

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN BOSTON

by

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B.A., Political Science
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Submitted to
The Department of Urban Studies and Planning
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Degree of
Master of City Planning

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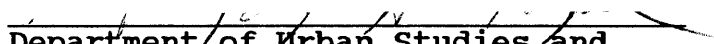
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ABSTRACT

Dropouts have become the latest in a long line of crises in public education. In the aggregate, the dropout problem hardly looks pressing. Nationally, the percentage of 18-24 year olds who have finished high school - about 80-85% - is higher today than it was twenty years ago. In our nation's largest cities, however, nearly one in two youth are dropping out. This locational problem raises serious issues of equity, since minorities are heavily concentrated in the largest cities. Consequently, there is a growing gap between the educational achievement of white youth as compared with black and hispanic youth. This widening gap reverses major gains made throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

There have been surprisingly few efforts to study the dropout phenomenon in our major cities. Researchers have been limited by the information management capabilities of many school systems and the accuracy of student records. As a result, most studies have had to rely on cross-sectional analysis or case studies of individual high schools.

This paper takes two cuts at the dropout problem in Boston. First, it performs a longitudinal analysis of the 1986 graduating class. Dropouts rates are broken down by race, sex, and neighborhood residence. Second, a social profile of dropouts was constructed on the basis of interviews with school staff. Together, these analyses

helps us understand who leaves the Boston Public Schools
and how these students are different from those who stay.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A great many people people helped make this research possible. I would like to first thank all the individuals interviewed for this project, whose names will go unmentioned because of confidentiality. I would like to thank my advisor, Langley Keyes, for being so patient with me and at the same time pushing me to greater depths of analysis. I am enormously indebted to Joseph Ferreira, committee member, and Aurelio Menendez, Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, for their help and assistance. The statistical component of this study and the use of relational data base management tools on MIT's Project Athena computer facilities could not have been possible without them. I want to thank Dr. Leslie Horst at the Boston Public Schools. Lastly, I want to thank all the support from friends, family, and classmates.

"Being a Teenager"

People are continuously coming and going. Nobody ever stays (sic) around long enough to get to know or love you, to become a part of you. Which is why so many teenagers do the things they do. They are empty inside and eventually (sic) stop caring. To make this world better isant (sic) going to take money, gold, or anything material. But we need love. If we could learn to love a little bit more, being a teenager doesn't have to be so bad.

Female Dropout in Alternative Education Class

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This paper looks at two dimensions of the dropout problem in Boston: (a) who drops out of the Boston Public Schools and (b) how they are different from those who do not drop out.

The first question is quantitative. It examines dropout rates according to race, gender, curriculum, and place of residence. Access was given to computer tapes containing the high school records of students enrolled in the 9th grade in the 1982-83 academic year. This data made it possible to complete the first longitudinal analysis of high school dropouts in Boston and one of the few such analyses of a large urban school system. To date, most research on high school dropouts has been national in scope or based on cross-sectional data. The dropout rates reported by the Boston Public Schools over the past several years have been approximations of student loss.

The second question - how are dropouts different from those who stay in school - is qualitative and is constructed from more than fifty interviews with district superintendents, principals and headmasters, teachers,

caseworkers, employment specialists, and youth workers. It attempts to construct a typology of dropouts derived from the perceptions and conclusions of those interviewed. As such, it is an effort to explore what it is that separates those who do and those who do not leave school.

Background Information

In 1987, the Boston Public Schools reported that 46% of its 1986 graduating class dropped out.¹ According to the School Committee, the percentage of students leaving school has risen steadily each year since 1982, when 36% of the students dropped out.² Although comparisons prior to 1982 are unreliable because of changes in accounting systems, it is widely understood that the dropout rate over the past several years is significantly higher than at any time in the post-war period, with the possible exception of the early years of court-ordered desegregation.³

¹ "Dropouts in 1987", Dr. Yohel Camayd-Freixas and Dr. Leslie Horst. Boston Public Schools. Office of Research and Development, September, 1987.

² Dr. Yohel Camayd-Freixas and Dr. Leslie Horst, 1987.

³ Refers to the 1974 court order to integrate the Boston Public Schools. Although data for that period is not considered reliable, many believe that dropout rates did rise, but by how much we don't know.

It should also be noted that, while Boston's current dropout rate is high in an historical context, it is not unusual for a city of its size. New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit all report dropout rates equal to or greater than Boston's. An enormous number of students are leaving our large urban school systems. For years, dropping out was the exception and not the norm. Today, the reverse is true in central city schools with high concentrations of minority enrollment.

