

WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

METCO PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT
2015-2016

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Executive Summary

2016 METCO Report

METCO Progress on Goals:

Weston METCO in collaboration with Administration has begun a revised approach to recording and reviewing METCO student data. The data collected will:

- Be used to better inform and support METCO Staff recommendations for students (placement, course selections and Special Education referrals).
- Provide a basis for new programming and partnerships.

Weston METCO has successfully continued fundraising initiatives:

- The Black Student Union Annual Fruit Sale raised \$626.83

School Based Reports

METCO building based liaisons continue to support students and families at an individualized level. New programs and innovations to support students are being explored at each building in an effort to boost student achievement and strengthen established relationships within the community.

Community Coordinator Report

Theresa Burns is in her second year as the Community Coordinator and continues to support the goals and initiatives of the program with her work. She collaborates with each building liaison and the METCO Director to further grow and expand our Family Friends Program throughout all the schools.

Community Support

The METCO Director along with the Community Coordinating Committee has continued to work on ways to make the program and its work more visible throughout the Weston Community. The committee also took an active role in METCO Lobby Day this year.

Introduction

This academic school year marks the 49th year of the Town of Weston's participation in the METCO program. This report will show continued support, dedication and successes from members of both the Weston and Boston communities, the school administrators, the faculty and staff members and, most of all, the students and their parents who continue to support the belief that pursuing a quality education is a key component to lifelong achievement and success.

The report is divided into four sections:

- I) Goals
- II) School Reports
- III) Community Support Organizations
- IV) Conclusion

I) GOALS

Goal #1 – Create student success plans (SSPs) for all of our METCO students utilizing the proposed methods of intervention listed in the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan.

The METCO staff will work together to develop a protocol that ensures all METCO general education students are connected as needed with the interventions and supports described in Weston's District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). We will build a database to document regular education accommodations that our students have received in the past and to compile information going forward. The database will allow for more efficient sharing of information about what interventions have been offered, which have been effective, etc. This communication is important as students transition from grade to grade and especially from building to building.

We also plan to identify students who are at risk due to a variety of factors. For each of these students, we will begin to develop a Student Success Plan; which will document all recommended DCAP supports and services. We will identify appropriate ways to share the information with parents, and ways to collaborate with teachers, principals, Instructional Support Teams (ISTs), and other staff to implement the plans.

Each METCO academic liaison serves as a member of the IST at their school(s). We understand that part of our responsibility, and one of the purposes of the DCAP, is to reduce the number of students prematurely referred for Special Education evaluation. Our proposed work supports this goal. Our initiative could be a pilot for the district, creating a system that promotes more effective use of the many general education resources available in the Weston Public Schools and maximizing every student's opportunity to succeed.

This would help to launch our first phase of student improvements as spelled out in last year's report. Our first phase was to begin collecting data to allow us the opportunity to begin:

“...a comprehensive review of the trends in METCO student achievement in the district. By targeting both quantifiable facts as well as anecdotal assessments, we will use the collected data to present our recommendations to teachers, administration and parents. While continuing to optimize the resources currently available to the Weston METCO program we will also look to research and develop (when possible) new programs. The METCO staff will continue to collaborate with district administration, building principals and other staff as partners in creating innovative revisions to current program offerings. We will then use the collected data on those changes to:

- Provide an update on the effectiveness of current initiatives to program and community supporters.
- Provide families with justification for any recommendations we offer.
- Inform all future decisions regarding current updates as well as proposals for future programming.”

Last year as a staff we began to set up individual databases (by schools) that we will continue to review over time to identify trends of both successful and ineffective interventions. Along with this information we will incorporate the district suggested regular education interventions described in Weston's DCAP. By beginning to incorporate the regular education interventions attempted and by serving as members of our individual schools Instructional Support Teams (ISTs), we believe our latest goal will help us to better advocate for students and families. It will also help us serve as a greater resource to teachers and other members of the ISTs in each school. As a department we will continue to regularly collect and review data on our students. Our newly created Student Success Plans will also assist us in our previously stated goal of comparing “the interventions used in the cases of students making effective progress with their other METCO peers who may not be, and then present to parents and teachers a list of recommendations based on that data.”

** As a department we are carrying goal #2 forward from our 2014-2015 annual report as it is essential to the METCO program itself and should continue to be examined from year to year. (Please note while the descriptor of the goal and the need for it, are the same, the progress and interventions focused on through the current school year have been updated.)*

Goal #2 – Maintain academic and social initiatives.

The METCO staff continues to maintain a positive and productive relationship with faculty and staff in continuing the work of meeting the needs of all students. These supports include:

1. Sustaining the summer enrichment programs.
2. Identifying High School students for advanced courses.
3. Working with system-wide Instructional Support Teams (ISTs) that consist of representative members from classroom teachers, guidance, Special Education, health, etc. The academic liaisons in each building also serve on their school’s IST. As members of these teams we work closely with our Weston colleagues in a collaborative effort, sharing information, which may impact student progress, and making recommendations for student improvement.
4. Collaborating with the High School Guidance Department, which supports the METCO staff, students, and parents in the areas of course selections, financial aid information for college, and the college admissions process.

