



Community College Officials join the Gateway Cities Legislative Caucus at the State House

Boston, MA - January 6, 2016 – The Massachusetts Community Colleges Executive Office (MCCEO) and a group of community college presidents were invited to address members of the Gateway Cities Legislative Caucus yesterday. They were invited by the co-chairs of the caucus (Senator Ben Downing of Pittsfield and Representative Antonio Cabral of New Bedford) to come in and address legislators and staff on how the community colleges play an transformative role in Gateway Cities. Also joining the meeting were representatives from Mass Insight Education.

The Gateway Cities Legislative Caucus was created in 2008 to collectively promote initiatives that invest in the Commonwealth’s Gateway Cities and advance the Gateway City agenda. Massachusetts Law defines a Gateway City as a municipality with: a population greater than 35,000 and less than 250,000; median household income below the state average; and a rate of educational attainment of a bachelor’s degree or above that is below the state average. The caucus meets monthly and recently has focused on education and economic development issues in Gateway Cities.

Massachusetts currently has 26 Gateway Cities. Many community college campuses are located within these cities and the colleges serve *all* Gateway Cities. Despite challenges, the Gateway Cities offer unique opportunity for future economic development in Massachusetts. The community college representatives discussed how the community colleges are natural partners for the Commonwealth’s Gateway Cities as a high-quality and affordable option for higher education in Massachusetts. They added that successful initiatives such as early college and dual enrollment programs are appropriate ideas that the Gateway Cities Legislative Caucus can support. The meeting was the Caucus’ first of 2016 and is one of many legislative meetings that members of the General Court will have as the legislative process relaunches in the new year.