

# Narratives

## Executive Summary

Ninety full-time AmeriCorps members will serve in the Boston Promise Corps to ensure all students in Boston's Dudley neighborhood are on track to graduate high school and attend college. Members will provide classroom interventions and extended day programming to support students in surpassing the Common Core standards, all while preparing to be teachers and leaders in the highest need areas of the city. Each year, AmeriCorps members will serve over 700 students, 80% of whom will increase academic engagement through improved attendance, homework completion, classroom participation, and school attitudes. The Boston Promise Corps is a community collaboration between Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, BPE (formerly known as Boston Plan for Excellence), and Boston Public Schools. This project will focus on the CNCS focus area of Education and will be part of the newly created Governor and Mayor Initiative. The CNCS investment of \$1,196,993 will be matched with \$380,126.

## Rationale and Approach

A. Need: "If we want America to lead in the 21st century, nothing is more important than giving everyone the best education possible—from the day they start preschool to the day they start their career." -President Barack Obama

The challenge for our country is clear. In the rapidly changing, increasingly globalized world, it is now more urgent than ever that we educate all of our citizens to the highest standards. The high school diploma that might have served as a ticket to the middle class in generations past is now insufficient; young people need post-secondary degree or certification to be eligible for the vast majority of middle class jobs. Further, the world is changing so quickly that we can no longer train young workers for a single specific job; the best-prepared people will know how to adapt as the world changes around them.

There is a current and growing disparity between the skills required for jobs and the capacity of the current labor supply. Currently, 27% of adults in the U.S. hold bachelor's degrees (NCHEMS, 2009), while 60% of jobs require post-secondary training (Carnevale & Desrochers, 2003). In Massachusetts, the Office of Labor and Workforce Development estimates that by 2016, 45% of all new jobs will require at least a bachelor's degree (The Boston Indicators Project, 2008).

So how do we address these issues? How do we support young people in gaining the skills and capacity they need to be competitive in the 21st century? We believe that engaging students in regular and rigorous academic thinking is the key variable determining whether a student will graduate and

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move on to become part of the skilled workforce. A study by the Consortium on Chicago School Research (1996) established student engagement as a more significant factor resulting in academic success than socioeconomic status, race, or gender. Student engagement, however, has experienced a general decline (National Research Council 2004), primarily in large, urban school systems (Joselowsky 2007). Klem and Connell (2004) report that "by high school, as many as 40 to 60 percent of all students are chronically disengaged from school." Disengagement can take many forms; self-withdrawal, or dropping out from school, represents the ultimate form of disengagement. Research has established poor attendance, behavior, and course performance (the ABCs) as early indicators of self-withdrawal from school (Neild, Balfanz, and Herzog 2007). As early as sixth grade, students struggling with just one of the ABCs are shown to have less than a 20 percent chance of graduating high school on time.

Like other urban school districts, Boston struggles with the challenge of student disengagement. Of the 55,000 students enrolled in Boston Public Schools (BPS), only 64% graduate on time (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: DESE). According to DESE, 47% of Boston students grades 3-9 struggle with at least one of the ABC early warning indicators mentioned above. Only 47% of students in BPS scored Proficient or Advanced on the state's 2011 English test, and only 40% on the math test. Boston also has a high concentration of students who face a statistically higher risk for course failure and dropout: 74% live in low-income households, 87% are children of color, 28% are English language learners, and 19% receive special education services.

Boston's "Circle of Promise," a five-square mile geographic area in the heart of the City of Boston, was identified by Boston Mayor Thomas Menino and Boston Public Schools Superintendent Carol Johnson because it contains a high proportion of the city's most underperforming schools and disadvantaged communities. At the center of the "Circle" is the Dudley Street neighborhood. At 35.2%, the poverty rate for the Dudley neighborhood is almost twice that of Boston as a whole. Thirty-eight percent of the Dudley area's children live below the Federal poverty line. Less than half of all people in the Dudley neighborhood have full-time employment (49%), while 44% are not in the labor force and 7% are unemployed. Over a third of Dudley residents aged 25 and over lack a high school credential; only 11% of residents have a bachelors or higher degree.

To address needs within the Circle of Promise, the Mayor's Office supported the creation of the Boston Promise Initiative, an innovative new program housed under the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) organization. The Boston Promise Initiative is a strategic approach to revitalize Boston's neighborhoods within the Circle of Promise, and the first iteration can be seen in the recently

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launched Dudley Village Campus (DVC). DVC brings together all components of the neighborhood to combat poverty, restore the community, and ensure that all children in the community successfully complete school. DVC is modeled loosely after the Harlem Children's Zone and consists of local residents, nonprofit organizations, businesses, schools, governmental and institutional partners, and service providers working together to improve the community. DVC serves approximately 18,000 residents, over 7,000 of whom are under the age of 24. The campus approach organizes and manages resources geographically so that children have access to their basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter, as well as other crucial needs: education, healthcare, caring and reliable adults, a positive peer group, and access to a wide variety of opportunities. Approaching Dudley's needs from a "whole community" standpoint includes supporting and engaging residents throughout their childhood with a multitude of educational, health, and civic opportunities.