Summer Academic and Enrichment Programs

The Administration continues to assist the Weston METCO program, both academically and socially, by supporting the following initiatives:

S.O.A.R.

The Summer Opportunities in Academics and Recreation (S.O.A.R.) program welcomed 24 METCO students in 2015 from the Field and Middle Schools that included:

- 8 incoming 5th graders
- 5 incoming 6th graders
- 8 incoming 7th graders
- 3 incoming 8th graders

A few of the goals we met for the summer 2015 SOAR program were:

Goal 2015	Outcome 2015
Better balance of attendees through grades.	Still struggling with rising eighth graders and working to bring more of them in. Since program re-design theme has been a steady increase in returning students. We hope to see last year’s seventh graders return.
Reconstruct SOAR afternoon programming.	Achieved students were offered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cooking classes ● Farming and nutrition ● Swim lessons ● Recreational swim ● Indoor games

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor games <p>This goal was achieved through our newly formed partnerships with the Weston Recreation Department, Lands Sake Farm and the Weston Public Library.</p>
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Academic Preview:

For Summer Academy 2015 all rising 9th graders were invited to participate in the High School Preview Program to prepare for Geometry, Physics, Honors World History and English. High School faculty members worked with students on the Math and Science preview for one week of full-day classes. These sessions focused on test taking, study skills, problem solving, and content. In the Honors World History preview, students met with a Weston High School history teacher in Boston for a series of sessions that included summer reading review, note taking, and study skills. A member of the Weston High School English Department also met entering 10th grade English students in Boston for a similar review of the curriculum.

Summer Academy 2016 will see the return of our 10th (Biology) and 11th (Chemistry) grade science offerings as well as the launch of an 11th grade math option (Pre-calculus).

Goal 2015	Outcome 2015
Send out “Save the Dates” for our summer programming to help encourage early registration.	Achieved and will reflect on impact next year.
Use our academic forums as an opportunity to promote our summer offerings and increase participation.	Forum was cancelled this year however information was given at parent meetings.
Seek out additional possible grants as funding sources to supplement summer program costs.	Did not locate additional funds, however worked with school administration and previous year’s staff to restructure program and costs.

Homework Clubs

This program is designed to assist students who are identified by classroom teachers and the METCO liaison as needing additional academic support. Students at the Field and Middle Schools meet with members of the faculty after school.

School-Based Academic Support, Country & Woodland Schools

METCO students access a range of general education academic supports made available to all Weston students including Reading Recovery, Early Math Intervention and Early Literacy Intervention (formerly known as ARP).

School-Based Academic Support, Field School

METCO students meet after school several times each month with our K-5 Science and Social Studies Specialist. Following her review of the Science MCAS scores, she worked with both the METCO Director and the Field School academic liaison to develop a pilot enrichment program for seven 4th and 5th grade students.

Tutoring at the High School

All departments continue to offer support to students who need assistance through one-on-one meetings during the day and after school. The High School academic liaison has continued to partner with members of the PTO Science & Math Council to offer a tutoring referral program to METCO students. This year also saw an increase in the number of students taking advantage of TEC (The Enrichment Services) tutoring services. We had 51% of all eligible METCO students visit the center for academic support.

Supporting School and Community Fundraising Initiatives.

Within the context of the academic and social achievements of our program, we continue to recognize the realities of the budget process and the economic landscape that potentially threatens the progress of the METCO program. Despite the consistent support from the Administration, the School Committee, and the Weston and Boston communities, the need for new and innovative revenue streams is vital to the future of our program. A number of initiatives were continued or introduced in order to meet this goal. These include:

- Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) Gift Letter
The CCC, with support from the METCO Director and the Community Coordinator, continues their fundraising initiative by mailing a letter of support, which is distributed to all households in the Town of Weston, as well as METCO families and METCO Alumni. The letter articulates the historical perspective of the program, as well as the realities of the predicted budgetary realities. We received contributions from supporters from the Weston and Boston communities.
- St. Peter's Episcopal Church of Weston Grant
For the second year in a row the HS Liaison applied for and was given a grant from St. Peter's Church. The grant was applied to the student travel assistance account established in 2014; the fund was created to offer educational travel scholarships to METCO students to help defer the cost of school-sponsored trips. This year we were able to offer financial assistance to four students.
- Other Donations
 - St. Peter's Episcopal Church Plate collection (student account)- \$234.00
 - Student Fundraising Efforts - \$1,387.09

This considerable show of support is appreciated by the students and staff of the Weston METCO program and is yet another indication of the pride and passion that people from both communities have for the METCO program in Weston.

