

## Mayor Walsh Launches Connection Center to Serve Boston's Disconnected Young Adults

**What** Press conference to launch the Connection Center, which serves as a one-stop resource for Boston's 20-24 year olds who already have a high school credential, but need help getting on a pathway that will further their education and career.

**Who:** Martin J. Walsh, Mayor  
Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative

**When:** Monday, July 27 at 12:30 PM

**Where:** Connection Center, outside the Ruggles MBTA station, on Northeastern University side

With large numbers of young adults across the country out of work and out of school, a group of Boston stakeholders has come together as part of the national Opportunity Youth movement. Based on findings from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2011-2013 American Community Surveys, there are 4,747 Boston high school graduates, 20-24 years old, who are unemployed and out of school with no postsecondary degree.

To begin the process of identifying these young adults and connecting them to education, training and employment, Mayor Martin J. Walsh and the Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative are proud to announce the formal opening of the Connection Center on July 27. Mayor Walsh will cut a ceremonial ribbon to launch the Center, with an open house to follow. The Center will reach out to unemployed high school graduates, assess their needs, and offer personalized referrals to further education, training, and employment opportunities.

Boston is one of seven cities selected to receive Social Innovation Fund (SIF) funding to improve education and employment outcomes for opportunity youth in communities across the country. Boston already focuses on high school dropouts through its nationally recognized Re-Engagement Center, a critical component of a dropout reduction strategy that has reduced the dropout rate by more than half.

Now, under the leadership of Mayor Walsh, Boston is replicating this model for young adults with high school credentials who have yet to enter the labor market successfully. Boston's economic growth depends on the size and quality of its workforce, and these young adults can contribute to the economy and their communities if they connect with the education and training they need to achieve financial independence.

*For more information, contact Jessica Hatfield at 617-733-0691 and see these web links:*

*Boston Opportunity Youth Collaborative:* <http://bostonopportunityyouth.org/>

*Opportunity Works initiative:* <http://www.iff.org/initiatives/back-track-designs/opportunity-works>