In 2010, DSNI was awarded a planning grant by the US Department of Education's Promise Neighborhood Initiative to develop the Boston Promise Initiative, and the US Department of Education recently awarded DSNI a five-year, six million dollar grant to implement the program with guidance from the Mayor's office. Now, Mayor Menino and Governor Patrick seek to strengthen this work through the power of national service by deploying much-needed human capital to high-need schools and developing future leaders for Boston's schools and communities.

B. AmeriCorps Members as Highly Effective Means to Solve Community Problems: Governor Patrick and Mayor Menino have charged BPE and DSNI with forming the Boston Promise Corps, a program based in the Dudley neighborhood to improve student outcomes. The Boston Promise Corps will provide high-quality academic support to students while strengthening the pipeline of teachers and leaders for years to come. The Boston Promise Corps will address Governor Patrick's most pressing education challenge: eliminating the deep and persistent achievement gaps that disproportionately affect children living in poverty, students of color, and students who are English language learners.

Mayor Menino, in collaboration with Governor Patrick, DSNI, BPE, and Boston Public Schools, proposes to leverage AmeriCorps to address the needs of the Dudley area because of his confidence in the demonstrated successes of Boston Teacher Residency and other neighborhood-based AmeriCorps programs, such as the Harlem Children's Zone Peacemakers. The Mayor knows that AmeriCorps members, especially those recruited from the community being served, have the unique opportunity to be community leaders in their year of service and beyond.

The Boston Promise Corps will consist of two unique yet collaborative AmeriCorps teams - the

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existing Boston Teacher Residency (BTR) program and the pilot Dudley Promise Corps (DPC) program - with the mission to ensure all Dudley students are on track to complete high school and attend college. Each year, a total of 70 full-time BTR members and 20 DPC members will serve in BPS schools to provide targeted interventions to off-track students as well as whole-class support. BTR is an AmeriCorps program of BPE, currently in its eighth successful year of service to the Boston community. BTR members serve in high-need Boston schools while simultaneously completing a rigorous teacher preparation program in order to become certified teachers committed to remaining in BPS for at least three years after their initial year of service. Dudley Promise Corps is a new program, based at DSNI, that will deploy highly-trained community members to mentor and support elementary students at neighborhood schools while simultaneously developing their professional skills.

The Boston Promise Corps proposes two strategic solutions to improve student academic engagement: 1) Deploy teams of exceptionally qualified and well-trained AmeriCorps members in high-need BPS schools to implement evidence-based academic engagement interventions for students in and out of the classroom; and 2) Prepare AmeriCorps members to be highly effective teachers and community leaders committed to remaining in Boston and serving students beyond their initial year of service.

Strategy 1: Deploy teams of AmeriCorps Members. Each year, a total of 90 full-time AmeriCorps members will serve in BPS classrooms and afterschool programs to increase student academic engagement through a set of four evidence-based interventions: 1) individualized instruction; 2) extended learning time (ELT) and mentoring activities; 3) intensive support to target students; and 4) family and community engagement activities. Each corps will be responsible for conducting different activities for the interventions, as outlined below.

In year one, the majority of members (65) will serve in three high-need schools within the Circle of Promise: Jeremiah Burke High School, a state-designated Turnaround School; Orchard Gardens Pilot School (K-8), a Turnaround School; and Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School (preK-2), a fresh start school launched in 2012 to replace the Emerson school, which had been closed by the district for underperformance. An additional 25 BTR members will serve at two schools outside the Circle of Promise: Young Achievers Science and Mathematics Pilot School (K-8), a BPS turnaround initiative in which the existing Young Achievers school took over the students of the failing Lewenberg Middle School, and Boston Community Leadership Academy, a BPS high school built around the theme of civic engagement and leadership. BTR has a commitment with the district to serve in these schools in the next academic year; each year BTR will increase the number of members serving within the

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Dudley Village Campus to ensure all students are enabled to reach Common Core standards. In addition, the work at these other two schools will teach BTR staff lessons which can be applied in the Dudley neighborhood through collaboration and sharing of strategies for success.

**BOSTON TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAM:** Seventy BTR members will serve in schools four days per week, assigned to one classroom and mentor teacher for the whole year. Members will serve at schools for the full day; mirroring a teacher's schedule, they will serve in the classroom during all classes, as well as have periods throughout the day and after school for lesson planning, supervisory meetings, data work, team collaboration, and other responsibilities. Members will provide targeted interventions to students individually, in small groups, and as a whole class using ambitious, relevant, and dynamic instruction to engage students in learning. By adding an additional qualified, highly-trained individual to the classroom, members double the adult-to-student ratio for children, maximizing the classroom teacher's time and attention. Research has shown that consistent student participation in high-quality extended learning programs, whether extra help during class or in out-of-class sessions, can help close the achievement gap that divides low-income students from their more affluent peers (Balfanz et al. 2012). Classroom teams of a teacher and AmeriCorps member enable a greater degree of differentiated instruction, a research-based practice allowing for targeted instruction to small groups of students who are performing at different levels. Utilizing these research-based instructional practices and proven interventions, the corps will create learning environments that are both demanding and engaging and will provide the additional human capital required to prepare all students to succeed.