II) SCHOOL REPORTS

The Weston METCO staff is comprised of a Director/High School academic liaison (La Toya Rivers), K-3 academic liaison (Riola Lazo), Field School academic liaison (Theresa Dryden), Middle School academic liaison (Cyril Kakulu) and Community Coordinator (Theresa Burns). Through monthly department meetings we keep each other abreast of the happenings in each of our respective buildings. We look to each other for support and guidance as the only members of our department housed in the various schools. We also use the time together to inquire about any past or current academic or social-emotional issues that may be affecting our students, as well as to solicit advice on best practices and to share resources that we feel could help. The following are building reports submitted by each of the liaisons and our community coordinator.

WOODLAND and COUNTRY SCHOOLS

Riola M. Lazo, as METCO academic liaison, is responsible for overseeing 55 students K to Grade 3. Her direct responsibilities include collaborating with members of the professional team, working with principals in making decisions to effectively support METCO students, and providing necessary resources/advice for METCO students and their families. The 55 students with whom she works are distributed between two schools, Woodland and Country.

Enrichment programs offered during this school year to METCO students include:

TPMC (Thinking and Playing Mathematically Club) Program

Objectives: Strengthen mathematical foundations; Reinforce language and mathematical concepts; Strengthen thinking and factual math operations; Reinforce that mathematics is in everything and is fun.

- Number of students participating: 17 students from first and second grade, 8 students in each school.
- Meeting frequency: The Math Club meets on Mondays every other week, alternating schools.
- Meeting times: After school from 2:15 PM to 3:15 PM.
- Responsibility for running the program: The METCO academic liaison is responsible for coordinating and providing all necessary support for students to attend the program with the voluntary collaboration of the early math intervention specialist who is responsible for the direct instruction.

RTS (Read to Speak) Program

Objectives: Reinforce reading for pleasure; Expand vocabulary; Strengthen conversations about what is read; Strengthen creativity by writing own stories; Reinforce reading as a fun activity of discovery.

- Number of students participating: 16 students from first and second grade, 8 students in each school.
- Meeting frequency: The Reading Club meets on Thursday every other week, alternating schools.
- Meeting times: After school from 2:15 PM to 3:15 PM.
- Responsibility in running the program: The METCO academic liaison is responsible for coordinating and providing all necessary support for students to attend the program with the voluntary collaboration of the reading specialist who is responsible for the direct instruction.

FIT-K (Foundation in Technology for Kindergarten) Program

Objectives: Strengthen the use of iPad for learning; Reinforce academic iPad functions for reading and writing; Strengthen fine motor development for digital technology functions; Reinforce the use of technology for communication; Strengthen digital games as a way to learn and have fun.

- Number of students participating: 16 Kindergarten students from both Schools.
- Meeting frequency: The Technology Club meets twice a month.
- Meeting times: After the school from 2:15 PM to 3:15 PM.
- Responsibility for running the program: The METCO academic liaison is responsible for coordinating and providing all necessary support for students to attend the program and the instruction with the voluntary collaboration of the Technology Support Specialist at Country School.

VOICES (Writing Club) Program

Objectives: Strengthen the mechanics of writing (grammar and punctuation); Support the growth of language skills; Use information from provided sources to answer questions; strengthen skills for research and writing projects; Practice the three types of writing: opinion, informative, and narrative writing.

- Number of students participating: 5 Grade 2 students from Woodland School.
- Meeting frequency: The Writing Club meets weekly.
- Meeting times: After school from 2:15 PM to 3:15 PM.
- The METCO academic liaison is responsible for coordinating and providing all necessary support for students to attend the program with the voluntary collaboration of the learning center specialist who is responsible for the direct instruction.

TABAR (Take a Break and Read) Program

Objectives: To encourage the habit of reading during the holidays/summer vacation with a report back to the METCO Academic Liaison with evidence of their work.

- Number of students participating: 53 students from Kindergarten to 3rd Grade.
- Meeting frequency: No meeting necessary. Coordination with the family for evidence collection (photographs reading with an adult)
- Meeting times: N/A
- Responsibility for running the program: The METCO academic liaison is responsible for coordinating and providing all necessary support for students to read on level and finish the assigned program with the voluntary collaboration of the Woodland 3rd Grade Teacher.

The METCO academic liaison assists and facilitates the participation of METCO students in the following programs offered to all third graders in Woodland and Country Schools as follows:

- After School Sports
- Orchestra
- Chorus
- Art Club
- Homework Club
- Writing Workshop
- Math Club

Other support programs and services offered to METCO students, which are under the responsibility of the academic liaison are:

Breakfast Academic Club

Objectives: Breakfast for children in need; Provide social-emotional support to students under stress as a result of the long journey from Boston and the dynamics generated on the bus; Provide opportunity for the students to prepare themselves well for the daily academic work; Provide opportunities for students to talk about their plans for the day or what happened on the bus that concerns them.

- Number of students participating: Average number of students attending in each school is 10, referred by the teachers.
- Meeting frequency: Every other day alternating schools.
- Meeting times: 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM.

Family Friends Lunch Groups

Objectives: Strengthen the interaction between Boston and Weston students; Provide opportunity to build social relationships and develop social skills; Provides opportunity to

reinforce proper manners when eating; Encourage appropriate conversation; share experiences.