Significance of Study

Time and again, research has proven that education makes a large difference between jobs and unemployment, welfare and dependency, early parenthood or planned parenthood, and behavior that is within the law or not.⁴ A female dropout, for example, is nine times as likely to be on welfare than someone who finishes high school.⁵ Indeed, "education is more significant than either background or class in predicting a youth's future prospects."⁶

⁴ "The Research Bulletin", Hispanic Policy Development Project. Fall, 1986. Volume 1, p.1.

⁵ Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1986.

⁶ Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1986.

Although there is an absence of time-series data on the post-secondary experiences of high school dropouts in Boston, it is reasonable to conclude that, given Boston's changing labor market, a good education is essential for long-term occupational success. The percentage of Boston's workforce employed in manufacturing, which has long been a source of good jobs for people with limited education, is among the lowest of any major city. Between 1975 and 1985, 83,000 jobs were added in Boston, but greater than two-thirds of these jobs were concentrated in the fields of finance, insurance, real estate, education, medicine, and business services - industries that rely heavily on academic credentials as a criteria for employment.⁷ John Kasarda, from the University of North Carolina, found that the number of jobs in which employees had less than a high school diploma decreased by 23% in Boston during the 1970s, but jobs where employees had at least two years of college increased by 34%.⁸ Although a high school diploma will not, by itself, confer much of a competitive advantage in Boston's information economy, it is a necessary first step in obtaining post-secondary education.

⁷ "Boston in Brief", Economic Development and Industrial Corporation. Fall 1986.

⁸ "Urban Change and Minority Opportunities", John D. Kasarda. The New Urban Reality, Paul E. Peterson, ed. (The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., 1985).

Research Questions

Education is one of our most cherished values and arguably our only universal entitlement. We have no such guarantee to food, shelter, or medical care. It is widely understood that education is a ticket to social mobility. But for most high school youth in Boston, education holds little promise. Few will go on to college or find their way into the front offices of downtown firms. According to the City-Wide Education Coalition, "over 40% of 12th graders score below 30% on a standardized reading test. They may graduate, but they are functionally illiterate."⁹ It would seem that, under these circumstances, there would be no compelling reason to stay in school. With or without a diploma, these youth will be sorted among that large mass of undifferentiated low-skill workers.

Indeed, a great many of Boston's youth have decided that school is not for them. Who are these youth that leave school, to what extent are they leaving, and in what ways are they different, if at all, from those who remain? In a school system where virtually the entire student body is decidedly poor, is it more-or-less random who makes it and

⁹ "Dropping Out: What the Research Says", Anne Wheelock. Equity and Choice. Fall 1986.

who doesn't or are there distinctions between graduates and non-graduates?

Research Findings

First, the dropout rate is substantially lower than previously reported by the School Committee. Instead of nearly one in two students dropping out, the dropout rate is closer to one in three. This finding is tendered with great caution. It should not be interpreted to mean that we have turned the corner on dropouts, only that we are more accurate in our measurement. A detailed discussion of this issue, and the various problems associated with counting dropouts, is presented in Chapter 2.

Second, there are significant differences in dropout rates accross race, gender, and neighborhood. Asian females (8.9%) had the lowest dropout rate while hispanic males had the highest rate (41.7%). Dropout rates also varied greatly by neighborhood. They ranged from 12.8% in West Roxbury to 44.7% in South Boston. There were also significant differences, some surprising and some not, between the dropout rate by race from one neighborhood to the next. Hispanics in the South End, for example, were half as likely to drop out than hispanics in Uphams Corner; whites in South Boston were four times as likely

to drop out than whites in West Roxbury.

We were surprised to find, however, that the overall dropout rate did not exceed 50% in any one neighborhood. Disaggregating these neighborhoods was beyond the scope of this study, but we believe that it would be something worth pursuing. By doing so, we would be able to isolate subneighborhoods where dropping out is a mass experience.

Third, we can say with assurance that student performance in the 9th grade is critical. Students held back in the 9th grade are three times more likely to drop out than students who are promoted to 10th grade. This finding is consistent with the research on non-promotions, but never has it been shown to have such an enormous impact. What we do not know are the circumstances behind these non-promotions and to what extent they could have been avoided.

