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City Connects Highlighted as Promising Model for Reform

(BOSTON) [City Connects](#) has been highlighted as a promising example of how to serve students effectively in the second annual [Condition of Education in the Commonwealth](#) report, released by the [Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy](#) on January 22, 2015. Including City Connects in this report reflects the program's record of success and its potential to serve as a model for other communities across Massachusetts.

The Condition of Education in the Commonwealth report examines areas of success and areas for continued improvement in student outcomes across the education pipeline, from birth to college and career success. This report includes a set of 25 data indicators representing critical student outcomes and—for the first time this year—an action guide that focuses on three areas where data indicate the need for further reform: setting a strong foundation in early childhood, attending to the whole child with comprehensive supports, and preparing college-ready students through innovative high school designs.

The action guide focuses on existing programs that could, if brought to scale, lead to substantial progress in educational outcomes for students. City Connects is one such program, having demonstrated a positive impact on academic achievement through its robust data-driven approach to student support. City Connects provides an organized method for schools to address the out-of-school factors that impact students, like hunger and homelessness. The comprehensive system of student support involves every classroom teacher, leverages resources in the community, and ensures that all students receive the tailored support and enrichment opportunities they need to succeed in school. Evaluations have shown that City Connects significantly improves academic performance and thriving with the positive effects of City Connects appearing not only in elementary school, but persisting in middle and high school—after students have left the intervention. Students outperform their peers on [statewide standardized test scores](#) (MCAS) and have half the likelihood of [dropping out of high school](#).

The Rennie Center is pleased to highlight City Connects as a model for policymakers and practitioners. According to Chad d'Entremont, Executive Director of the Rennie Center, “The Condition of Education project offers a platform for constructive dialogue among stakeholders about the most effective strategies to promote student success. Through this report, the Rennie Center brings together thought leaders to develop a shared understanding, grounded in evidence, of the state of our educational system. We are excited to shine a light on the great work that City Connects is doing to contribute to positive outcomes for Massachusetts students.”

About the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy

The Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy's mission is to improve public education through well-informed decision-making based on deep knowledge and evidence of effective policymaking and practice. As Massachusetts' preeminent voice in public education reform, we create open spaces for educators and

policymakers to consider evidence, discuss cutting-edge issues, and develop new approaches to advance student learning and achievement. Through our staunch commitment to independent, non-partisan research and constructive conversations, we work to promote an education system that provides every child with the opportunity to be successful in school and in life. For more information, please visit www.renniecenter.org

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