- Number of students participating: 55 Boston students and their family friends with the total of 106 students attending every week.
- Meeting frequency: The Family Friends Program meets once a week in each school.
- Meeting times: The meeting schedule is the same as the planned lunch times for the whole school.

Snack Groups

Objectives: Provide social and emotional support for students in family crisis; Deal with cases of misbehavior in class, during recess, or on the bus; Helps students who need specific support to complete an academic project or task in class; Academic support to students who speak Spanish and need translations.

- Number of students participating: Average of 6 students depending on need, referred by the teachers in each school.
- Meeting frequency: Every day with different students according to teacher referrals or as needed.
- Meeting times: Different schedules according to class snack time.

Briefing for Third Graders Meeting

Objective: Provide support for third graders transitioning to fourth grade at Field School; Reduce anxiety about going to a new school building and environment; Meet METCO students currently in fourth and fifth grade at Field School.

- Number of students participating: 15 Grade 3 students from the two schools.
- Meeting frequency: Two sessions of one hour each. One session at each school.
- Meeting times: 2:15 PM to 3:15 PM. The days of session will be determined as soon as possible.
- The METCO academic liaisons are responsible for coordinating and supervising the activities of students who will be participating as representatives from Field School at Woodland and Country Schools.

Kindergarten Luncheon:

Objectives: Start social bond between Boston and Weston families; Provides an opportunity for children selected as Family Friends to meet the parents of their friends; Creates a dynamic of trust and confidence between family friends; Explain the purpose of the program and provide opportunities for questions and open conversation.

- Number of students participating: 32 Kindergarten students and their families.
- Meeting frequency: Two meetings. One in each school.
- Meeting times: 12:30 PM to 2:15 PM.

- The Community Coordinator and the METCO academic liaison are responsible for planning, preparing, and running the meetings.

METCO Academic Forum “Focus on Education”:

Objectives: Connect parents with school principals, grade leaders, counselors, librarian, and develop support networks among themselves; Provide an overview of the academic curriculum for the school year; Highlight academic areas with higher demand in each grade; Explain the use of technology to access the library and the corresponding information in each school; Explain support strategies and resources for academic success.

- Number of parents participating: The program was prepared for 53 families to attend; attendance was a total of 23 parents between the two schools combined.
- Meeting frequency: Once per school year.
- Meeting times: 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM in Boston.
- The METCO academic liaison is responsible for preparing the meeting and the material to be distributed to the parent as well the attendance certificates.

Others responsibility of the METCO K-3 academic liaison at Woodland and Country Schools are:

- Help coordinate and attend parent/teacher conferences. The parent attendance at conferences so far this school year is 100%.
- Attend all Back to School Nights in September; 8 meetings in total. METCO Parent attendance was 98%.
- Provide support to METCO parents and provide information to understand the regular education programs and resources available designed to enhance the academic performance of their children such as: Early Math Intervention (EMI), Reading Recovery (RR), Early Literacy Intervention (ELI), English Language Learner (ELL), Gross and Social Pragmatic (GRASP), Wake Up and Warm Up (Physical Ed. Activities prior to the start of school day), Instructional Services Team (IST).
- Participate and collaborate with teachers, counselors, members of the Special Education support team, and curriculum specialists when students are identified as needing intervention, as well as maintaining communication with parents during the evaluation process and providing help in coordinating IEP meetings.

Observe student behavior and academic participation in and out of the classroom and during transition time.

Objectives: Better understand the learning style of each student, the relationship between teacher/student, and the interaction between classmates. Identify ways to support if needed and/or obtain reliable information to recommend placements, grouping and support programs.

- Number of students observed: 55 students, Kindergarten to 3rd Grade
- The METCO academic Liaison plans according to the priority of each case, and the activity in which the student needs to be observed. It is planned in accordance with the respective teacher.

FIELD SCHOOL

Theresa Dryden is the METCO academic liaison at Field School. This year our METCO cohort at Field consists of 13 fourth grade students and 13 fifth grade students. Most of these students have attended the Weston Public Schools since kindergarten, and they are vibrant, enthusiastic members of the school community.

The Field School academic liaison provides a number of services for students and families. She also collaborates extensively with other Field School staff, including the principal, nurses, teachers, adjustment counselor, school psychologist and learning assistants, working to ensure that every student receives the supports and services they need, and to maximize their opportunities for success.

Direct services provided by the Field School Liaison include the following:

After-School Homework Club

This program meets two days per week and provides students an opportunity (and incentive) to begin their homework in a structured, supervised setting where academic support and resources are readily available. Students learn to prioritize their assignments, and they can get assistance from the Liaison, from their own teachers, and from each other. Over the years, anecdotal evidence has shown that our most successful high school and middle school students are those who know how to appropriately collaborate with peers and how to take advantage of extra help. The Field School Homework Club helps our young students begin to develop those skills.