In addition to their service to the whole classroom, each member will also have responsibility for specific outcomes for at least five "target" students - students in their classrooms who are off-track or at risk of becoming off-track in at least one ABC early warning indicator (attendance, behavior, course performance). The leadership teams in each partner school will work with BPE Clinical Teacher Educators and data analysts to select students who meet the requirement detailed above and who will benefit most from additional academic engagement interventions. Members will meet individually with target students in and out of class to support student learning, set goals, discuss student progress against those goals, trouble-shoot challenges, and discuss other resources available to students that might help them reach their goals. Members will track target students' course performance on a monthly basis; they will collect data on each student's performance and discuss this information with the classroom teacher and other school-based experts to diagnose gaps in learning and identify proven instructional practices that will help the student. Members will work closely with

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classroom teachers and others who work with the target students to promote a coherent approach to each student's learning.

To monitor and improve target students' attendance, members will provide quarterly attendance reports to administrators, families, and students to identify the number of learning hours missed. These reports will include: a) the number of days a student was absent, late, left early, or skipped class, b) the corresponding number of learning hours the student has missed, and c) a rating of "red/yellow/green" to indicate how this affects the student's progress toward grade promotion and, if applicable, graduation. By providing this information in a user-friendly format, members enable school administrators to work with students and families to identify challenges to consistent school attendance.

DUDLEY PROMISE CORPS: 20 full-time DPC AmeriCorps members will serve five days per week to support in-class learning and comprehensive Extended Learning Time (ELT) programming in two elementary schools located in the Dudley Village Campus: the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School and the Orchard Gardens Pilot School. Each member will be placed in a pre-kindergarten through 5th grade classroom, filling a gap in early childhood support that other AmeriCorps and local programs are not currently addressing. During the school day, DPC members will serve in classrooms to support classroom instruction; lead guided reading time, writing workshops, number strings activities and other math-block activities; conduct whole-class interactive read-alouds; and manage classroom transitions. In addition, members will run engaging and healthy lunchtime activities including games/physical education and nutrition/healthy eating, using the time as an informal opportunity to mentor students, build community, and use conflict resolution techniques to manage playground conflicts.

DPC members will spend school day afternoons setting up and executing ELT activities to engage students in healthy and relevant learning opportunities. Three afternoons per week will be dedicated to leading activities including, but not limited to, the visual arts, music, drama, physical activities such as dance or sports, healthy eating/nutrition, science, history, social studies, and civic engagement. These activities are part of an effort to increase access to subjects which receive minimal attention during the regular school day and to address additional DVC student social-emotional needs. These activities will be led and managed by DPC corps members, who may also engage Dudley community members for assistance in planning or leading selected activities. The remaining afternoons each week will be dedicated to academic mentoring, in which corps members will support students with homework completion and current classroom material based on their own and teachers' observations of student

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learning throughout the week.

Like BTR members, DPC members will each be responsible for improving engagement among five target students who participate in the ELT afterschool activities. However, given the younger population served by DPC, interventions will be based around the social-emotional needs of students rather than formal academic assessments. DPC members will check in with each target student at least twice per week to talk about classroom behavior, attitude toward school, and other social-emotional factors related to their learning. DPC members will also track student attendance and provide quarterly attendance reports to administrators and families.

Throughout all activities, members will be responsible for increasing family and community engagement. In addition to contacting families regarding student attendance and performance, members will coordinate service projects to involve family members and students, lead communication strategies to involve families in parent council, schedule and conduct report card conferences, and lead curriculum nights to involve parents in their children's learning.

Strategy 2: Prepare teachers and community leaders. The Boston Promise Corps aims to improve student engagement while also supporting members' growth into teachers and civic leaders. Throughout the year, members will engage in significant personal and professional development activities to help them serve students.

BTR will prepare and deploy a corps of members with outstanding records of service, leadership, and academics. At least one day per week, BTR members will engage in graduate-level training leading to a Masters degree in Education from the University of Massachusetts Boston. BTR members are able to conduct interventions that couple high levels of engagement with high levels of rigor because they receive quality graduate-level training and also bring significant content expertise. DPC members will spend two mornings per week focused on professional development. Members will receive ongoing training to support their service activities as well as to build additional professional skills, foster esprit de corps, and prepare for life after service. See Section E for a more detailed member development plan.

c. Evidence-based/Evidence Informed and Measurable Community Impact: Studies conducted by Roland G. Fryer and The Hamilton Project have shown that four components of a successful educational system include: 1) a focus on human capital, 2) using student data to drive instruction, 3) providing individualized instruction and support, and 4) providing extended time on task (Fryer, 2012). To this end, the Mayor, Governor, BPE, and DSNI designed the Boston Promise Corps to address these key areas. Members will receive ongoing teacher training, professional development, and

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feedback based on classroom observations in order to improve their teaching and leadership abilities, supporting the human capital of Boston Public Schools. Members will utilize student test scores and classroom behavior, attendance, and other data to plan their work with students. Members will provide individualized attention and instruction in classrooms. In addition, DPC will provide afterschool homework help and instructional support in supplemental subjects (including the arts, physical education, and health) during extended days at school every week.

