



Never Too Early to Start College and Career Conversation, American Student Assistance Expands Mission to Help Students Make Informed Choices About Their Futures

Nonprofit With 60-Year Legacy of Supporting Students Will Focus on Providing Programs and Resources to Kids as Young as Middle School About Post-Secondary Education and Career Options

BOSTON – June 26, 2018 – American Student Assistance® (ASA), a national nonprofit, announced today the organization’s mission has expanded to include engaging students as early as middle school to help them make informed choices about their college and career options.

With a legacy of more than 60 years of working directly with students to increase their access to higher education, ASA® is now helping kids earlier in their education journey to put them on a path to meaningful learning and fulfilling jobs. This shift is grounded in the belief that exploring education and career goals at an earlier age can help students develop a clearer plan for their futures that lessens the financial burden of postsecondary education and increases their chances of job satisfaction and success.

“ASA is committed to helping kids know themselves, know their options, and make informed choices to achieve their education and career goals—especially as our workforce needs evolve,” said **Jean Eddy, President and CEO of ASA**. “I’m proud to lead an organization that has been on the side of students for more than half a century, and I’m eager to expand our work to reach students at an earlier age so they can discover, explore, and experience all of the possibilities available to them and find what truly ignites their passion.”

ASA wants to empower kids to find and pursue education options that offer them viable paths to careers of the future and align with their personal interests and goals. The organization is approaching its mission from multiple angles—innovating products, partnering with like-minded organizations, and funding student-focused programs and services—that will deliver significant impact to kids on a broad scale. The nonprofit is also pursuing a robust research agenda to inform where and how to best deliver services to kids, measure student impact, and drive continued thought leadership and advocacy efforts.

ASA will support students during the three stages of their education journey:

1. **MIDDLE SCHOOL Awareness & Exploration**: Engaging students at a young age to make them aware of all the educational and career possibilities ahead of them, and helping them start exploring those options.

2. **HIGH SCHOOL Experiment & Plan:** Empowering high school students to play a central role in determining their education and career plans after graduation, and providing them with the tools and skills to be successful.
3. **POST-HIGH SCHOOL Execution:** Leveraging its deep expertise in higher education, ASA will help students implement their post-high school plans, whether it's pursuing a two- or four-year degree, credentials, trade apprenticeships, or another pathway.

ASA is also partnering with organizations aligned with its new mission to increase its impact on students locally and nationally, including: the [Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston](#), [Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities](#), [Red Sox Foundation](#), local school districts, and many more.

“We are inspired by this exciting evolution for American Student Assistance, and MENTOR is proud to partner with them toward achieving our shared goal of expanding social capital and reinforcing the fabric of communities, both locally and nationally,” said [MENTOR CEO David Shapiro](#). “It is so important that philanthropic leaders follow ASA’s example of investing in relationships that will open doors to a wider range of opportunities that align with young people’s unique skills, interests, and abilities. We applaud ASA for their commitment to expanding support, pathways, and opportunities for our young people and our nation’s strength, justice, and prosperity.”

The three cabinet secretaries that comprise the [Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet](#)—**Rosalin Acosta, Secretary, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; James Peyser, Secretary, Executive Office of Education; and Jay Ash, Secretary, Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development**—added: “ASA’s new mission directly supports the work we are doing through the Workforce Skills Cabinet to better align education and training systems to job growth and expansion in Massachusetts. Helping more kids make informed education and career decisions is at the heart of this work. We look forward to working with ASA to execute on their mission.”

“The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities is pleased to partner with American Student Assistance,” said **Antonio R. Flores, President and CEO, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities** (HACU). “Helping young people explore their education path early is especially important for first-generation students.”

Additional quotes from ASA’s valued partners can be found [here](#) and at the end of this press release.

About American Student Assistance® (ASA)

American Student Assistance® (ASA) is a national nonprofit committed to helping kids know themselves, know their options, and make informed choices to achieve their education and career goals. ASA has a 60-year legacy of working directly with students to increase their access to higher education through loans and financial education. ASA has turned its experience into impactful solutions for kids in middle, high school, and beyond to help them pursue their dreams. To learn more about ASA’s commitment, visit [asa.org](#).

Partner Support for ASA:

Karen Crebase, Superintendent of schools, [Hopedale Public Schools](#), Hopedale, Massachusetts

"ASA is recognizing an important need by helping kids start to explore college and career options at an early age. Hopedale is thrilled to be partnering with ASA to provide our middle school students with a grant to fund STEAM education, teaching engineering, robotics, sensor input, animation, and many other standards. Like ASA, we believe that by providing our students with these learning opportunities in seventh and eighth grade, they will make informed decisions about computer science courses during high school and college. By teaming with ASA, Hopedale schools will be at the forefront of preparing our students for careers in computer science, which our business community has identified as a critical need."

Rebekah Splaine Salwasser, Executive Director, [Red Sox Foundation](#)

"The Red Sox Foundation is honored to work with ASA as the Official Workforce Development Partner of our Red Sox Scholars program this year. We are committed to making a difference in the lives of youth, and one way that we've been able to achieve our mission is by providing greater educational opportunities through our Red Sox Scholars program. With the added expertise and support of ASA, we are excited to further strengthen the academic, professional, and social support for our students from middle school through college."

Josh Kraft, Nicholas President and CEO, [Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston](#)

"Through our partnership with American Student Assistance, we are able to create and implement a quality workforce development program to prepare our members for success in today's competitive global workforce. ASA's knowledge of financial and educational planning, paired with BGCB's existing career development programming, will benefit our preteen and teen members tremendously as they plan for their futures. We look forward to working with ASA to help our members realize their full potential as the next generation of Boston employees and business leaders."