lingual families in our community.

Roxbury Prep will measure the engagement of families of SwD by tracking attendance at SEPAC meetings and more generally through our end of year family survey.

# Certifications:

### ☒ By checking here, I certify that our charter school has engaged stakeholders in our community in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act

**Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

* + Spring of 2020, Roxbury Prep held four different SEPAC meetings.
  + In early January 2021, all Roxbury Prep families received links to complete a mid-year survey. The survey requested feedback from families on a wide range of metrics in addition to open-ended questions.
  + Roxbury Prep also engaged Uncommon Schools network leadership, regional leadership stakeholders, and monthly school leader check-ins to discuss Special Education programming.

### ☒ By checking here, I certify that the Roxbury Prep Charter School’s Board of Trustees voted on our Student Opportunity Act Plan.

The Board voted to approve during the January 28th Board meeting.

### Date of vote: 1/28/2021 Outcome of vote: The Roxbury Prep Board of Trustees unanimously approved the school’s Student Opportunity Act Plan.