



# TRANSFORMATIVE MENTORING

**Community Equity Roundtable Discussion  
3.26.21**

*As a part of Return, Recover, Reimagine:  
Transformative GPS Mentoring is BPS'  
response to the devastating impact of the  
COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of  
our students - especially Black, Brown, and  
Asian students.*

*-Dr. Charles Grandson*

**The problem to address today**

# **The Urgency of Now**

## **BPS**

- 1. Our model of supporting the individual needs for every and all students is in need of reimagining**
- 2. Insufficient # of guidance counselors and other roles that provide individualized support.**
- 3. All hands need to be on deck.**

## **Students**

- 1. Coming back from a pandemic!**
- 2. All need more individualized support and an individualized plan to get back on track and accelerate**
- 3. All students need an abundance of caring adults in community supporting their success**

# Struggling Boston teens find few support options, fueling record absentee rates

By [Bianca Vázquez Toness](#) Globe Staff, Updated March 10, 2021, 7:13 p.m.

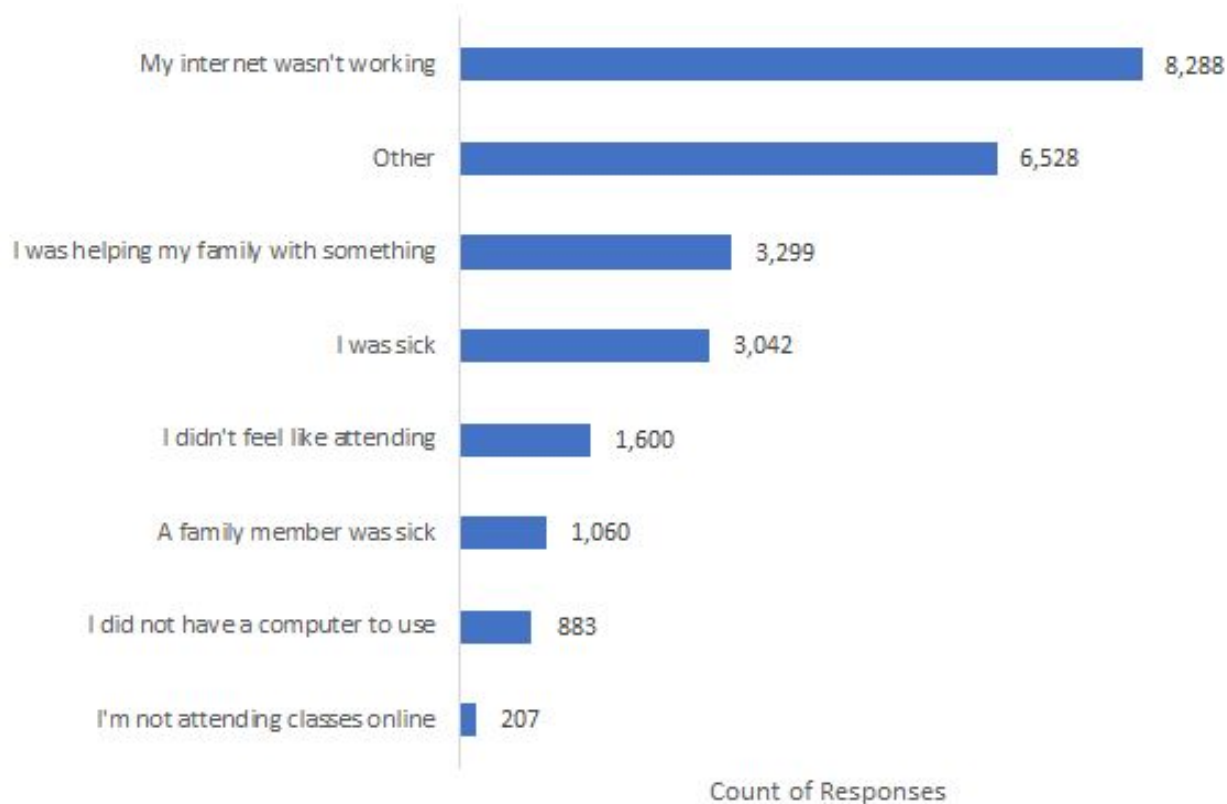
“If I had had someone there to be with me during the school hours, I would have been more successful,” he said. “I just needed someone to tell me that I could do it.”