In addition to the evidence-informed program design, the specific activities and interventions with which Boston Promise Corps members will engage students are known to improve student learning. These include specific activities and techniques for student interaction (Lampert et al. 2010), using evidence of student learning to inform instruction (Gallimore et al. 2009), and working collaboratively with colleagues (Perez et al. 2007).

Boston Promise Corps members will carefully track the progress of their target students. They will be trained in data skills during orientation and throughout the year and will closely monitor students' progress. Each month, member supervisors will check in on student progress and next steps based on what the data shows. BPE, BTR, DSNI, Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School, and Orchard Gardens Pilot School all bring extensive knowledge about matching instructional and social-emotional interventions to students' strengths and needs, and will train and support members in these techniques. In addition, the DPC will be built on a set of best practices in ELT programming. Member trainings will include regular exposure to these best practices so that members are constantly building a set of pedagogies and approaches reflecting the latest strategies of the field.

IMPACT. The Boston Promise Corps will serve more than 4,000 Boston Public School students to increase academic engagement each year, for a total of more than 12,000 students served over three years. Each year, BTR and DPC will provide targeted interventions and/or extended learning time support to 730 students (350 through BTR, 380 through DPC's extended learning activities). Boston Promise Corps will use National Performance Measure ED27: of the 730 students who receive targeted interventions, 80% (584) will improve academic engagement demonstrated by an increase in attendance, completion of assignments including homework, teacher-reported participation, and attitude toward school. The outcomes of these target students will help us understand our broader impact on the students and schools served by the Boston Promise Corps.

Impact on target students will be measured through daily participation logs, school attendance logs, and quarterly teacher surveys measuring academic engagement (including class participation, homework and classroom assignments completed, attitude towards school, classroom behavior, and

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peer interactions). The Boston Promise Corps will utilize Ron Ferguson's Tripod Survey of Student Perceptions tool to track student attitudes and engagement. Developed and refined over ten years and used in thousands of classrooms across the globe, the Tripod survey assessment has been used as part of the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The Tripod survey comprises a well-designed, classroom-level data collection, analysis, and reporting system.

Boston Promise Corps' secondary goal is to prepare effective teachers who enter and remain in BPS teaching positions after their BTR year of service. BTR will train 70 members each year in classroom instruction and engagement. Members who successfully complete program requirements will be recommended for teacher licensure and become certified teachers; 85% of certified graduates will be placed as teachers in BPS. Over the three years, this will provide BPS with 160 well-trained, diverse teachers committed to Boston. Eighty percent of these teachers will teach in BPS for at least three years. In addition, it is anticipated that several DPC members will express interest in serving a second year of service with the Boston Promise Corps, this time within BTR.

d. Member Recruitment and Selection: DSNI and the current BTR Admissions/Recruitment team will ensure Boston Promise Corps fully enrolls all slots and recruits the highest quality candidates. BPE will conduct BTR member recruitment, and the AmeriCorps Program Director and DSNI will take primary responsibility for DPC member recruitment. All accepted members will demonstrate commitment to students and BPS, prior volunteer or community service experience, and the resiliency to complete a full year of AmeriCorps.

BTR actively recruits via a deep and targeted nationwide effort to identify high-quality, diverse candidates who are committed to serving the children of Boston, first as an AmeriCorps member and then as a full-time teacher. BTR begins its recruitment process a full year before the corps begins; recruitment for next year is underway (with applicants informed that the AmeriCorps program is contingent upon funding). BTR uses its website (including an interactive blog featuring reflections from current members, alumni and mentor teachers), recruitment websites such as Idealist, the AmeriCorps portal, Google Adwords, connections with "pipeline" organizations (such as Breakthrough Collaborative, City Year, Posse Foundation, and Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship), advertisements in public transit stations and local newspapers, and social media campaigns to reach the community at large. BTR recruits talented members from Boston through partnerships with local education, social service, faith-based and other community organizations. BTR has a track record of successfully recruiting members of color, achieving a consistent rate of at least 50% people of color in

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each corps.

