

HOUSING ACCESS IS THE MISSING LINK TO EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

in the Greater Boston Area

\$876,180

**30
Families**

**75
Students**

A District-Level Analysis of Enrollment, Housing Costs, and Opportunity Gaps in
Massachusetts' Highest-Performing School Districts.

Greater Boston is home to some of the highest-performing public school districts in Massachusetts. Yet access to these districts remains deeply unequal.

Despite representing **10.2% of students statewide**, Black or African American students are significantly underrepresented in Greater Boston's top-ranked school districts. This disparity is not driven by academic readiness or family ambition, but by housing costs that far exceed the support available to families who qualify for assistance.

This report examines ten of Greater Boston's highest-performing school districts and demonstrates how targeted philanthropic investment in housing access can unlock educational opportunity at scale.

An investment of \$876,180 provides:

- **30 families** access to stable housing in high-opportunity districts
- **75 students of color** entry into top-performing public schools
- **Measurable reductions** in district-level equity gaps
- **Stronger, more inclusive communities** across Greater Boston

This analysis is designed to support grantmakers, foundations, and partners seeking data-driven, outcomes-oriented approaches to educational equity.

High-Performing School Districts Exclude Students of Color at Scale in Boston

Across Massachusetts’ highest-ranked public school districts, Black or African American students remain significantly underrepresented relative to the statewide average of 10.2%.

Despite Massachusetts’ strong academic outcomes overall, enrollment patterns reveal persistent inequities in access to the districts most closely associated with educational opportunity.

Black Student Enrollment in Greater Boston’s Top-Ranked Districts

School District	% Black or African American Students	Equity Gap vs. State Average
Belmont	3.7%	-63.8%
Brookline	6.4%	-37.3%
Dover-Sherborn	3.5%	-65.3%
Hopkinton	0.7%	-93.1%
Lexington	3.9%	-61.9%
Newton	4.7%	-54.0%
Wayland	4.7%	-54.1%
Wellesley	3.8%	-62.7%
Weston	6.4%	-37.6%
Winchester	1.0%	-90.3%

Why This Matters

In each of these districts, underrepresentation reflects structural barriers to access rather than differences in academic readiness. Housing affordability remains the dominant constraint shaping who can live in—and attend school within—these communities.

Data Notes

- District rankings are based on 2025–2026 data from U.S. News & World Report and Niche.com.
- Enrollment data sourced from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, academic year ending June 2026.
- Equity Gap reflects the difference between district-level Black or African American student enrollment and the statewide average.

Housing Costs Are the Primary Barrier to Educational Access in Greater Boston

In Massachusetts' highest-performing school districts, housing costs—not eligibility or academic readiness—determine who can access opportunity.

Families receiving housing assistance face market rents that far exceed allowable support levels. The resulting gap makes these communities effectively inaccessible, even when families qualify for assistance and schools have capacity.

Average Monthly Housing Costs in Greater Boston's Top-Ranked Districts

School District	Market Rent	Housing Assistance	Monthly Housing Gap
Belmont	3,820	2,321	-1,499
Brookline	3,620	2,321	-1,299
Dover-Sherborn	5,070	2,321	-2,749
Hopkinton	3,737	2,321	-1,416
Lexington	4,070	2,321	-1,749
Newton	3,320	2,321	-999
Wayland	4,987	2,321	-2,666
Wellesley	4,452	2,321	-2,131
Weston	10,153	2,321	-7,832
Winchester	4,320	2,321	-1,999

Why This Matters

Monthly housing gaps ranging from **\$1,000 to more than \$7,800** make long-term residency unattainable for families relying on housing assistance. Without targeted intervention, access to high-performing schools remains determined by housing prices rather than student potential.

Data Notes

- Market rents reflect average monthly costs for three-bedroom homes, inclusive of utilities.
- Housing assistance reflects combined Housing Choice Voucher payments and utility allowances.
- Sources include Zillow, Realtor.com, Redfin, RentCafe, Apartments.com, local MLS listings, and Public Housing Authority schedules.

