

Education Funding Ideas for MA and Boston

Lisa Jeanne Graf, compiled April, 2019

STATE IDEAS

1. **Taxing Hedge Funds**

A small tax could be created to just cover charter school reimbursement. If MA does it on a small-scale other states would probably do the same because it would solve a school funding issue for them too.

2. **A larger tax on Marijuana**

MA has lower taxes than other states with legalized marijuana

3. **A Millionaire's Tax**

This tax would not be tied to education or transportation. Just presented as a new funding stream for any use in the State budget. This is a fair and popular direction. The main problem is that it will take a number of years for it to go into effect (if it is passed).

4. **A tiny income tax increase for everyone**

This would not require a change to the state constitution like the Millionaire's tax so it could go into place as a short term stop gap measure. Exemptions could be added to make the small tax more equitable as well.

5. **Increase in the State Excise Tax**

There could be a higher tax for more expensive personal vehicles and boats

6. **Taxing College Endowments**

7. **An Airbnb Tax**

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/editorials/2018/09/17/pass-airbnb-tax-already/oqgT86LWwSeGblC1eelfZM/story.html>

8. **A new capital-gains tax:** State tax capital gains — profits made from the sale of corporate stocks, bonds and other financial assets could be taxed.

9. **Reform the PILOT system though-out the State**

Making tax payments mandatory in Boston would need to be changed in state law. With enough political will this could happen.

10. Taxing **alcoholic beverages** to be in line with most states. Massachusetts has one of the lowest taxes on alcohol in the country.

[S1714, AN Act relative to the fair taxation of alcoholic beverages](#) (Senator Lewis)

11. Taxing **sugary drinks**. This bill would create a tiered tax for sugary drinks. The more sugar that a beverage has per 12 ounces, the more that the beverage would be taxed. S1709, An Act to promote healthy alternatives to sugary drinks (Sponsored by Senator Lewis)
12. Establish **taxes on e-cigarette and vape products** and increase some of the taxes on other tobacco products. S1606, An Act protecting youth from nicotine addition (Sponsored by Senator Chandler, cosponsored by Senator Lewis)

STATE AND BOSTON IDEAS

1. **New Market Tax Credits**

These have been used for Public Schools and there does not appear to be any restrictions to their being used for this purpose. This funding could help BPS build and repair school buildings in Boston. In addition, if these funds no longer available to charter schools in Massachusetts it would be fair since charter schools have benefited from these funds up till now and public schools have not.

2. **A cap on overtime for government employees**

This might mean that more government employees would need to be hired but that would be a positive - allowing more residents to have jobs that pay decently. Any savings could be put into education budgets. This could be put in place by the state, and/or by individual cities.

3. **Reforms to METCO**

If METCO were more strategic about how towns are desegregated maybe similar results could happen with shorter bus rides. Could towns like Salem or Lynn bus students to Marblehead for instance? Savings could possibly pay for some busing in Boston to desegregate the city better. Also, families from the suburbs could be bused into under enrolled schools in Boston. In addition, it would be good if the system included the income of a family for future placements into the program.

4. **National Science Foundation**

Districts could apply for these Federal funds from the National Science Foundation for STEM programing. Currently these funds are not being used in Boston. The NSF Information Center may be reached at (703) 292-5111.

5. If the **MBTA was free** at point of service, then money that is currently being spent on student t-passes could be reinvested into school budgets.

6. **A Tax on Airplane Fuel**

A number of towns receive these funds including Boston. Perhaps the Boston funds could go to East Boston BPS schools.

7. **More government buildings could display ads for increased revenue.**
8. Raising **property taxes** to the current limit.

BOSTON IDEAS

1. **PILOT programs in Boston**

Community benefits could align better with BPS needs, including before and after school programs. Also buildings could be part of community benefits by offering swing space for Build BPS, and school buildings to the district.

2. Have future **sports parades** paid for by the sport team's owners or sponsors. If money is paid by the city, have matching funds go to Boston Public Schools as well.

3. The \$10K annually that BPS pays to the **Boston Compact could end** as well as the collaboration between BPS and private and charter schools.

4. **The Boston school district could join with other school districts to create a legal challenge to overhaul the state's 25-year-old education funding formula**

This approach could possibly make faster changes to education funding, than other approaches as it might make emergency measures possible.

5. **City aid would reflect the city's increased revenue**

The city is bringing in more revenue. Funding for BPS should increase, by minimum, by the same percentage that city funding has increased. More would start to address current underfunding.

6. Have any money left over from the Boston **snow removal budget** annually earmarked for the Boston Public School budget. <https://budget.boston.gov/operating-budget/cabinets/streets/snow-removal/>

7. To encourage a company to move to Boston, we could **stop the process of offering tax breaks**. Instead a further investment could be made to BPS & that information could be shared. That would be a win-win investment.

References

MassBudget report on revenue options:

http://massbudget.org/report_window.php?loc=14-Options-for-Raising-Progressive-Revenue.html

Thanks

- to Kathy Cahill and Michael Maguire for starting a discussion about raising property taxes to the current limit
- to Christine Langhoff, Jonathan Cohn, and Michelle Wu for pushing for the MBTA to be free at point of service
- to DB Reiff and Jonathan Rodrigues to suggest that future sports parades are paid for by the sport team's owners or sponsors.
- Senator Lewis

I am interested in adding to this list. Please email lisa_jeanne_graf@msn.com