Lunch Groups

Lunch groups meet at least twice per week. These are informal gatherings that provide opportunities for Boston students to come together, and they constitute an important component of the students' social and emotional support system. Lunch groups are also an authentic setting for Boston and Weston students to meet together. During these sessions, the Academic Liaison facilitates conversations and activities that focus on strengthening connections between the students. These connections are difficult to quantify, but the METCO staff believes that they are one of the most important benefits of the METCO program, providing long-term positive impact in the Weston and Boston communities and beyond.

Classroom Support

The Liaison regularly collaborates with classroom and specialist teachers to provide in-class support (academic and social-emotional) for students in all subjects as needed.

Parent Services

The Liaison supports parents by joining them at parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings and 504 meetings. She also assists them in finding appropriate after-school and summer programs for their students.

Lobby Day

The Liaison selected with a small group of students and prepared them to attend METCO Lobby Day at the State House. The students spoke with legislators and staffers, sharing their experiences and requesting support for the METCO program.

The Field School Liaison also collaborates with staff on the following programs and services:

Field School Academic Forum in Boston

The Liaison works with the Field School Principal to facilitate an academic forum designed specifically for Boston parents. It is similar to the academic forums held in Weston. Field faculty and staff present information about curriculum, homework, technology, transitions, and other topics essential to student success. Parents of Grade 3 students are encouraged to attend the Field forum as part of their transition process. We conduct the meeting in an informal, Open Circle-type format, promoting positive interactions and relationship building among parents and staff. The Liaison also works to connect families with resources in the community, and to that end we will hold our 2016 forum at one of Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)'s neighborhood centers in Roxbury.

Math Lunch Groups

Weston's Elementary Math Specialist began working with the Field Liaison in 2013 to develop a pilot Math Lunch Group program for fourth and fifth grade METCO students. The program meets once a week during the students' regular lunch periods. The math specialist leads the sessions. Students engage in fun, informal math enrichment activities that relate directly to the content they are learning in math class. It's amazing to see children excitedly choosing to do math during their free time.

Transition Planning

Because students attend Field School for only two years, careful coordination of transitions is essential for student success. For incoming Woodland and Country students, the Field School academic liaison meets with our K-3 academic liaison and with the 3rd grade teachers. She also facilitates a visit to Field School for third grade students, hosted by fourth and fifth grade students. She participates with the Field School team in the complex, iterative fourth to fifth grade placement process. For fifth grade, the Field School academic liaison meets with our Middle School academic liaison and the Grade 6 guidance counselor and individually reviews each student's strengths, needs, academic profile, and family information.

Health Services

This year, one of our students was diagnosed with a major, life-threatening health condition. The Field academic liaison is a member of the team who worked with the student, parents, school nurses, principal, teachers, tutors, and WPS administration to support this student. The liaison maintained constant communication with the parents and many members of the Weston Public Schools community (Field school students, families and staff; staff at other schools; METCO families, etc.) Tragically, the student passed away in January. His death was a heartbreaking loss, and he will never be forgotten.

Family Friends Program

The Field School academic liaison works closely with our community coordinator to monitor the Boston-Weston family pairings, strengthening existing connections and making adjustments when needed. She also works with the community coordinator to plan activities, which provide opportunities for the children to socialize together. One event this year was an after-school trip to Monster Mini-Golf. Attendance at this event was almost evenly divided between Boston and Weston resident students, a testimony to the strong social and emotional connections between the two communities.

We know that maintaining strong connections between Boston and Weston students and families is one of the most important roles of the Weston METCO program. We believe that these relationships are essential to breaking down barriers and prejudices, and they plant the seeds for these students to create strong, diverse communities in the future.

Instructional Support Team (IST)

For the third year, the Field academic liaison is a member of the Field School IST. At Field, IST is a multi-disciplinary team that meets weekly, providing consultation and recommendations regarding interventions for students who are experiencing difficulty in academics or behavior.

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Cyril Kakulu is the Middle School academic liaison currently supporting 38 students in the METCO program grades 6-8. He works in close conjunction with each grade level's house director/supervisor, guidance counselors, specialists and teacher teams in supporting the academic, social & emotional needs of the program's Middle School students. He has worked to help close the achievement gap and has immersed himself into the school's fabric at all levels including:

- Collection and review of student data to inform practice and the targeting of students in need of increased support including quarterly/mid-quarterly academic progress, standardized testing, IEP goal progress, DSP/IST referrals.
- Provision of small group one on one academic support study blocks, student/liaison academic conferences, after-school METCO Homework Club 3 x week.

- Frequent family engagement via various communication channels including parent/teacher conferences, home visits, phone conferences, parent/team meetings, provision of mid quarter METCO Academic Progress Report for parents & students, yearlong compilation & distribution of pertinent school/community based academic resources/enrichment programming opportunities to parents & students.
Co-facilitator of joint Academic Forum for MS/HS Boston parents.
- The academic liaison position is fully integrated into school culture at each grade level's Initiatives/Activities/Event(s): 8th grade Crew Advisory leader, 8th grade Blue House Homeroom Teacher, 8th grade D.C. Trip chaperone, 7th grade Hale Group Leader, Facing History & Ourselves Workshop participant in correlation with Hale Groups, PARCC Test Administrator, all grade level trip chaperone (Wachusett/Hale Reservation/Faneuil Hall, MIT trips).
- Member of WMS Instructional Support Team (RTI Model) assisting in maximizing student success in the classroom via utilization of assessment and intervention tools to help remove educational, behavioral, or emotional barriers for all students.
- Member of Principal's Cabinet (Middle School Leadership team).