Targeted Housing Support Unlocks Educational Opportunity in Boston

The housing gaps outlined on the previous page are not theoretical—they are precise, predictable, and solvable. By bridging the difference between market rents and existing housing assistance, A Welcome Home Inc enables families to access communities tied to Massachusetts’ highest-performing public schools.

This approach does not replace public housing programs or require policy change. It complements existing systems by addressing the final affordability barrier that determines where families can live—and where children can attend school.

Funding Impact By District

School District	Annual Donor Support	Cost Per Student	Equity Gap Reduction
Belmont	53,964	7,195	0.2%
Brookline	46,764	6,235	0.1%
Dover-Sherborn	98,964	13,195	0.6%
Hopkinton	50,964	6,795	0.2%
Lexington	62,964	8,395	0.1%
Newton	35,964	4,795	0.1%
Wayland	95,964	12,795	0.3%
Wellesley	76,704	10,227	0.2%
Weston	281,964	37,595	0.4%
Winchester	71,964	9,595	0.2%

Why This Approach Works

This model produces measurable results with limited, targeted investment:

- Small, targeted investments generate measurable district-level change
- Per-student costs remain modest relative to educational outcomes
- Funding scales predictably across communities

Rather than diffusing resources broadly, this approach concentrates capital where it has the greatest leverage—at the intersection of housing access and educational opportunity.

What This Investment Makes Possible

Educational inequity in the Greater Boston area's highest-performing school districts is not a function of academic readiness, but of housing access.

Targeted philanthropic investment can unlock opportunity quickly and measurably.

Investment Summary

\$876,180

Provides stable housing for **30 families** across Greater Boston's highest-ranked school districts

75 students of color

Gain access to top-performing public schools at an average cost of **\$11,682 per student**

Measurable impact

A **4% increase in student enrollment** reduces district-level equity gaps by approximately **2.5%**

Stronger communities

Families integrate into districts with demonstrated academic excellence and long-term opportunity

Why This Matters Now

Massachusetts' educational landscape is already defined by excellence. The challenge is ensuring that excellence is accessible. By addressing housing as the final barrier, philanthropic capital can produce durable, measurable change without waiting for systemic reform.

A Clear, Actionable Opportunity for Philanthropic Partnership

A Welcome Home Inc is seeking **\$876,180** to fully fund this initiative across ten of Massachusetts' highest-performing school districts.

This investment will:

- Secure **three homes per district**
- Serve **30 families and 75 students**
- Produce **measurable, district-level reductions in opportunity gaps** within one academic year

Funding may be structured as:

- A single grant
- A pooled foundation partnership
- District- or region-specific sponsorship

Why A Welcome Home Inc

A Welcome Home Inc specializes in bridging the gap between housing assistance and market realities in high-opportunity communities. Our work focuses on precision, accountability, and measurable outcomes—ensuring that philanthropic capital translates directly into access and opportunity.

We work in coordination with public housing authorities, school districts, and local partners to ensure families are placed successfully and supported sustainably.


Next Steps

Grantmakers interested in supporting this initiative or exploring partnership opportunities are invited to connect with us directly.

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Methodology and Data Sources

This report draws on publicly available data and market research to assess enrollment patterns, housing affordability, and opportunity gaps across Massachusetts' highest-performing school districts.

District Selection

- Top ten districts based on 2025–2026 rankings from U.S. News & World Report and Niche.com

Enrollment Data

- Student demographic data sourced from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (academic year ending June 2026)
- Statewide Black or African American student enrollment average: 10.2%

Housing Costs

- Market rents reflect average monthly costs for three-bedroom homes, inclusive of utilities
- Sources include Zillow, Realtor.com, Redfin, RentCafe, Apartments.com, and local MLS listings

Housing Assistance

- Assistance levels reflect combined Housing Choice Voucher payments and utility allowances as determined by local Public Housing Authorities

Assumptions

- Average household size: 2.5 students
- Three homes funded per district
- All figures rounded to the nearest dollar

Disclaimer

This report is for informational purposes only. While data is believed to be accurate, A Welcome Home Inc makes no warranties regarding completeness or future outcomes. Figures are subject to change based on market conditions.