[Link to full article](#)

[Link to survey data](#)

## If you have missed online classes recently, why?



# Student Challenges

Overall, students expressed challenges around

- Connecting with adults and fellow students at their schools
- Engaging in class and schoolwork
- Thinking deeply about race-related topics

(The table below includes questions that had less than **40%** of students responding favorably.)

Topic	Question	% Favorable
Student Relationships	How connected do you feel to other students at your school right now?	31%
Classroom Engagement	How excited are you about participating in your classes?	32%
Classroom Engagement	How difficult or easy is it for you to try hard on your schoolwork right now?	35%
Student Relationships	How connected do you feel to the adults at your school right now?	35%
Classroom Engagement	How difficult or easy is it for you to stay focused on your schoolwork right now?	37%
Learning Environment	How helpful are the following types of remote learning strategies? - Assignments on SeeSaw	38%
Cultural Awareness & Action	At your school, how often are you encouraged to think more deeply about race-related topics?	39%

Even pre-pandemic [data](#) showed gaps in performance, absenteeism and graduation. We want young people to do more than recover...***we want them to thrive!***



# We Need to Think Differently

“

We have an opportunity to think and plan differently in this moment—to build a system that is responsive to the needs of the students it purports to serve. Doing so requires that we begin by listening to those young people and amplifying what *they* say they need, as opposed to what we as adults think they need.

Neema Avashia, 8th grade teacher at the McCormack, from  
[\*Students Respond to Adults' Fixation on "Learning Loss"\*](#)