BTR runs an extensive process to ensure the selection of members who will be able to provide students the highest quality support. This includes an application with transcripts and Selection Day with interviews, content area assessments, problem-solving activities, and a mini-lesson plan delivered to students. In the past four years the average admission rate was a highly-selective 12%; only one in eight applicants is admitted to BTR. All BTR AmeriCorps members are required to hold a bachelor's degree and to have demonstrated academic excellence in their content area at the undergraduate or graduate level. Ninety-six percent of past members came from selective colleges and universities. Of 2012-2013 members admitted, the average GPA was 3.4 and 13% held a graduate degree prior to enrollment. BTR's selection criteria are based on the best available research on teacher quality and our knowledge of the specific needs of BPS. Candidates must have excellent writing skills based on a rubric; high achievement in academic, professional, and community settings; and a strong commitment to Boston and civic engagement in general. Each candidate must demonstrate a set of critical dispositions drawn from research on teacher effectiveness.

The AmeriCorps Program Director will work with DSNI and BPE to recruit and select DPC members from the Dudley neighborhood. DSNI is a resident-led organization engaging Dudley area citizens in meaningful community improvement activities. Utilizing its extensive community network, DSNI will support recruitment in community and faith-based organizations within the Dudley Village Campus. DSNI will work with BTR admissions staff and with Roxbury Community College, Wheelock College, UMass Boston, and other local educational institutions to identify and recruit DPC members. In addition, BTR currently receives over 600 applications per year, including many from individuals with strong community outreach experience and a desire to serve, but without the experience or content expertise to become teachers. We will recruit DPC members from this pool of pre-screened applicants as well. Our goal is that at least half of DPC members will be members of the Roxbury and Northern Dorchester communities who are interested in devoting a year of their lives to service while building valuable professional skills for future employment. At minimum, members will have completed high school (or their GED equivalent) and either be working towards or have completed an associate's degree or higher; we expect about half of DPC members to already have a bachelor's degree. Members will have a passion for working with children and be interested in completing additional training in early childhood development and education; preference will be given to members who express interest in pursuing a career in education.

BTR and DSNI will work with the Ross Center for Disability Services at UMass Boston and the

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National Service Inclusion Project (NSIP) to devise outreach strategies to people with disabilities and to create an inclusive service environment. Boston Promise Corps will comply with the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; no qualified individual with a disability will be excluded from the program, and Boston Promise Corps will provide reasonable accommodations for members. BTR has experience successfully providing reasonable accommodations for interviews and service. Boston Promise Corps will work with various organizations to reach more candidates of color, such as the Black Educators Association of Massachusetts, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, university minority student associations, and the Historically Black College Network.

e. Member Training: Utilizing connections with BTR, Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA, the state commission on service and volunteerism), AmeriCorps Alums Greater Boston Chapter, and other national service programs, the Boston Promise Corps AmeriCorps staff will organize orientation and trainings to prepare members both for a year of service and for life after service. At the start of the service year in July, all Corps members will participate in a two-week orientation. The first week will orient members to AmeriCorps and the history of national service; MSA; the City of Boston; BPS; the Boston Promise Initiative; and Dudley Village Campus, BPE, and DSNI. Topics will include member roles and responsibilities, prohibited activities, and all other AmeriCorps standards for compliance, including avoiding prohibited activities when designing volunteer roles/projects. Members will receive introductory training on topics such as engaging parents and families in schools, implementing service-learning activities, and designing large-scale service projects. Members will participate in team-building exercises and a service project at the end of the week, as well as take the AmeriCorps Pledge together as the Boston Promise Corps. The second week of orientation will introduce members to the education system, BPS, their responsibilities in the classroom, conflict resolution, best practices in teaching and student engagement, and their roles in BTR and DPC.

After orientation, DPC members will be placed in classrooms for the Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School summer school program for two weeks, where they can practice some of the classroom management and instructional support techniques they have just learned. In August, DPC members will receive additional training from AmeriCorps program staff and local nonprofit leaders in early childhood development, education, tutoring techniques, mandated reporting, community outreach/organizing, curriculum planning, and community asset mapping. They will take an Introduction to Data Analysis training with BPE staff.

After the orientation, BTR members will begin Masters-level courses to prepare them to serve students, such as Foundations of Teaching and Child Development. BTR members will be introduced

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to the core interventions that they will deliver throughout the year through a two-week session with their supervisor, a Clinical Teacher Educator on BTR's staff, who will teach them content methods and other skills for delivering the interventions.

Before the end of the summer, all members will meet mentor teachers - the lead teachers in the classrooms in which they will serve - and receive an orientation to their school site, which includes a community mapping project. Members will participate in their host school's professional development along with the rest of the school staff to ensure integration into the school community, with the AmeriCorps Program Director making it clear to both members and school staff the distinction between AmeriCorps members and employees.

Members will continue to receive training and professional development throughout the year. BTR members will continue their Masters-level coursework, teambuilding activities, civic engagement exercises, and additional training one and a half days per week throughout the program year. Members' graduate courses provide targeted, relevant training and practice to implement the interventions described above. BTR members will receive extensive preparation to understand core learning and child development theories, the history and context of education in Boston, research-based approaches to literacy learning across the curriculum and across grade levels, specific techniques to teach English language learners and students with special needs, and year-long attention to teaching in specific subject areas (e.g., math, history). BTR's Clinical Teacher Educators (CTEs), who help supervise members, will also coach BTR members in schools to ensure they are applying what they have learned with fidelity and in ways that maximize student engagement.

