



Summaries of External Reviewer Comments on Successful SIF Subgrantee Applications

Boston Private Industry Council (\$300,000)

The Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) has been a leader in Success Boston's transition coaching, the intervention is core to their mission, and they are well positioned to grow. PIC has a holistic model, targeting a very high need student population, and the organization is data driven in its work, frequently partnering in local and regional research initiatives focused on underserved youth.

PIC is a critical partner for BosC4C's work with community colleges, and will be an important resource for newer organizations that come on board with the coaching expansion. PIC has a proven track record of success in this work and has provided strong evidence of their ability to sustain and grow the coaching model beyond SIF funding.

PIC's proposal demonstrates deep expertise with community college students, long-term relationships with local higher education institutions, a focus on priority populations, and a strong track record of implementing post-secondary success programming.

The PIC received high scores from BosC4C's review team on their written proposal and provided a strong site visit that reinforced their fit with the BosC4C initiative and model of coaching, as well as the SIF in their ability to scale over time and beyond the grant.

Bottom Line (\$400,000)

Bottom Line has a strong track record and the transition coaching intervention model is core to its work. The organization proposes to serve the largest number of students amongst all applicants and its well-trained staff is poised for high capacity and growth potential.

Bottom Line's proposal scored highly on all of the elements of the rubric, including capacity for SIF engagement and growth, potential for impact, strong existing partnerships with higher education institutions, and organizational capacity. In addition, their plan for expansion into 2-year colleges indicates an even greater focus on BosC4C's priority populations.

College Bound Dorchester (\$130,000)

College Bound Dorchester (CBD) is one of the city's leaders in serving proven-risk or court-involved young people. As a current Success Boston grantee, they are an active and positive participant in the

learning community. Over the past year, they have built out talent and professional development strategies, as well as their data capacity, strengthening the overall organization. CBD's retention rate for students in college from the fall 2012 to fall 2013 was 67% higher than the national average for students in their target population.

CBD's proposal demonstrates strong evidence of its ability to integrate data into the overall organization and work plan. CBD's proposal was noted for its overall strength, focus on all of BosC4C's priority populations, strong capacity for SIF engagement, established partnerships with a track record of success, and demonstrated ability to recruit staff with relevant experience for the highly-disengaged population of youth they serve. In addition, CBD's strategic plan calls for growth in post-secondary support, which aligns with the intent of BosC4C's planned expansion, and the overall SIF goal of building capacity.

Freedom House (\$150,000)

Transition coaching is core to Freedom House's work, and growth is part of their current strategic plan. FH's theory of change is based on engaging students as soon as they enter high school and working with them through college graduation.

Freedom House has been a strong contributor to the Success Boston network. Through BosC4C, they plan to deepen their partnership with UMass-Boston and Bunker Hill Community College, priority campuses for the initiative and top destinations for Boston graduates. Evidence of their depth of partnership is reflected in a \$25k match funding commitment directly from UMass-Boston.

Overall, FH demonstrated to the BosC4C Review Team a strong track record, deep institutional partnerships, and a well-aligned proposal for BosC4C showing coaching as core to their work and poised for continued expansion beyond SIF.

Hyde Square Task Force (\$160,000)

Hyde Square Task Force (HSTF) has been a core partner of Success Boston since the initiative's launch. HSTF has a track record of postsecondary programming that is embedded within its overall program model. HSTF employs a diverse coaching staff and serves low-income, first-generation students of color; of whom more than 50% attend community college. HSTF has existing deep relationships and partnerships with local high schools.

HSTF's proposal demonstrated a focus on priority populations, existing partnerships with priority local higher education institutions (including Bunker Hill Community College and UMass Boston), strong potential for impact, and a willingness to expand in alignment with SIF's goal of scaling effective practices.

Match Education (\$110,000)

Match Beyond is fundamentally very aligned with the BosC4C model, in its incorporation of success coaching – and the nature of this coaching – and a focus on postsecondary completion. The proposal also

represents a very innovative and “disruptive innovation” for the landscape through its use of an online, competency-based degree program through an established partnership with Southern New Hampshire University’s College For America. The organization has a track record of being data and results-driven, and has the capacity to manage and engage fully with SIF through BosC4C.

Match is also very well positioned to grow over time, and beyond the SIF project, with a long-term plan for financial and programmatic sustainability. As evidence of this, Match has already completed a large portion of their \$5 million fundraising goal before they anticipate breaking even and being sustainable for the long term. They have ambitious growth goals for the number of students they will serve.

Finally, there are programmatic growth opportunities through Match Beyond. For Success Boston, Match introduces an opportunity to expand the student pipeline to include more public charter school students and graduates. Given the competency-based model and flexible entry point to their program, Match is also a potential strategy to reach college stop-outs, to increase their postsecondary completion rates.

Sociedad Latina (\$100,000)

Sociedad Latina (SL) describes an intentional partnership with the dual enrollment pathway at Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, a priority 2-year institution of higher education. The organization has expressed willingness to develop additional partnerships with 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education in its neighborhood, including Wentworth Institute of Technology, Roxbury Community College, and the Colleges of the Fenway.

Transition coaching is a part of its student support model and they have the potential for growth, because they are moving into a larger facility, which will enable them to support more students. SL brings cultural competencies that may enhance the network, and a focus on high-needs students and high schools.

SL’s proposal demonstrates a focus on priority populations, a 40-year track record of success in the youth development field, a coaching model that includes dual-language support, and a plan for expanding their postsecondary program in alignment with SIF scale goals.

Steppingstone Foundation (\$100,000)

Steppingstone has a 25-year track record of high student completion rates and the Success Boston transition coaching model is part of their planned expansion into post-secondary programming. Steppingstone has information for about 93% of students who complete their flagship program, and of those participants, 99% have graduated from high school, 92% of these graduates have enrolled at a four-year college, and more than 80% of Steppingstone Scholars who enroll in a four-year college complete their degrees within six years.

Steppingstone has identified a need to serve community college students, a priority population for BosC4C. Of the 46 Steppingstone students who have attended a community college, 9% completed an Associate’s degree, 22% are still attending, and 35% did not complete the community college program (another 28% transferred to a 4-year college). Through BosC4C, they propose to focus their efforts on

public four-year as well as community college students. While the organization is relatively new to coaching, they have been proactive in seeking out learning and best practices from peer organizations in the Success Boston network. As a result, they have already begun to implement elements of the BosC4C model, and their proposed work is highly aligned.

Historically, Steppingstone's work has focused on high-achieving students, but they are broadening their populations and as part of the review process expressed a willingness to take on assigned students as necessary. Steppingstone hopes to learn more about college coaching, expand their post-secondary programming and incorporate the model into their current work in ways that accommodate the needs of a diverse set of students, including priority populations for BosC4C (BPS graduates, community college students).

West End House Boys & Girls Club (\$150,000)

Transition coaching is part of West End House's continuum of student services. WEH is the only organization with an embedded partnership with Mass Bay Community College, a destination campus for Boston Public Schools students and a priority campus for the BosC4C initiative. WEH proposed to take referrals from other Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston, which is an interesting scaling opportunity for serving more students in Boston over the long term. WEH serves a population of Boston youth geographically isolated from the rest of the city.

WEH has a full pipeline of holistic services for young people at all ages; their youth development strategy continues academic programming and wrap-around social emotional support for its members beyond age 18.

In summary, specific strengths identified in the review process include: WEH's strong financial position, their fluency with data and information management, and established partnership with a priority campus.