**School and Student Partners to date**

## PARTNER SCHOOLS

**Curley Middle School  
(K-8)**

**Curtis Guild School  
(K-6)**

**Edison (K-8)\***

**Edwards Middle  
School (6-8)\***

**Greater Egleston  
High School (9-12)**

**Henderson (K-12)**

**John D. O'Bryant  
School of Math and  
Science (7-12)**

**Lilla Frederick Pilot  
Middle School (6-8)\***

**Ohrenberger School  
(K-8)**

**Orchard Gardens  
(K-8)**

**Russell Elementary  
School (K-6)**

**TechBoston Academy  
(6-12)**

**Trotter (K-8)**

**Umana Academy  
(K-8)**

**UP Academy Boston  
(6-8)**

**EXPANDING ASAP**

**YOUTH INTERN  
ADVISORS**

# Youth Designed and Led Transformative Community Spaces

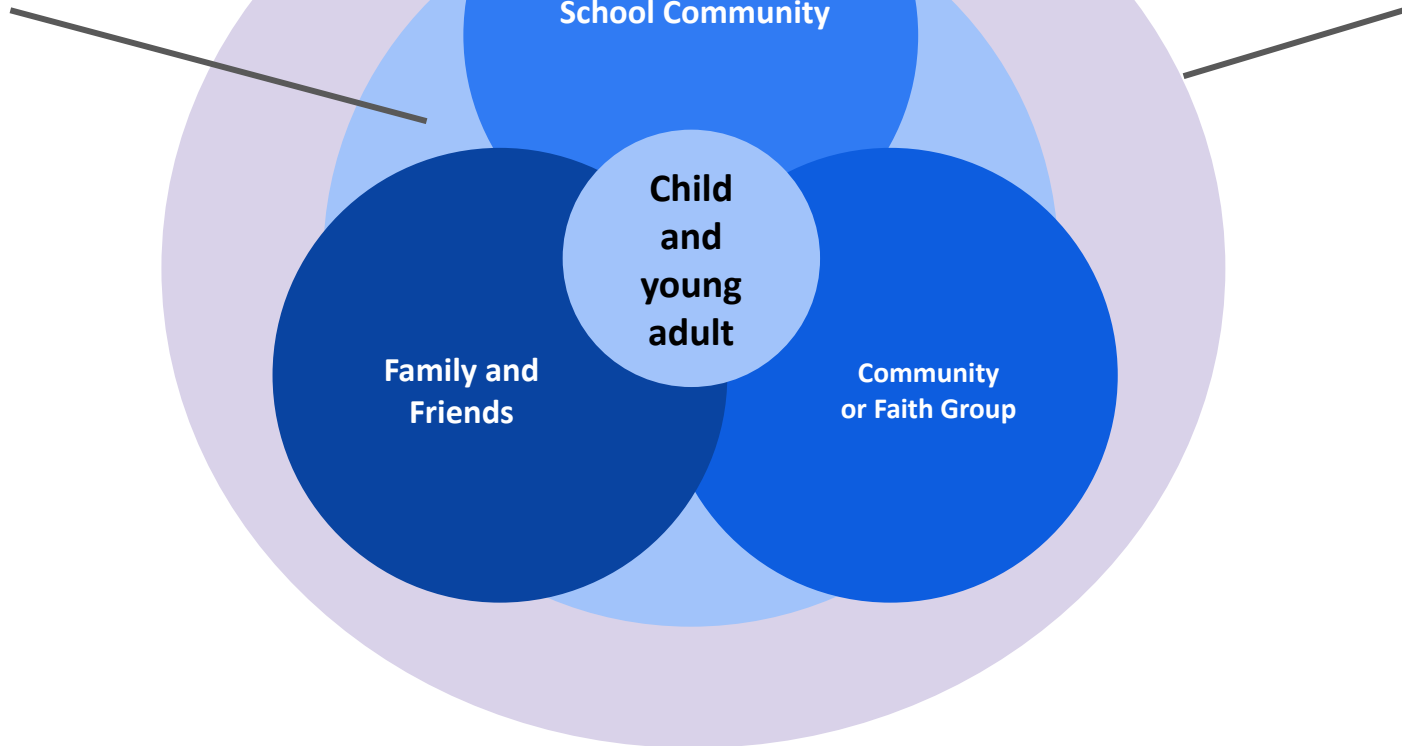
*“We want to strengthen the community network by reinforcing and applying skills and values students take away from the Transformative Mentorship, all while creating space for open, insightful conversations.”*

## Accomplished through:

- Presentations from community members, current BPS students, or BPS graduates
- Student-led panels
- Mentors and mentees connections
- Students developing and sharing their My Career and Academic Plans

**Connected network**  
**Individual success plan**  
**Student-centered Self-directed**  
**Academic and Navigational supports**

**Problematic Macrosystem**  
**Historically Oppressive Ecosystem**  
**Unmitigated Systemic Barriers**  
**Failures to Reconcile Caused Harms**



