

### IS STEPPINGSTONE A SCHOOL?

No. We are an academic program that meets in the summer and after-school. We help students apply to, prepare for, and transition into Boston public exam schools and private schools.

### WHO SHOULD APPLY TO STEPPINGSTONE?

Motivated fourth and fifth graders who live in the City of Boston who are hardworking, love to learn, are ready for an academic challenge, want help accessing college, and are committed to attending one of our placement schools should apply.

### HOW MUCH DOES STEPPINGSTONE COST?

Steppingstone is tuition-free. There is an \$80 enrollment fee, which can be reduced or waived if it is a hardship.

### WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

**Scholars and their families must make a full 14-month commitment if they are admitted to the program.** The program begins with a summer session where students attend classes Monday-Friday (8:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.) for six weeks. They continue in the school year by coming to class Wednesdays (4:25 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.) and Saturdays (8:45 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.). They finish with a second six-week summer session. It is important that both families and students understand the time commitment involved before applying to Steppingstone.

### WHERE DOES STEPPINGSTONE MEET?

Steppingstone classes are usually held at Milton Academy (Milton, MA) during the summer and Boston Latin Academy (Dorchester, MA) during the school year. Bus transportation is available during the summer but not the school year.

### HOW ARE STUDENTS SELECTED FOR THE PROGRAM?

The admission process is divided into five components: 1) Written Application (Applicant Information, Family Questionnaire, Student Questionnaire and Essay); 2) Teacher Recommendation; 3) Transcript (includes most recent report card and standardized test scores); 4) Interview; and 5) Steppingstone Exam. Final decisions are made based on all of the admission components. We are looking for students who enjoy learning and challenging themselves, families and students who are committed to making Steppingstone a priority, and families who demonstrate a need for tuition-free college access programming and the opportunities provided by our placement schools. We look for students who are already doing well in school and would benefit from extra preparation and guidance in accessing Boston public exam schools and private schools.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SENDING MY CHILD TO A PUBLIC EXAM OR PRIVATE SCHOOL?

At these schools, students share a desire to excel in school and go to college. The resources, teachers, extracurricular opportunities and support offered prepare students for the rigor of college and nearly all of the graduates go on to pursue a four-year degree. Steppingstone gets fourth-grade students ready to attend a private school and fifth-grade students ready to attend either a public exam or a private school.

### DOES STEPPINGSTONE PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS?

Independent schools are a type of private school that are privately funded and charge tuition annually. **Steppingstone does not provide scholarships.** Independent schools award financial aid according to family need. Steppingstone works with families to apply for financial aid. Most families receive some form of financial aid and many receive generous aid packages. Please note that all families are asked to contribute some amount of money towards their child's tuition at an independent school.

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY STUDENT COMPLETES THE 14-MONTH ACADEMIC PREPARATION COMPONENT?

Steppingstone continues to support your student through college graduation. Your student will have access to a Steppingstone Advisor, and in college, a College Success Coach, who will provide tutoring and mentoring, free SAT classes, college readiness workshops and conferences, college and financial aid application support, internship and job guidance, and connections to the Steppingstone Alumni network.