Implications for Further Study

One of the greatest obstacles confronting dropout research is the availability of reliable data at the local level. According to Andrew Hahn, who has studied dropouts extensively, "We have informed estimates of how many

students nationally are dropping out, of how many are poor or members of minority groups, of how many are doing well or poorly in school. But on the level that really counts - at local districts and individual schools - we simply don't know."¹⁰

In Boston, we can now safely say that we know a lot more than we did before. We know how many drop out, when they drop out, their race, sex, and neighborhood. The question that remains is whether we can use this data to inform practice. Does this data move us any closer to solving the dropout problem? Are new initiatives necessary or do we need to expand on programs that already exist? Should our efforts be focused at the high schools, which seems to be current practice, or should interventions occur in the earlier grades?

¹⁰ "Reaching out to America's Dropouts: What to do?"
Andrew Hahn. Phi Kappa Delta. December 1987.

CHAPTER TWO

A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN BOSTON

"The size of the number is less important than how policy makers feel about it."

Dale Mann
Teachers College

To make sense of dropout statistics in Boston, one must have an understanding of (a) who attends the Boston Public Schools and (b) how dropouts are defined. Information on enrollment is important because a large number of school-age children in Boston do not attend the public schools. Consequently, the dropout statistics reflect only the experiences of a subset of Boston's youth, predominantly those with fewer resources. The definitional issue is critical because there are an infinite number of ways that dropout rates can be computed, many of which are intended to disguise a large social problem.

A. WHO ATTENDS THE BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In terms of both race and class, students in the Boston Public Schools are not a representative cross section of school-aged children in Boston. Overall, 34% of the city's school-aged children do not attend the public schools, believed to be the fifth highest percentage of

any major city.¹¹ Many of these youth are white and middle class. As a result, Boston Public School students are disproportionately poor and minority.

By race, only 40% of white school-aged children in Boston attend the public schools, compared with 76% of black, 87% of hispanic, and 96% of asian children.¹² For all races, but especially for whites, families with high incomes are less likely to send their children to public school. For example, 71% of white children from families with incomes below \$10,000 attend public school, but just 30% of children from families with incomes above \$40,000 do so. For blacks, the figures are 78% and 67%, respectively.¹³

¹¹ Boston Public Schools, discussion with staff in Office of Planning and Research.

¹² "Results of the 1985 Household Survey: School-Aged Children", Margaret C. O'Brien. Boston Redevelopment Authority. October 1986.

¹³ Margaret C. O'Brien, 1986.

ENROLLMENT OF SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN IN THE BOSTON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS, BY RACE AND INCOME LEVEL
(Year, 1985)

	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC
Less than \$10,000	71%	78%	89%
\$10,000 - \$20,000	40%	76%	94%
\$30,000 - \$40,000	35%	76%	83%
\$40,000+	30%	67%	-

Source: 1985 BRA Household Survey¹⁴

It should be noted that, in general, children in Boston experience very high rates of poverty and low income. More than one out of three school-aged children in Boston is poor. As a result, 45% of Boston Public School students are poor, 44% live in single-parent households, 24% rely on transfer payments, and 74% are minority.¹⁵

The racial composition of the Boston Public Schools has changed dramatically over the past 20 years. In 1967, 73% of the student body in the Boston Public schools was white, 25.6% black and 2.0% hispanic. In 1973, the year just prior to court-ordered busing, the white percentage had fallen to 57%, whereas black and hispanic enrollment increased to 53% and 6%, respectively. Today, 49% of the school body is black, 26% white, 16% hispanic, and 9%

¹⁴ These figures were extrapolated from the 1985 BRA Household Survey.

¹⁵ O'Brien, 1986.

asian.¹⁶

Racial and economic segregation in the schools is even more striking at the high school level. While around one-fourth of high school students are white, more than one-third of these students attend Boston's examination schools. By 11th and 12th grade, after many have dropped out, there are few white students left in the non-examination schools.

The changing composition of the student body in the Boston Public Schools is due in part to the higher percentage of white school-children attending private schools, but more of it has to do with the shifting demographics of the city. Between 1940 and 1970, large numbers of blacks, mostly from the south, migrated to Boston. There were 22,000 blacks living in Boston in 1940, or 3.1% of the city's population. Forty years later, the black population had grown to 126,000, or 22% of the population. While the black migration from the south ended in the early 1970s, large numbers of "new" immigrants have arrived in Boston during the 1980s, particularly hispanics and Southeast Asians. In 1985, 23% of the population was black, 7% hispanic, and 4% asian. And, because of the aging of the white population, 57% of

¹⁶ Unpublished Boston Public Schools document.

school-aged children in Boston are minority.¹⁷

As minorities become an even larger percentage of Boston's population, and assuming the continued reluctance of white families to send their children to the public schools, minority enrollment in the Boston Public Schools will grow. By the mid-1990s, minority enrollment could well exceed 80-85% of the student body.