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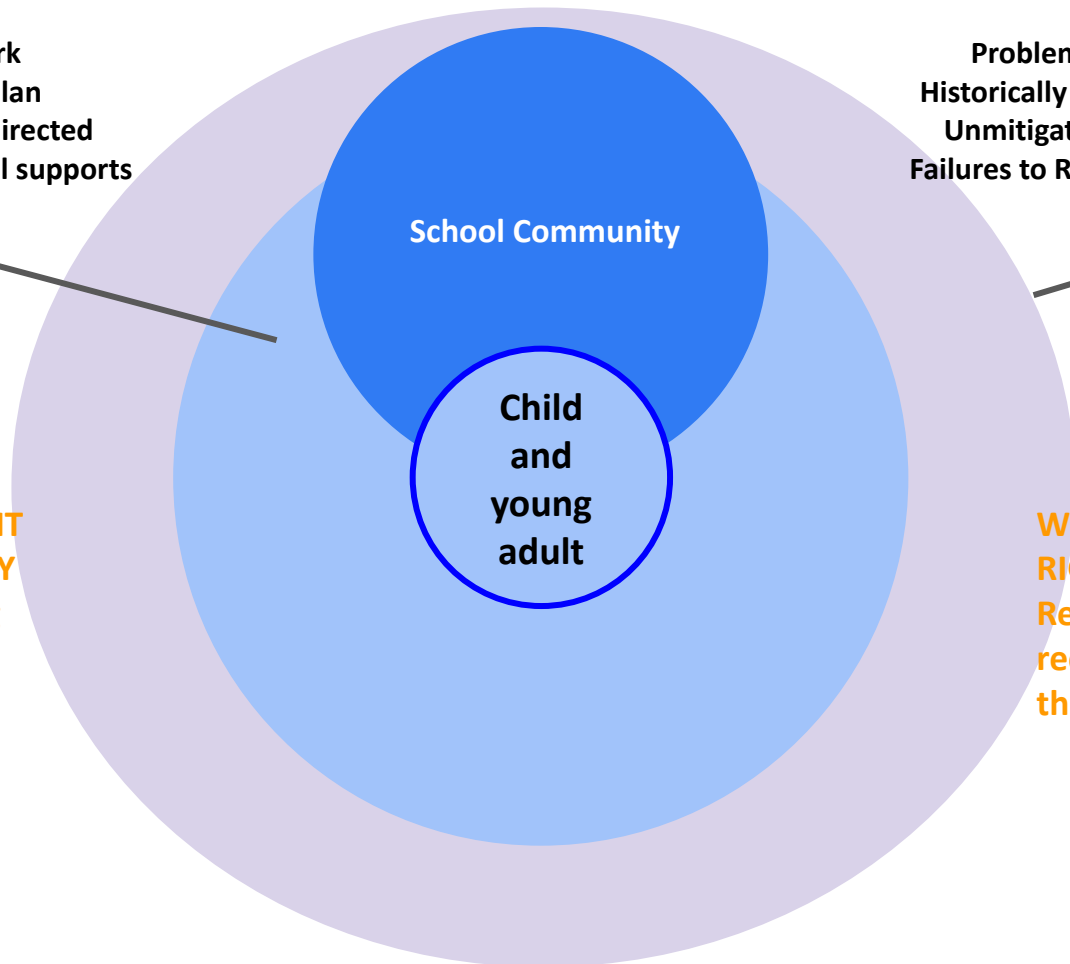
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**School Community**

**Child  
and  
young  
adult**

**What can we do RIGHT  
NOW to IMMEDIATELY  
respond to our young  
people?**

**What are we building  
RIGHT NOW that will  
Reimagine BPS and  
reconcile harms over  
the LONG TERM?**



## **Middle grades problem:**

- 1. Middle grades are make or break years according to studies**
- 2. Our 6-9 students can change schools every year due to BPS configurations and other circumstances.**
- 3. We are moving to a 7-12 model, students in grades 6-9 will need to be supported to enter high schools.**



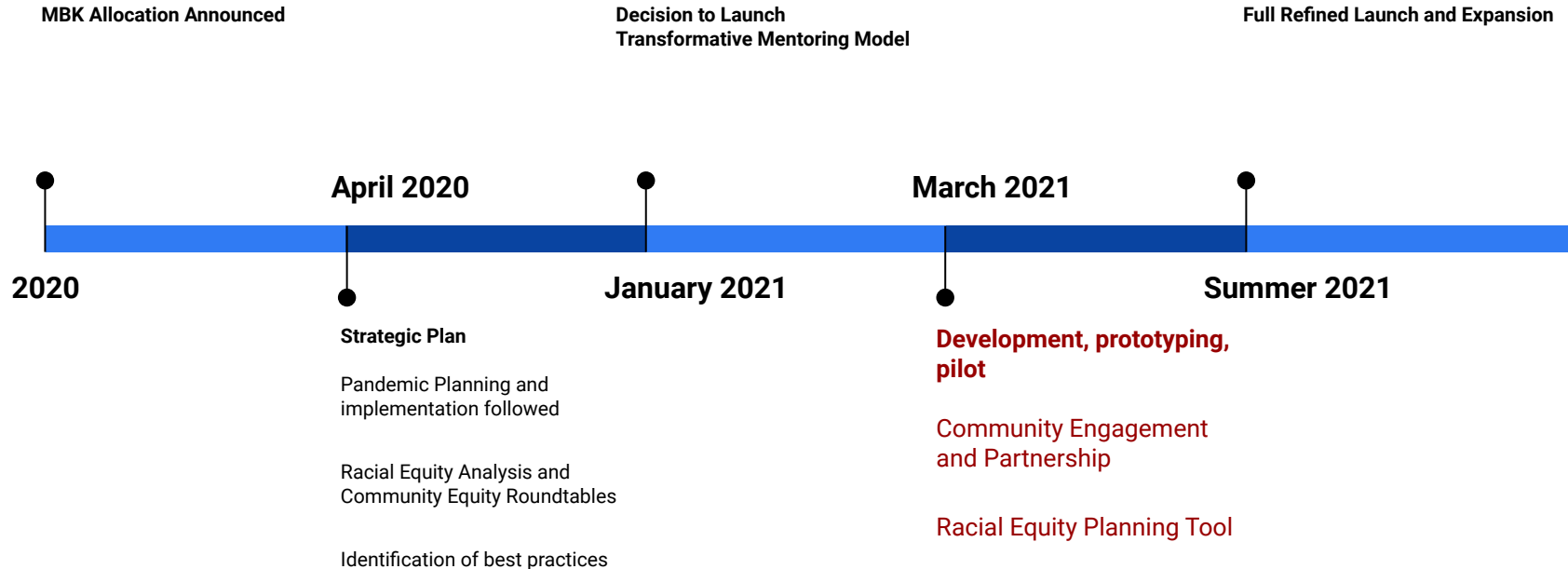
**One way we are working to address the problem**