DPC members will dedicate two mornings per week to personal and professional development. This will include weekly reflections in which members review their week and discuss successes and challenges; receive training related to their service activities, civic engagement, and professional skills; plan or implement service projects with neighborhood organizations (such as the Kroc Center, the Food Project, Haley House, or Roxbury Community College); participate in civic engagement activities (such as touring the State House); plan special program or school events; or shadow local nonprofit professionals in their daily activities. Throughout the year, BTR members will join DPC members on non-school service days to participate in all-corps Boston Promise Corps service projects and civic engagement activities, and to plan inter-school service learning curriculum. Some DPC members may also opt to be part of a "pre-BTR" track, in which they can take additional coursework to strengthen their skills in particular content areas in preparation for a transition into the BTR corps for a second year of AmeriCorps service. This coursework will be arranged by BTR staff in concert

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with local universities for interested members.

f. Member Supervision: All corps members will have significant support during their year of service. Two full-time AmeriCorps program staff, a Program Director and Member Development Coordinator, will ensure members receive the necessary training, support, and formal supervision during service. BTR members will be supervised by the Program Director, BPE Clinical Teacher Educators (CTEs), and mentor teachers (see member activities). CTEs and mentors will have daily oversight of members' performance and activities; in addition, CTEs will meet at least biweekly with members. CTEs are expert and experienced teachers, school administrators, and teacher coaches; mentor teachers are exemplary classroom teachers within host schools. The Program Director will be responsible for training and supporting CTEs and mentors on AmeriCorps requirements and regulations, including prohibited activities. BPE Chief Program Officer (see staffing section) will oversee the Program Director.

A new Member Development Coordinator (MDC), supervised by the Program Director, will provide formal supervision to the DPC members, meeting biweekly for individual check-ins and weekly for whole-corps reflections. The MDC will have team management and supervisory experience, ideally in an AmeriCorps setting. The Program Director and Member Development Coordinator will conduct individual midyear and final member evaluations for BTR and DPC, respectively. Both staff will keep an open-door policy, allowing members to drop in to discuss any aspect of their service from classroom management to tutoring tips, from professional development to the various challenges of service. In addition, staff will assess member satisfaction and needs through regular emails, surveys, and other tools.

The Program Director will also conduct regular monitoring site visits to all schools to ensure compliance with AmeriCorps regulations and to make observations regarding corps member performance.

g. Member Experience: To promote esprit de corps, Boston Promise Corps members will meet quarterly for daylong retreats with the AmeriCorps program staff to reflect on the service experience and civic responsibility. In addition, the members at each school site will meet as a group with program staff each quarter to further reflect and provide feedback on their service, with session topics determined by both program staff and the members.

Members will connect to the AmeriCorps identity and larger service movement through participation in MSA's statewide AmeriCorps Opening Day, an inter-corps MLK Day of Service project,

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additional national service days, AmeriCorps Alums events, and other activities throughout the year. All members will wear the AmeriCorps logo during service hours to identify themselves as AmeriCorps members in the schools and in the community. Members will be recognized throughout the year at their quarterly meetings, a mid-year celebration, and an end-of-year AmeriCorps graduation ceremony.

h. Volunteer Generation: The Boston Promise Corps will recruit, train, and manage 700 student, family, and community volunteers during year one of the program, leveraging over 3,000 volunteer hours. BTR and DPC members will work together to plan, organize, manage, and lead 500 volunteers in quarterly Dudley Village Campus neighborhood service projects, as well as citywide service projects on National Days of Service such as MLK, Jr. Day and September 11. BTR AmeriCorps members will work with school leaders to design sustainable projects that address a need within their respective schools and engage 100 volunteers. DPC AmeriCorps members will recruit 100 members of the Dudley community to assist with special projects and activities of extended day clubs/groups at their school sites. To ensure members do not recruit volunteers for unallowable activities, AmeriCorps program staff will approve all projects and provide training to members on the requirements, including a reminder of prohibited activities.

i. Organizational Commitment to AmeriCorps Identification: The Mayor's Office is committed to promoting the AmeriCorps identity, and both BPE and DSNI will oversee members and participating community organizations in this commitment. The AmeriCorps logo will be present on all program materials including advertisements, handbooks, and contracts. It will also appear on BPE and DSNI websites, as well as a new Boston Promise Corps web page hosted by BPE. Each participating host school, government office, and community organization will prominently display the AmeriCorps logo on site. BPE and DSNI will post an 'AmeriCorps wall' in their offices with information on members, accomplishments, and the logo.

