



To: The Honorable Charlie Baker  
Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Cc: The Honorable Karyn Polito, Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth  
Kristen Lepore, Secretary, Administration & Finance  
Jim Peysner, Secretary, Executive Office of Education  
Steven Kadish, Chief of Staff to Governor Baker  
Joel Barrera, Deputy Chief for Cabinet Affairs, Office of Governor Baker  
Lauren Peters, Director, Health Care Policy & Legislative Affairs, Administration & Finance

From: Marty Martinez, President and CEO, Mass Mentoring Partnership

Date: December 19th, 2016

Re: **Mentoring Matching Grants (line item 7061-9634)**

We are extremely grateful for your current and past support of mentoring and empowering youth-adult relationships, from your willingness to speak publicly about the benefits, to your backing of the Mentoring Matching Grants line item (7061-9634), ***the only state funding dedicated specifically to supporting formal, structured youth mentoring programs***. The current state investment of \$500,000 provides critical funding to 33 mentoring programs across Massachusetts, to enable them to match over 1,500 youth with volunteer mentors. As you know from your personal experience with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay, mentoring agencies and youth development organizations across Massachusetts are improving the lives of vulnerable youth by providing access to empowering youth-adult relationships and the kind of wrap around support youth need to stay in school, make responsible choices around risk taking behavior, and succeed.

On behalf of over 270 mentoring programs, the 15,000 adult volunteer mentors and 33,000 young people in those programs, **we respectfully ask that your FY18 budget include \$750,000 for line item 7061-9634, the Mentoring Matching Grants account**. An investment of \$750,000, when matched dollar for dollar by private funds, would yield \$1,500,000 in support of mentoring relationships all across the Commonwealth.

The **Mentoring Matching Grants Account (line item 7061-9634)** is a funding stream that is unique in its simplicity, transparency, research-based impact, and leverage of private dollars. On average, grantees spend \$1,000 to screen, train, and match a young person with an adult mentor for a school year at a minimum. **The funds are used for this direct purpose and are leveraged through a dollar for dollar matching requirement.** This money is awarded through a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process and community review, and programs are supported with training and capacity building from Mass Mentoring Partnership based on the latest research and effective practices.

**In the current year, the Mentoring Matching Grants Account (line item 7061-9634) funding is projected to match over 1500 youth with volunteer mentors through 33 quality programs across Massachusetts. Mentoring Matching Grant programs report improvements in academic-related goals for the year**, such as attitude towards school, improved test scores and grades, and improved classroom behavior- all positive steps improving Massachusetts' schools and giving each student an equal chance to succeed. In addition, these programs also report significant increases among youth served in self confidence, self efficacy and positive attitude about the future.

*An investment of \$750,000 in FY18 would:*

- Create and support more than 2,000 empowering youth-adult relationships through mentoring programs across Massachusetts
- Leverage \$750,000 from the private sector through a dollar-for-dollar match requirement
- Improve mentee attitude towards school and other outcomes related to school success such as increased school attendance and improved grades
- Yield an almost 3:1 return on investment of \$2,040,000 through dollars saved in reduced juvenile delinquency and crime, and youth engagement in risky behaviors such as drug, alcohol and tobacco use



Unmet needs for mentoring relationships remains very high. In the cities with the highest numbers of youth from single parent families in poverty, the mentoring need being met ranges from a high of 33.5% of youth ages 5-17 in Boston, to a low of .2% in Lowell. In each of the Gateway Cities of Brockton, Fall River, Lowell, Lynn, and New Bedford, less than 10% of the need for mentors is being met.<sup>1</sup>

We know that while the fiscal picture has been improving, as always, there will continue to be challenges providing the resources necessary to support all the programs that serve critical needs across the Commonwealth. We remain available to work with you to ensure youth mentoring programs are funded to the fullest extent possible. Please contact Chelsea Aquino, Manager of Government Relations and Public Policy, with any questions or concerns. She can be reached at 617-695-2476 or [caquino@massmentors.org](mailto:caquino@massmentors.org)

Thank you for your time, consideration and leadership.

Marty Martinez  
CEO, Mass Mentoring Partnership

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<sup>1</sup> University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. (2015). Mass Mentoring Counts 2014: The State of Mentoring in Massachusetts. Report for Mass Mentoring Partnership: Boston, MA.