**#1 Addressing what we need for now and later**

**#2 Building on what heroes within BPS and the  
community have already built**

**#3 Individualized support for all students (using a  
mentor mindset)**

# Development Phases



**ANCHOR GOAL 1**

BPS Graduates will be ready for success in college, career, and life.

**PRIORITY 1.1:**

Ensure that BPS policies, plans, and budgets advance the OAG Policy so that all of our schools are equitably resourced to provide robust academic programming and social emotional supports, giving every child what they need.

**TRANSFORMATIVE GPS SYSTEM**

**Implementing a student-adult hybrid engagement model that empowers social and emotional, academic, career, and life planning competencies for future readiness**

Through a combination of virtual and in-person, one on one and group interactions, workshops, and activities

Between learners in middle & high school and educators, school and district supporters, community members, and other experts and professionals that are committed to supporting them on their journey.

**BPS Transformative Mentoring Support: A GPS Handbook**

**FOCUS: 6-9th graders**

- Facing **multiple transitions**, configurations and closings
- Report feeling **disconnected**.
- Have had **limited engagement** in school.
- Described **substantial difficulties** to learning from home and need help problem-solving.
- Wellbeing **challenged by recent events**
- Priority: students **facing serious academic transitions** whose decisions at this time could have especially life-altering consequences. For example the reconfiguration of schools means 7 and 8 graders -used to middle schools - will enter a high school environment

