

# OUR NEW WAY FORWARD

United Way of Massachusetts Bay is committed to advancing an economically just region, with shared prosperity across race and ethnicity. That's the guiding principle of our **'BECAUSE YOU SAID SO'** campaign – reflecting how we are embracing a new approach to philanthropy that is **listening, responding, and inviting** collaboration from the communities we serve.

Developed in partnership with minority-owned Proverb Agency, the new “Because You Said So” campaign is a recognition that philanthropic efforts must evolve to meet the pressing issues of our region and reflects the major shift in our giving strategy aimed at advancing economic mobility and thriving, equitable communities. The portfolio of **124 organizations** we've selected for partnership as part of our seven-year plan truly represents our new way forward. Our campaign features the people, partners and communities that are part of our work.



**“DIGNIFIED, PROUD, AND HARDWORKING**, these families nevertheless rely on mutual aid and subsidized community services to access essential resources and meet their health and social care needs,” – Community Art Center, New Way Partner.



The campaign slogan takes that familiar turn of phrase – “because I said so” – and gives it an ownable, recognizable twist. It signals that United Way is putting equity and community voices at the center. Working with Proverb, we'll be featured in the following outlets: **▶ Transit ads through MTBA ▶ Social media ▶ Audio/Podcasts ▶ Boston Business Journal and WCVB-TV**

The new brand strategy was first reflected in our new website (launched last October) and the relaunch of our organizational newsletter this spring. These initiatives tie back to the values and guiding principles of our New Way Forward.

Now is the time to invite the community to see our new kind of philanthropy. To **see what's new** on our new landing page.

[www.unitedwaymassbay.org/whatsnew](http://www.unitedwaymassbay.org/whatsnew)



United Way of Massachusetts Bay

# EMPOWERING LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME FAMILIES TO GENERATE WEALTH AND ACHIEVE LONG-TERM FINANCIAL STABILITY.

We envision a region where access to financial wellbeing is universal, and prosperity is shared across races and ethnicities. When we invest in economic inclusion and wealth-building programs that increase income, build credit and saving; and reduce debt, we can mitigate the inherent inequities in how individuals and families benefit from the economy and help them ultimately achieve financial wellbeing.



## A WIDENING RACIAL WEALTH GAP

The wealth gap impacts nearly every aspect of daily life and creates significant barriers for future generations' ability to survive and thrive. Additionally, demographic data historically shows that communities of color that have been marginalized experience tremendous economic hurdles to financial stability and wealth generation.

**Massachusetts has the 3rd highest racial wealth gap in the U.S.** Over the past few decades, the wealth gap between white households and that of Black and Hispanic/Latino/a/x households has considerably widened. Today, the average Black and Hispanic/Latino/a/x household owns 15 to 20 percent of the average wealth of white households.

This widening effect is a result of discrimination and inequities in both historical and existing economic and tax policies. Disparities are directly linked to racial discrimination against non-white households which decades ago played out in policies like redlining, loan denial based on race, and leveling of black and brown communities for infrastructure projects.

## WHY IT MATTERS

**When people are caught up in the chaotic cycle of trying to secure safe, stable housing, childcare, and other basics, they are unable to engage in efforts that can lead to upward mobility, such as participating in job training, financial empowerment, or supporting their children in education.**

Additionally, the stresses resulting from financial hardship severely impacts mental health, making it challenging for individuals to complete the tasks necessary (such as providing income and asset verification documents) to qualify for existing support resources. It becomes a perpetual cycle for families that is nearly impossible to break.

# COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:

## Strengthening Conditions for Learning



Community Schools are an equity strategy that organize resources of the local community to accelerate academic and social outcomes for students. Community Schools are a key lever in an education system that is integrated and connected, has adequate resources and funding, and is centered on the experiences of children, youth, and families.

In a Community School, students, families, educators, community members, community partners, and local businesses work together to strengthen conditions for student learning and healthy development. By bringing together collaborators and integrating community partners, Community Schools foster conditions that support students in achieving their full potential.

### A STRONG RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Increased Attendance

Higher Student Achievement

Increased Resources

Improved Social-Emotional Wellbeing

### ADVANCING A MOVEMENT

We envision a Commonwealth where all students flourish in thriving school communities. Together, we will:

- Launch a Community Schools movement by educating and convening innovators and collaborators
- Demonstrate effectiveness by supporting local school districts in implementing Community Schools
- Scale and expand Community Schools in the Commonwealth by supporting new districts in establishing the strategy
- Build and mobilize resources to sustain the strategy by co-designing and advancing a policy agenda

We are building deep, trusting relationships with schools and community-based organizations in Boston, Haverhill, Lynn, Salem, and other communities to best meet the needs of students and families.

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