



# STEPS TO SUCCESS

## INVESTMENT RATIONALE

### WHY STEPS TO SUCCESS?

Steps to Success (STS) is a comprehensive achievement program that works with students and their families from 4th through 12th grade and into college. STS' intense relationship-building model is based on its close collaboration with the Brookline Housing Authority, the public schools and the Brookline Community Fund. With 86% of STS students enrolling in college and 72% graduating within 6 years of enrollment, the 10 years-old program has clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of its personalized, student-centered approach.

### WHY INVEST NOW?

An investment in STS will allow the program to develop in the following ways:

- Extend program services to follow students' progress through college
- Expand reach to serve low-income students in Brookline who do not live in public housing
- Begin working with students and their families even earlier (kindergarten or 1st grade)
- Formalize organizational structure to ensure program sustainability
- Improve ability to help similar communities adapt and replicate this model

## OUTCOMES

STEPS TO SUCCESS	BROOKLINE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
% OF STUDENTS GOING TO COLLEGE (HS CLASS OF '09)	
86%	92.8% <sup>a</sup>
% OF STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM COLLEGE WITHIN 6 YEARS (HS CLASS OF '03)	
72% <sup>b</sup>	N/A <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Brookline High Schools

<sup>b</sup>Includes projected numbers

<sup>c</sup>Data unavailable from Brookline High

## RECOMMENDED APPROACH

Social Impact Research recommends college access and success programs that include the three components shown in the table to the right. This table shows some of the activities the organization undertakes related to each component.

### ACADEMIC PREPARATION AND ENRICHMENT

- Tutoring services
- Preparation for college admission tests
- Academic enrichment courses for core subjects
- Academic enrichment courses for additional subjects
- Academic advising services

### COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE AND ASPIRATIONS

- Long-term mentors
- Extracurricular activities
- Visits to colleges and/or college fairs
- Internships/work experience
- College application assistance
- Summer bridge programs
- Support during college

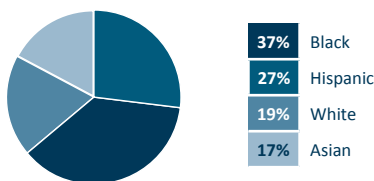
### FINANCIAL AID AND PLANNING

- Assistance with federal financial aid application (FAFSA)
- Assistance with private scholarship applications
- Assistance with loan applications
- Financial aid education and awareness for parents

## POPULATION SERVED BY STEPS TO SUCCESS

Step to Success is open to all children living in Brookline public housing regardless of academic performance.

### RACE AND ETHNICITY



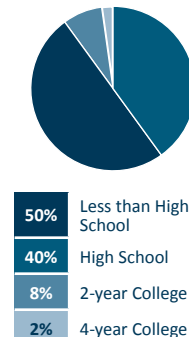
As reported by the organization

### FAMILY INCOME



As reported by the organization

### PARENT EDUCATION



As reported by the organization

### PARTNERS

#### HIGH SCHOOL

Brookline High School

#### UNIVERSITY

Boston College

Simmons College

Newbury College

Pine Manor College

Boston University

Emmanuel College

# STEPS TO SUCCESS

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES HIGHLIGHTS

### SYSTEMIC CHANGE

- Received the Nellie Mae Education Foundation's Catalyst for Change Award for their strong social impact model\*
- Provides assistance to Brookline Public Schools to improve staff ability to develop college aspirations among students
- Hosted symposium attended by 300 education and housing practitioners and policymakers; will publish two reports in fall 2010 about best practices

\*An organization's research-based theory about the best way to address a particular social problem

### GROWTH POTENTIAL

- Provided assistance to four cities as they began to implement similar programs
- Currently works with all Brookline public housing children; aiming to serve all low-income children in Brookline
- Focused on building staffing and governance infrastructure to sustain operations and future growth; evaluating new potential markets as the Brookline market is nearly saturated

## PROGRAM PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

AGE OF COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAM	# OF STUDENTS SERVED 2009	STARTING GRADE OF PROGRAM ENTRANTS
10 years	286	4th
AVERAGE GPA OF STUDENTS IN 9TH GRADE	AVERAGE GPA OF STUDENTS GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL	% OF STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH PROGRAM
2.50	2.56	90%

## UNIQUE ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM

STS' comprehensive program enables widespread outreach and success through the following strategies:

- Encouraging all students residing in Brookline public housing to participate in the program through door to door outreach
- Developing deep relationships with students and their families, STS advisors create a college-going mindset beginning in 4th grade
- A yearly Student Success Plan guides each student through the steps necessary for personal and academic success
- Embedded within the public school system, STS has full access to student records, and collaborates with teachers and administrators

## ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

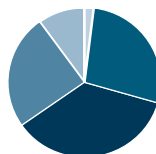
Financial sustainability is analyzed with three years of data including debt to equity ratio, current ratio, cash reserves, funding diversity, and growth rate.

COST PER BENEFICIARY	# OF MONTHS IN CASH RESERVES 2008
\$2,492*	2.5**
TOTAL ORGANIZATION BUDGET	PROGRAM SIZE AS % OF ORGANIZATION
\$987,360	100%

\* Expenses/total number of students served, excluding students who participate in grade-level but not long-range STS program

\*\*Nonprofits are typically expected to have 3-6 months in reserves

### MAIN SOURCES OF PROGRAM FUNDING



29%	Public Schools of Brookline
28%	Government Grants
25%	Private Foundations
13%	Brookline Housing Authority
5%	Corporate grants

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

- ED's experience spans government and nonprofit sectors; deep understanding of grassroots organizing and coalition-building for at-risk populations
- STS is an evolution of the Brookline School Community Partnership that the ED established to increase school success among low income students
- Team brings extensive experience in grassroots organizing, education, and youth development; undergoing organizational assessment to identify gaps and fill critical areas (e.g., financial planning/management, data analysis)

## MISSION

"Steps to Success is a comprehensive school success and college preparation program for low-income students, dedicated to fostering educational equity and ending generational poverty. Steps to Success's mission is to make the dream of a college education a reality for all our students and their families."

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## ABOUT ROOT CAUSE'S SOCIAL IMPACT RESEARCH

SIR is the independent research department of Root Cause, a research and consulting firm dedicated to mobilizing the nonprofit, public, and business sectors to work together in a new social impact market. SIR aggregates, analyzes, and disseminates the best information available about social issues and the performance of nonprofit organizations.

SIR research reports include social issue reports, state reports, and organization reports that are designed for social impact investors to fill the information gap between high performing organizations and valuable resources. This organization report describes one of the seven college access and success organizations that SIR selected in Boston. For further information on the SIR analysis process, please refer to our methodology.

If you are interested in investing in this organization, please contact the person listed above.