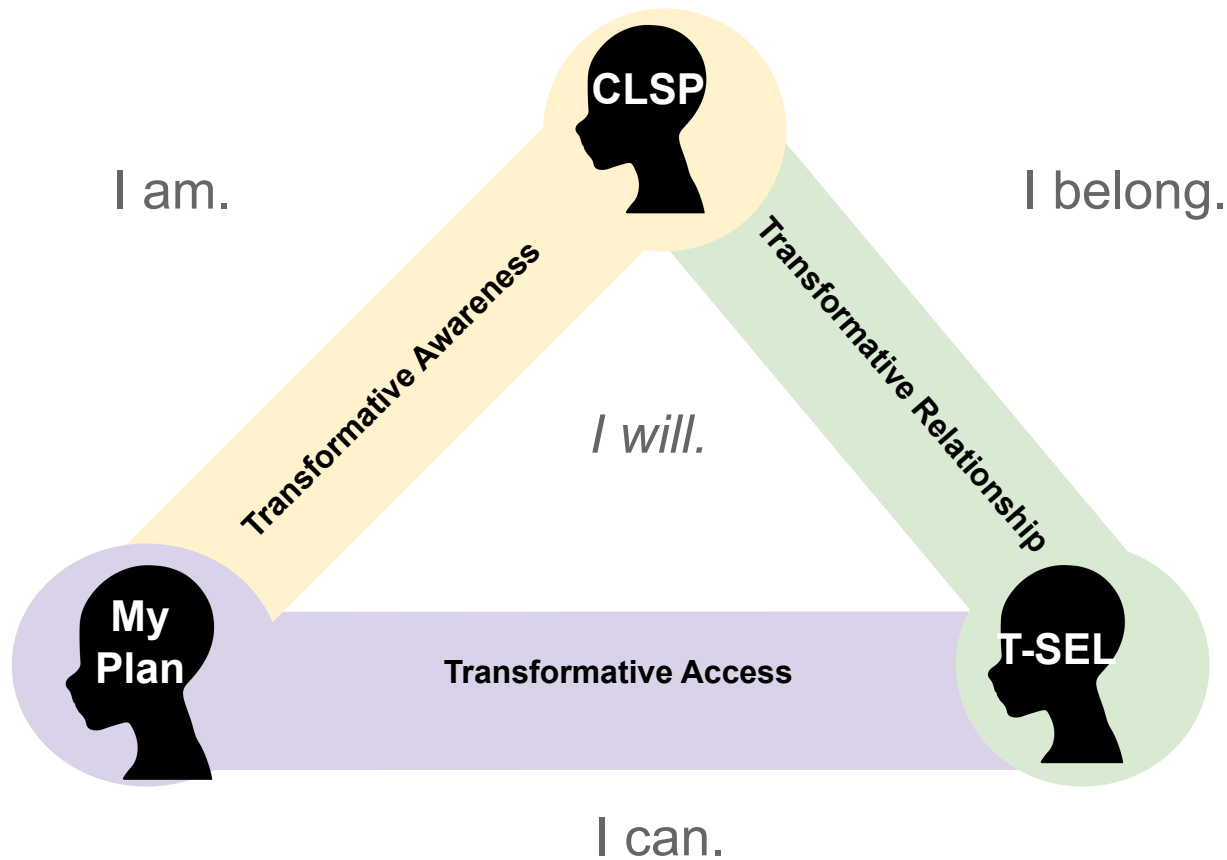
**ALL ADULTS on board**

- ❖ BPS staff year 1, expanding beyond to families and communities
- ❖ A team that comes together to support transformative experiences for career and college planning with external support and resources (academic tutoring + TI)

**Common commitments**

- ❖ Training in
  - CLSP & Critical Mentoring
  - SEL & CLSP (Transformative SEL)
  - Career and Academic Planning
- ❖ Will provide coaching one-to-one, in small groups, or in larger circles.

THE GPS  
MODEL



COMPETENCIES		
CLSP	SEL	MyCAP (Massachusetts My Career Academic Planning)
<b>Transformative Awareness</b>		Supports Affirmation...The "I AM"
Awareness: Understanding One's Lens and Bias (Comp 1)	Self Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to describe emerging talent, competencies, and values</li> <li>• Able to describe what additional competencies they need in order to pursue career life goals</li> <li>• Able to provide evidence they are growing confident in their skills and competencies</li> </ul>
<b>Transformative Relationship</b>		Supports Planning...The "I BELONG"
Cultural Learning/ Relationship Building (Comp 2)	Social Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engages in perspective taking by being aware of the diversity of roles, skills and knowledge needed to complete group tasks or simulated work activities</li> <li>• Appreciates and respects others cultural background and abilities is able to contribute to creating a positive team environment</li> </ul>
	Relationship Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to demonstrate the effective communication skills needed to give and receive feedback from peers</li> <li>• Able to responsibly complete tasks necessary for group projects to be completed efficiently and with high quality</li> <li>• Able to manage interpersonal dynamics with educators/supervisors and peers during group projects and when placed in work settings</li> <li>• Able to ask for help and support necessary to complete assignments or manage competing expectations.</li> </ul>
<b>Transformative Access</b>		Supports Readiness... The "I CAN"
Cultural & Linguistic Practices (Comp 3)	Self-Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates proactive and self-motivated behavior by identifying ways to continue developing their talent and competencies</li> <li>• Setting short-term academic and career development goals that align to their career and life goals</li> <li>• Identifies intentions to pursue specific educational and postsecondary pathways to pursue their career and life goals</li> </ul>
		Supports Action... The "I WILL"
Responsible Decision-Making		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to identify 2-3 career and life goals</li> <li>• Able to identify the information and people resources needed to support them in pursuing their career and life goals</li> <li>• Able to accurately evaluate future education and career pathways with respect to the financial impact and future labor market projections</li> <li>• Develops and effectively executes plans for using their current educational and outside learning opportunities to gather the skills and experiences that align to their career and life goals</li> </ul>