### Organizational Capability

a. Organizational Background and Staffing: The Mayor's Office has selected BPE to take primary responsibility for management of the Boston Promise Corps, given BPE's eight years of experience running a successful AmeriCorps program. BPE's mission is to drive exceptional outcomes for all students by developing great teachers and great schools. BPE was established in 1984 by corporate and philanthropic leaders to support the city's schools. In 2003, then-BPS Superintendent Thomas Payzant asked nonprofit partner BPE to incubate BTR under the leadership of Jesse Solomon, who had begun a pilot version of the program within his own school. As BTR Director, Mr. Solomon managed a \$5M

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program with a staff of 27 people and raised over \$30M. In 2011, Jesse Solomon became the Executive Director of BPE.

BPE is governed by a board of trustees chaired by Chad Gifford, Chairman Emeritus of Bank of America. The board works with senior staff leaders including Executive Director, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Program Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Development Director, and Director of Organizational Learning to ensure strong financial oversight and grant administration. The board assists with fundraising, monitors the program's success toward goals, and supports and evaluates the Executive Director.

Chief Program Officer Simon Hess will supervise and coordinate all of Boston Promise Corps' programs. Formerly, Mr. Hess was CEO of Civitas Schools, an administrator and teacher in BPS, and a whole school change coach for BPE. BPE Director of Organizational Learning Ed Liu, who was formerly Assistant Professor of Educational Administration at Rutgers University, leads BTR's research and evaluation efforts. Dr. Liu will partner with the Center for Educational Policy Research at Harvard and Arbor Consulting to conduct a three-year AmeriCorps evaluation on the pilot Boston Promise Corps. Carolyn Chen, BTR's Director of Admissions and Recruitment, will oversee BTR member recruitment and share best practices for DPC member recruitment. The DSNI School Partnerships Coordinator will oversee partnership management, assist with DPC member recruitment, and provide additional resources to the program and members.

BPE and DSNI will work together to hire one full-time Boston Promise Corps Director to oversee the initiative, including recruitment, selection, and management of members; supporting whole-corps initiatives and activities of the Boston Promise Corps; managing partnerships; leading community outreach efforts and collaborations in the Dudley neighborhood; and ensuring grant compliance with all CNCS, AmeriCorps, and MSA regulations, including assisting the Mayor's Office with completing all fiscal and programmatic reporting. The Program Director will be hired at least two months prior to the July 1 program start date; the ideal candidate will have a minimum of five years of professional experience in nonprofit or program management; familiarity with AmeriCorps and national service; and familiarity with Boston Public Schools and the Dudley neighborhood in particular.

BPE and DSNI will also hire a full-time Member Development Coordinator to implement member training, lead initial planning of service projects for all National Days of Service, and provide formal supervision of DPC members. The Member Development Coordinator will ideally have at least three years of professional experience in nonprofit programs and experience managing teams, preferably in an AmeriCorps program.

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A part-time summer intern will assist with program startup, including completing member criminal history checks, collecting and filing member documents, and ensuring all members are enrolled in the My AmeriCorps portal. The intern may also assist the program staff with orientation or others events as needed.

BPE Grants Manager Melissa Penney will oversee program design and implementation until the Program Director is hired; she will also assist the Mayor's office and Program Director with grant reporting and compliance monitoring. Prior to joining BPE, Ms. Penney served as an AmeriCorps Program Officer with the Massachusetts Service Alliance; she previously worked with Big Sister Association of Greater Boston, MetroWest Health Foundation, and Harvard School of Public Health, and she holds a Masters in Social Work from Boston University. Current BTR AmeriCorps Program Director Cassandra Pagán will transition out of her role after the current program year, but she will oversee the transfer of responsibilities to the new Program Director and Member Development Coordinator. Ms. Pagán joined BPE in 2011; she holds a B.A. from Colorado College, served as an AmeriCorps member for a year with Tahoe Women's Services, and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Greater Boston AmeriCorps Alums.

BTR's fifteen Clinical Teacher Educators (CTEs) will teach M.Ed. courses, provide BTR member training, and coach and supervise BTR members throughout the year. Two directors of Clinical Education will oversee the CTEs and member training curriculum: Lynne Godfrey, the former manager of the team of teacher coaches that support BTR alumni, and Marcie Osinsky, a former teacher and teacher educator, has managed the BTR members' coursework for eight years. These positions are funded through other federal resources and therefore do not appear on the AmeriCorps budget.

A Boston Promise Corps Advisory Board will also be convened to provide strategic guidance on the program design, and to deeply engage stakeholders in the program's success in engaging students and increasing academic achievement. In particular, Advisory Board force will engage leaders with deep expertise in extended learning time to inform this aspect of programming. Other Advisory Board members will include representatives from the Governor's and Mayor's offices, host school principals (or designees), representatives from BPE and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Boston Public Schools ELT leaders, and nonprofit and faith-based leaders from the Dudley community.

b. Sustainability: The Mayor's Office, Governor's Office, BPE, and DSNI are fully invested in the Boston Promise Corps. In addition, Boston Public Schools is already fully invested in BTR - the district commits \$700,000 annually as well as significant programmatic support which will help support the

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new Boston Promise Corps. Superintendent Carol Johnson is an ex-officio member of the BPE's Board of Trustees, ensuring alignment with district priorities. BTR was recently selected by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as a priority provider for turnaround schools, which qualifies BPE to manage state and local contracts. Boston Promise Corps will work closely with BPS to ensure the program meets district needs, especially in regards to student engagement, and will collaborate with Wheelock College and UMass-Boston for member training.