B. Defining Dropouts

It has been said that there are as many ways of defining dropouts as there are school systems.¹⁸ Indeed, few school systems use the same measurement. In one system "dropouts" can include only those students who officially notify the school of their leaving, while in other systems dropouts can include anyone who fails to report to school. Similarly, students may or may not be classified as a dropout depending on the reason (usually self-reported) for leaving school, such as work, pregnancy, or military service. Moreover, some school systems report dropout

¹⁷ Margaret C. O'Brien, 1986.

¹⁸ "Can we Help Dropouts: Thinking about the undoable" Teachers College Record. Volume 87, Number 3. Spring 1986.

rates on an annual basis (the percentage of high schoolers who withdrew in any year) whereas others report dropout rates based on cohort analysis (how many of those students who entered the 9th grade have dropped out after four or five years).

The varying definitions of what constitutes a dropout is problematic. It makes comparisons accross school systems and accross time imprecise. One cannot say with any certainty, for example, whether the dropout rate in New York City is greater than or less than the dropout rate in Boston. Both systems employ different accounting procedures. One can only acknowledge that the scope of the problem is quite large in both cities.

C. Understanding Dropout Rates in Boston

In Boston, a dropout is defined as someone who has withdrawn from school for reasons other than death, graduation, expulsion, or transfer to another school system.¹⁹ The dropout rate, on the other hand, is calculated by dividing the number of dropouts from an

¹⁹ Each student who is discharged from the Boston Public Schools is assigned one of 19 discharge codes. These codes are then grouped into five smaller categories -- normal progress (which really means still enrolled, since it includes grade repeaters), transfer, dropout, probable dropout, and other. See Appendix A for greater detail.

entering 9th grade class by the total enrollment of that 9th grade class. Thus, if 100 students begin in the 9th grade, but 40 drop out, the dropout rate would be 40%. This rate is calculated over five years (four years of high school plus an additional year for students who repeat).

Under this definition, only those students who are enrolled in the Boston Public Schools during the 9th grade are counted in the dropout calculation.²⁰ Students entering after the 9th grade and students who drop out from middle school are not included in the cohort. If we were to include these groups, the dropout rate would probably increase by a few percentage points.

We should be clear that the dropout rate does not measure the number of students who graduate, only how many students remain enrolled in the school system. A significant number of overage students, especially those who are still in the 10th or 11th grade after five years, are not likely to finish school. Moreover, like all dropout statistics, it must be kept in mind that the

²⁰ The Boston Public Schools, in calculating its cohort dropout rates does not include (a) students who were expected to enroll in the 9th grade, but who did not report, and (b) students who enroll after October 1. We included these students in our tabulations. We believe that, by including these students, our calculations produce a dropout rate that is about 1-2% higher than otherwise would be reported.

dropout rate does not measure educational success. It only measures the percentage of students who stay in school, regardless of educational achievement.

In calculating its dropout rate, the School Committee includes in the denominator those students who have transferred to another school system. While this may seem like a small matter, it produces a large difference in rates. Consider, for example, the case in which 100 students begin in the 9th grade and where 40 drop out and 20 transfer to another school system. Including transfers in the denominator produces a dropout rate of 40%, while not including them produces a rate of 50%.

With Transfers in the Denominator		Without Transfers in the Denominator	
9th Graders	100	9th Graders	100
Divided into		Less Transfers	-20
Dropouts	40	Equals Adjusted Cohort	80
Equals Dropout Rate	40%	Divided into Dropouts	40
		Equals Dropout Rate	50%

For the purposes of this paper, transfers will be included in the denominator. This is done to keep our calculations methodologically consistent with the Boston Public Schools'. We believe, however, that transfers should not be included in the denominator, as is suggested

by various researchers.²¹ Therefore, we have included in Appendix B dropout rates by race and gender that were calculated without transfers in the denominator.

