



maaps Appoints Elizabeth Dello Russo Becker as Executive Director



Boston, MA – December 5, 2018 – The Massachusetts Association of 766 Approved Private Schools (**maaps**), a statewide association of schools providing educational programs and services for students with special needs, is pleased to announce that Elizabeth Dello Russo Becker has been appointed Executive Director, starting March 1, 2019.

Ms. Becker has served since 2016 as the Director of Community Relations and Government Affairs for the Massachusetts Port Authority, acting as Massport’s primary liaison with the public, elected officials, advocacy groups, and agency stakeholders about Massport operations and development projects.

As **maaps** CEO, Ms. Becker will lead and advocate the association’s 80 member schools currently serving more than 6,800 students with special needs, including 5,700 students from Massachusetts public school districts who require specialized instruction and services. She will succeed James V. Major, who has served as **maaps** Executive Director for 29 years and who will retire in May after assisting Ms. Becker in a transition period.

“I am profoundly honored to be entrusted with the leadership of **maaps** at a time when Jim Major and our board have built a strong, thriving organization to advocate for ensuring that students with special needs receive the highest quality education and fulfill their potential,” Ms. Becker said. “We represent an extraordinarily diverse group of schools serving an extraordinarily diverse group of students with special needs, but what unites all **maaps** schools is our commitment to excellence and integrity.”

David W. Manzo, **maaps** Board Chair and President of The Cotting School in Lexington, said: “Elizabeth has excelled at the highest level in every position she’s held in her career, and she was our search committee’s unanimous choice. Her problem-solving skills and proven ability to build consensus and execute complex projects align her perfectly with the mission of **maaps**.”

Mr. Major said: “It has been the central honor of my life to serve as Executive Director of **maaps** and affect real change on behalf of our member schools and for their staff, students, and families. I’m thrilled that our board found Elizabeth, and I know **maaps** will be in very good hands as she brings her energy, insight, and passion for special education to this position.”

A longtime leader and facilitator, Ms. Becker has broad experience in policy, legislation, advocacy, and community relations. Prior to becoming Massport’s community and government relations chief, she served as the organization’s senior legal counsel, and was a senior attorney for the City of Boston before becoming director of Boston’s Office of Gaming Accountability from 2008 to 2014.

A Melrose resident, Ms. Becker earned her Bachelor of Arts in History and English from Mount Holyoke College. She received dean's list honors during her studies at Suffolk University Law School, where she completed her Juris Doctor degree with a focus on special education law. Ms. Becker is a member of the Boston Bar Association, Women's Bar Association, and Massachusetts Municipal Association.

About maaps

The Massachusetts Association of 766 Approved Private Schools (**maaps**) was founded in 1975 as a statewide association of schools dedicated to providing educational programs and services to students with special needs, particularly students from Massachusetts public school districts who require specialized education programs and services as guaranteed by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 766. **maaps** represents 80 member schools serving approximately 6,800 children with special needs from Massachusetts and other states and countries.