Boston Promise Corps is a true community collaboration, and will remain sustainable beyond AmeriCorps funding with continued support from the participating members of the Boston Promise Initiative, including support in the forms of funding, space, supplies, in-kind donations, collaborative ELT activities and field trips, and community-wide projects. Members of the Boston Promise Initiative are diverse and include Mayor Thomas Menino and the City of Boston, Governor Deval Patrick and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, DSNI, BPE, Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School, Superintendent Carol Johnson and BPS, and range from the Boston Police Department to Artists for Humanity. Each of these organizations plays a role in funding, coordinating, and providing holistic services to the Dudley community.

c. Compliance and Accountability: Strong oversight of the AmeriCorps program ensures both compliance and success. The AmeriCorps Program Director and Member Development Coordinator will attend trainings sponsored by MSA, including ongoing program director meetings. They will be responsible for training all relevant staff on AmeriCorps regulations and the member handbook through an orientation at the start of the year and through ongoing trainings and updates. Classroom teachers who will work with DPC and BTR members in the classroom will attend an orientation with the AmeriCorps Program Director prior to the start of each school year. The Program Director will conduct formal and informal site visits to all school sites for compliance monitoring, and will hold office hours for members so that potential issues can be identified and addressed proactively. At the start of the year, members will sign a contract confirming that they have read and understand and will follow all policies. Members who violate compliance will face disciplinary action ranging from verbal warnings to dismissal. The Program Director, with support from BPE's Grants Manager, will ensure the program and budget is compliant with federal reporting requirements. BPE's CFO and Controller will participate in the state commission's financial orientation at the start of each program year to understand the specific requirements of the AmeriCorps grant. At least one AmeriCorps staff member will attend the National Conference on Service and Volunteering each year to learn best practices and trends in the field.

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### Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy

The Mayor's Office respectfully requests CNCS support for 90 full-time members at \$13,300 per MSY for a total of \$1,196,993. The Mayor's Office will entrust BPE and DSNI to provide additional resources through other funding sources to meet the total program cost of \$1,577,119. The majority of the AmeriCorps program budget (77%) is dedicated to direct member support costs including living allowance and health insurance. The remaining share will allow the Mayor's Office, BPE, and DSNI to provide adequate staffing and resources to successfully implement this new initiative.

The Mayor's Office will assign fiscal responsibility for the program to BPE, and the AmeriCorps grant will represent 14% of BPE's organizational budget. BPE's current funding base is diverse, with 63% from government sources, 24% from foundations, 12% from our endowment, and 1% from corporations, individuals, and earned income. BPE Development Director Melanie Winklosky, who has served as Chief of Staff at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Liz O'Conner, development advisor for DSNI, will lead efforts to continue to diversify and grow our funding base, engage BPE's and DSNI's boards in fundraising, leverage matching funds, cultivate corporate partnerships, and increase in-kind donations. The program has obtained resource commitments for the matching portion of this project from DSNI, the U.S. Education Department Investing in Innovation program, and BPE's endowment. Pending sources include Boston Public Schools, Stone Foundation, Harold Whitworth Pierce Foundation, and Barr Foundation. BPE has already raised 48% of its FY14 budget, and will continue to seek both public and private funds to support the program.

The proposed budget will support all aspects of the program outlined in the program narrative: recruitment, admissions, orientation, background checks (including CORI/SORI and FBI fingerprint checks), coursework, school placement, support and supervision, member living allowances and health insurance, applicable taxes (BTR members are exempt from paying FICA), graduation, program evaluation, program management (including finance), grant reporting, dissemination activities, AmeriCorps gear, staff training (including CNCS travel), and professional development for staff, mentors, and principals.

Boston Promise Corps' members will meet critical student engagement needs that would otherwise remain unmet in the Boston Public Schools. This program is a highly cost-effective way for the district to provide individualized academic support to students that it is unable to staff with paraprofessionals, additional teachers, or other supports in some of the highest need schools in the city. With the leveraging of private and local public funds, the Boston Promise Corps will provide

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extraordinarily valuable support in these tight-budget times, enabling this high-need urban community to recruit, train, mentor, and retain a cadre of talented new teachers and community leaders while simultaneously providing additional individualized student support, ELT, and family engagement to the neighborhood's students and their families. As a Governor and Mayor Initiative, the Boston Promise Corps will serve as a model of nonprofit collaboration in the City of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and across the nation.

### **Evaluation Summary or Plan**

N/A

### **Amendment Justification**

N/A

### **Clarification Summary**

N/A

### **Continuation Changes**

N/A