Professional Development

- The Middle School academic liaison has earned a Master of Education in a dual licensure School Adjustment & Mental Health Counseling program and DESE School Social Worker/School Adjustment Counselor licensure in January 2016.
- Currently in progress of a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies program in Mental Health Counseling.

Indicators of Success

HS/MS Honors:

Four students are recommended for HS Honors Level History; Three students are recommended for HS Honors Level Math and one student is recommended for HS Honors Level Science. Four students are recommended for MS Honors Algebra (8th gr).

**In addition to academic grades, there were additional variables tracked this school year & found to potentially positively influence or impede a student's academic success at the Middle School. These factors included: student engagement, parental involvement, & utilization of academic recommendations/interventions.*

Student Engagement:

- School/Community Based extracurricular activities: clubs, sport teams.
- After-school/Summer enrichment programming.

Parental Involvement:

- Back to School Night attendance.
- Parent/Teacher conferences.
- Frequency of Home/School communication.
- Parent/Team Meetings.

Academic Interventions/Recommendations:

- Referral to & utilization of school-based resources:
 - IST referral via school
 - 1 on 1 Academic Support Study blocks via Liaison
 - METCO Homework Club
 - Weston Middle School Homework Club
 - Before/After school Teacher Support
- Community Based: METCO Inc. tutoring referrals.

HIGH SCHOOL

The 2015-2016 school year marks La Toya Rivers' third year as a member of the Weston METCO staff and in the Weston Public Schools system. Along with her role as program director for the district she also serves as the High School academic liaison for 50 students in grades 9 through 12.

In reviewing high school goals from last year, there has been continued participation in TEC (The Enrichment Center) by eligible METCO 9th graders. Last year the academic liaison began recommending that all eligible entering 9th grade students were registered for a TEC block to start the school year and aid in their transition to the High School. Following the conclusion of last year's summer programming, the METCO Director conducted informal surveys with parents, students and teachers to evaluate the programs and determine ways to improve participation, effectiveness as well as stress the importance of the programs. Last year saw the restructuring of the SOAR program and this year we have redesigned the model of the High School Summer Academy. Per parent request we have moved all courses to the day program held on the Weston Campus. We have continued to have both weeks of the program complete prior to the start of Fall sport practices. We have not only sent out "Save the Dates" for all summer programming in early spring, but we have also sent out the registrations in the Spring as well. We will reassess the impact of these changes at the end of the summer and use the collected information to help inform our planning for Summer 2017.

This year the high school liaison along with a group of interested students have begun discussions about developing a scholar program from METCO students. Some ideas being discussed are possible peer mentors, group tutoring sessions, college visits/tours as well as establishing academic and behavioral standards for participation. Students will work with both the liaison and each other to identify and take advantage of the resources offered in the district as well as finding ways to increase their visibility in the Weston community. The idea for this group stems from the previously stated goal of the High School academic

liaison is to foster an environment in which our students view their academic success with the same enthusiasm they view their social obligations. We have continued to recognize students for their academic accomplishments and as leaders. The students have begun to push themselves to achieve and offer challenges to themselves and others to excel academically.

This year our students participated in:

- METCO Lobby Day: A group of METCO High School, Middle School, Field School students, the Field School METCO Liaison, the Community Coordinator and METCO Director traveled through the State House informing representatives and senators of the benefits of the METCO program and to lobby for increased funds for the program.
- Six of our METCO seniors were nominated for a full four-year scholarship through the POSSE program. Two of them made it to the semi-final round. One of those advanced to the final round.
- The Nineteenth Annual Youth Conference; which was held in the LaCava Building at Bentley University. The theme the conference was “**Carpe Diem: Seize the Day.**” The purpose of the Youth Leadership conference was to provide an educational event that augments youth leadership and enhances the continuous development of students toward responsible and informed citizenship in the urban and suburban environments in which they live and learn. The full day conference offered interactive workshops and trainings sessions from educators, professionals, and community leaders. Workshop offerings included: *Dare to Be Different, Ferguson, Boston and ME, Do You Know Where You Are Going, From Empowerment to Employment, How Social Media Affects Your Future, How to Invest In Your Future, How to Prepare for College, Plan Early For Success, and Using Your Voice, It's Your Choice!*

Affinity Group

Our High School Liaison hosts monthly METCO Affinity Group meetings. These group meetings provide an opportunity to touch base with the students, update them on program developments and put forth specific topics focused on the needs they have as non-resident students in the district. Some topics discussed during Affinity include: GPAs, proper course placement, expectations of METCO students, student/student and student/teacher relationships. There are also meetings whose agendas are left open for student-determined discussions.