## Excerpts from James Baldwin: A Talk to Teachers (1963)

"Now if I were a teacher in this school, or any Negro school, and I was dealing with Negro children, who were in my care only a few hours of every day and would then return to their homes and to the streets, children who have an apprehension of their future which with every hour grows grimmer and darker, I would try to teach them—I would try to make them know—that those streets, those houses, those dangers, those agonies by which they are surrounded, are criminal. I would try to make each child know that these things are the result of a criminal conspiracy to destroy him. I would teach him that if he intends to get to be a man, he must at once decide that his is stronger than this conspiracy and that he must never make his peace with it. And that one of his weapons for refusing to make his peace with it and for destroying it depends on what he decides he is worth."

"The paradox of education is precisely this—that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated. The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions, to say to himself this is black or this is white, to decide for himself whether there is a God in heaven or not. To ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his own identity. But...[w]hat societies really, ideally, want is a citizenry which will simply obey the rules of society. If a society succeeds in this, that society is about to perish. The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it—at no matter what risk."

**Transformative  
Awareness**



**Transformative  
Relationship**

## Excerpts from Outliers: The Story of Success (2011)

“It is those who are successful, in other words, who are most likely to be given the kinds of special opportunities that lead to further success. It’s the rich who get the biggest tax breaks. It’s the best students who get the best teaching and most attention. And it’s the biggest nine- and ten-year-olds who get the most coaching and practice. Success is the result of what sociologists like to call “accumulative advantage.” – Malcolm Gladwell

“We are so caught in the myths of the best and the brightest and the self-made that we think outliers spring naturally from the earth. We look at the young Bill Gates and marvel that our world allowed that thirteen-year-old to become a fabulously successful entrepreneur. But that’s the wrong lesson. Our world only allowed one thirteen-year-old unlimited access to a time sharing terminal in 1968. If a million teenagers had been given the same opportunity, how many more Microsofts would we have today?”

### Transformative Access

“Superstar lawyers and math whizzes and software entrepreneurs appear at first blush to lie outside ordinary experience. But they don’t. They are products of history and community, of opportunity and legacy. Their success is not exceptional or mysterious. It is grounded in a web of advantages and inheritances, some deserved, some not, some earned, some just plain lucky—but all critical to making them who they are. The outlier, in the end, is not an outlier at all.”

# Transformative Access



Thompson Island programs blend academics with adventure to create social-emotional learning experiences that allow students to discover ***who they are*** and ***all they can become.***

## Academic Mentoring & Tutoring

In this unique moment in history, when we are faced with the realities of the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and a racial reckoning across the country, prioritizing the social, emotional and instructional needs of Black and Latinx students and their families in the most culturally affirming manner is at the forefront of our work. BPS will offer Academic Mentoring/Tutoring to students who need it the most.

## High School Senior Internship in Education Program

Between now and June 2021, DESE is funding the Boston PIC/MassHire Workforce Board to:

- offer high school seniors the opportunity to complete a paid work-based learning education internship;
- accelerate the growth of the teacher pipeline in MA with a particular focus on increasing racial/ethnic diversity; a
- improve educational outcomes for underserved students, particular younger learners, due to the pandemic.

## **Breakout Room Discussion**

**Based on what you've heard, what else should we consider to ensure that all of our students get what they need to stay connected and to accelerate their learning as they prepare for college and/or career?**

# **Racial Equity Planning Tool and Analysis: Next Step**