College Preparation

This year we considered our partnership with college admissions coach Breanna Kirk and fellow Weston resident, Victoria Rakov. Both ladies work with our rising seniors on the college application process as well as offer the opportunity for students to have one-on-one meetings with them. She began a smaller scale version of this program last year and

this year we have worked to formalize a timeline and meeting schedule with our students. Her newly design program focuses primarily on having our rising seniors completing their college application essay during the summer of their junior year. By completing this task during the summer, students have the opportunity to begin their senior year knowing they have a solid personal narrative with which to apply to the colleges of the choice.

Black Student Union

Our High School Liaison continues to serve as the faculty advisor for the Black Student Union and in that role has developed and facilitated the High School's Black History Month Assembly. This year will mark the second year in a row that the BSU will be participating in a booth at the Weston High School Spring Fling. The event is one whose proceeds go to benefit a summer program for children with disabilities. This year also marked the first official Black Student Union sponsored Weston High School Dance held at the High School in over 4 years. The BSU invited members of the Wellesley High School community. By reaching out to the METCO students of Wellesley High School, the BSU was able to help build a bridge between the two METCO programs as well as the two high schools. The dance was counted a success and students of the two METCO Programs began talks for future collaborations.

Indicators of Success

The Weston METCO program prides itself on the accomplishments of students who are successful in academics, community service, and athletic participation. The culmination of their success is reflected in the colleges and universities where our graduates are accepted. This year, the eleven METCO graduates of the class of 2016 have been accepted to the following institutions: Bentley University, Bridgewater State University, Bucknell University, Champlain College, Colgate University, Fitchburg State University, Fordham University, Franklin Pierce University, Hampton University, Hobart & Williams College, Howard University, Lasell College, Loyola Maryland, Newbury College, Northeastern University (Honors Program), Pennsylvania State University, Quinnipiac University, Salem State University, Southern New Hampshire University, St. Michael's College, Union College, U.S. Naval Academy, University of Arizona, University of Delaware, University of Hartford, University of Massachusetts Amherst (Honors College), University of Massachusetts Boston, University of Massachusetts Lowell, University of Michigan, University of Southern California, University of Vermont, Wheaton College, Worcester State University. We salute our graduates.

Another indicator of success is the number of students currently enrolled in Honors and Advanced Placement courses. This year 31% of our High School METCO students are currently enrolled in a total of 32 Honors and Advanced Placement courses. The percentage of METCO students who participate in upper level courses has remained consistent as a result of the combined efforts of the Administration, faculty members, High School academic liaison, and METCO parents who value high expectations for all

students. This year, the High School liaison worked with the department heads to review placement standards and resources in place for METCO students participating in those courses. She also worked with the Guidance Department on reviewing course recommendations and reaching out to parents in order to better educate them on the benefits of our students being placed in the appropriate course levels. This year we saw an increase in the number of Honors and Advanced Placement courses that our students participated in, which demonstrates the increased education and exposure. In an effort to continue this positive trend, the High School liaison will continue to work closely with guidance and meet regularly to discuss students.

WESTON METCO COMMUNITY COORDINATOR REPORT

Theresa Burns is now in her second year as the Weston METCO Community Coordinator. She was prepared for the year ahead and excited to build upon the foundation from the past year. Our Community Coordinator's goal for the year was to have programming be as financially self-supporting as possible.

She planned to have at least three programs this year in both Field School and the Middle School, as well as attending lunch groups to get to know the students better; to be a presence in the High School and have a High School Family Friends event for the first time; and to continue the Family Friends Afterschool Program at Woodland and Country Schools. At each of these events, as well as at the district-wide social events, she wanted to track the attendance of both Boston and Weston families in an effort to assess their efficacy.

District Events:

Ice Cream Social

Held in late September, this event is a way to reconnect Weston and Boston families. This year's event was held at the Country School. High school students volunteer to scoop ice cream and entertain the younger students. This event spans all levels of Family Friends. There over 60 participants representing both Boston and Weston families as well as METCO staff.

Notepad Fundraiser

The teacher notepad fundraiser is our annual fundraiser run solely by the community coordinator. This year's teacher notepad sales netted \$1,792. Our CCC member and supporter continue to print these at cost. With 762 notepads ordered, this is a fundraiser that the community at large supports and gives our program key funds to start the year.

Annual Family Friends Pot Luck

This year the community coordinator decided to hold the Pot Luck in Weston for the second year in a row. Last year and then again this year, the event was held the same night as the Tropical Dance at the Middle School. This allowed Boston parents to drop off their sixth graders at the dance and then be entertained themselves at the Pot Luck.

This increased attendance at both events. While this event raises money for the program, its primary goal is a social one.

Ice Skating Party (NEW THIS YEAR)

In late February, the community coordinator hosted a drop in Skating Party at Frog Pond in downtown Boston. She provided a gathering space and hot chocolate for all families in attendance.

Lobby Day

On Lobby Day, the community coordinator escorts members of the Weston METCO Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) to the State House and/or assists in chaperoning students attending the event. The day is meant to show the support of both Boston and Weston Community members to those at the State House who will be deciding the state's budget as well as the allocations to the various initiatives. Our goal is to lobby for additional financial support for the METCO program.

Family Friend School Reports:

Woodland and Country Schools- FFAP:

The Family Friends After School Program (FFAP) began the first week of October and will continue through the end of May. The year will culminate with an end-of year-celebration. FFAP is an excellent opportunity to socialize and solidify the friendships for Boston and Weston students from grades one through three. These monthly meetings for each age group are curriculum based and supported by the staff. Projects have worked to encourage teamwork and foster friendships. Participation has been strong from both Boston and Weston families. Generally, we have an 86% attendance with a 60/40 split of Boston/ Weston that flip flops from week to week which group has higher attendance. The community coordinator begins working in conjunction with the kindergarten teachers each February on the potential kindergarten family friends pairings for next school year. Each year has seen an increased number of Weston family inquiries about becoming a potential family friend. This speaks highly to the strong community support of the program. Lunches welcoming the children and their parents to the program happen in March and April. End of the year events are being planned for both schools.

Field School:

This year the community coordinator provided two after-school events that occurred at school as well as a major field trip. In the fall the Family Friends program hosted a trip to Monster Mini Golf; which both Boston and Weston students attended. There is an event scheduled at Field School based upon the game show "Minute to Win It". High school students are excited to help run the event. There will also be a closing event toward the end of the year.

Middle School:

This year, the community coordinator attended lunch groups and surveyed the students about their family friend pairings as well as regarding their field trips. Based upon this survey of the students, the Family Friends program had a field trip to Dave and Busters on February 10th. Both Weston and Boston students were excited about this trip. Family Friends also hosted it's second annual 6th Grade Movie afternoon for both Boston and Weston students.

High School:

This year, based upon student polling, the community coordinator planned a field trip to Dave and Busters. In addition, she provides a sounding board to students who come to the office and offering them an additional adult in the building to form a connection with. The community coordinator holds office hours during the students lunch hours when they are more likely to visit the office.

Plans/Goals for future programming:

As an active member of the Community Coordinating Committee (CCC), the Community Coordinating Committee Chair and the Community Coordinator will continue to organize a fundraising letter to the community, which has continued to generate funds into the Weston METCO Fund Account. Along with the support of the CCC, the community coordinator will continue to explore possible grants as well.

III) COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations, which represent both communities, continue to be an integral part of the success of our METCO program:

1. Community Coordinating Committee (CCC) – This year Madelaine Kenyon is the new chair of the committee. The committee consists of members from both the Boston and Weston communities. In support of the METCO Director and staff, the committee offers recommendations for fundraising opportunities. The Gift Fund letter, distributed to Boston and Weston resident families in the spring, has become an annual fundraising vehicle. The METCO Director/High School academic liaison, the Field School academic liaison and the Community Coordinator served as members on the committee this year.
2. Boston Weston METCO Parent Organization (BWMPO) – Cheryl Antoine and Elizabeth Nagarajah serve as co-chairs of this organization. Cheryl is also the President of the METCO Parents Legislative Committee (MPLC), which represents all METCO programs statewide. The BWMPO continues its work by co-sponsoring the annual METCO Informational Session held annually at the historic Twelfth Baptist Church. The organization also continues to assist the METCO Director and the Transportation Director in a variety of areas pertaining

to program goals and transportation issues and policies. The organization holds monthly meetings in Boston for parents and supporters for discussion and review of procedures and policies of the METCO program and the school system. The organization supports our graduates with an annual scholarship program for qualified students. This gift award is given during the annual Class Day held at the High School.

3. Weston METCO Scholarship Committee – The members of this committee consist of former METCO graduates, members of the Boston and Weston communities who volunteer their time to raise scholarship money for our graduating seniors, and former students who are currently attending college. The committee works closely with parents, students, the METCO staff, and the Guidance Department in support of the scholarship process.
4. Weston PTO – This organization continues to support our program in several areas, which includes working with the Community Coordinator to advertise METCO events to the Weston community. It also offers a portion of the proceeds of the annual PTO calendars to the BWMPO for their scholarship program.

On behalf of our METCO Department, we would like to thank all of these organizations for their continued commitment of support for our wonderful METCO program.

IV) CONCLUSION

The METCO Staff would like to thank all of the following stakeholders for helping to ensure that we are not simply a functioning program, but a flourishing Weston METCO Community: the Weston School Committee, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendents, members of the Central Administrative staff, building Principals, Faculty and Staff members, members of the Transportation Department, Office Support Staff and Aides, the members of the Food Services Department, and members of the Custodial and Maintenance Staff. Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do to work at making this program the success that it is and supporting our students! Additionally, we would like to thank both the Weston and Boston Families for a collaborative spirit and continued dedication to work together.

Last, but certainly not least, as Director, I would like to thank the METCO staff for their persistent dedication to our students' success. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this amazing team and look forward to helping our students reach their fullest potential!