D. A Longitudinal Analysis of the 1986 Graduating Class²²

The following dropout statistics were gathered by accessing Boston Public School computer tapes of student records for the school years 1981-82 to 1986-87. The Boston Public Schools maintain a record on each student for each academic year. A student who has attended four years of high school will have four separate records. Each record contains information on student grades, type of curriculum (vocational education, special education, bilingual, etc.), school(s) attended, transfer status (the reasons for entering or leaving), gender, race, and address. No information is provided on family income, headship status (single parent, two-parent, or extended family), or nationality.

²¹ "Standardizing Practices in the Analysis of School Dropouts", George Morrow. Teachers College Record. Volume 87, Number 3. Spring 1986.

²² We refer to this group as the 1986 Graduating Class or the Class of 1986, which is the year in which these students would have graduated had they matriculated "on-time". In actuality, we examined their progress through 1987 to account for students who are held back at least once.

We were given the records for all students enrolled in the high schools during the years 1982-83 to 1986-87, plus limited data on students enrolled during 1981-82. The tapes for the six years contained approximately 120,000 records of information. From these we isolated in a separate file, called School2, the 7,072 students who were enrolled in the 9th grade in 1982-83. This file consisted of approximately 18,000 records (multiple records for each student depending on how many years he/she remained in the school system). We next deleted from School2 any students who appeared in the 9th grade in the previous year, 1981-82, of which there were 1,679 cases. Because these students were repeaters, they did not belong in the 1982-83 cohort. Our final cohort group, therefore, numbered 5,393 students.

The longitudinal history of each student in the cohort was summarized in a third table, School3, which contained 11 columns (the first one containing the student's identification number). In the second column we would put the student's grade in 1982-83, which for everyone was grade 9. In the third column we entered each student's enrollment status - "1" for normal progress, "2" for transfer, "3" for dropout, "4" for probable dropout, and "5" for other. We then repeated this for each year for each student. A student who dropped out of the 10th grade

in 1984-5 would have a "10" in column 6 and a "3" in column 7. If that student returned to school in 1985-86, but repeated the 10th grade, a "10" would be inserted into column 8 and a "1" in column 9, meaning that the student was enrolled in school. If the student did not return to school, the remaining columns in the record were left blank.

The analysis was done using a relational database management package called Ingres-Sql (Version 5.0) running under UNIX VAS hardware and accessed via networked IBM RT/PC workstations. The use of a SQL (Standard Query Language) to manipulate the 100,000+ records was a key to making useful time-series comparisons a manageable task. Aurelio Menendez, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, was working with Professor Joseph Ferreira on an Athena Project to develop curriculum materials using relational database management tasks. Since they were interested in using the data for their case materials, they worked with me on this project. Aurelio designed and carried out the data management and relational calculus needed to construct the summary tables.

To calculate the dropout rate, we queried the computer to look at the last entry in School3 for each student. A

student who dropped out in 9th grade in 1982-83, and who did not return, was recorded as a 1982-83 dropout. However, if that student returned to school and was enrolled in 1986-87, that student was considered as making "normal progress"²³ and was not counted as a dropout.

Aggregate Statistics

We calculated an overall dropout rate of 34.01% for the Class of 1986, significantly less than the 46.14% rate previously reported by the School Committee. There are two major reasons for this lower rate. The first, as mentioned earlier, has to do with how we treated grade repeaters from the previous year. Students who are held back in the 9th grade are far more likely to drop out (see discussion below). There were approximately 1600 students who were repeating 9th grade for at least the second time. Including these students in the calculation artificially inflates the dropout rate. In determining our cohort population, we excluded any student who was enrolled in 1981-82 school year. The School Committee, on the other hand, had been including them in their cohort group.

²³ Once again, "normal progress" means only that the student was enrolled in school during the school year and did not dropout, transfer, die, or get expelled. It does not imply that the student was promoted. Understandably, this terminology is confusing; however, it is a convention used by the School Committee and we have decided not to change matters, which might add more confusion.

Second, resource constraints have prevented the School Committee from conducting an individual record analyses of student progress. Instead, it has been estimating student loss according to annual dropout rates.

Dropout rates for the Class of 1986, broken down by race, gender, neighborhood, and educational program area (bilingual and special education) are presented below. In a number of cases, we calculated a dropout rate exclusive of students attending Boston's examination schools - the Latin School, Latin Academy, and Boston Technical.²⁴ Seventeen percent of the cohort group was enrolled in one of these schools, the admission for which is based on entrance examinations. The overwhelming majority of these students would not otherwise attend the Boston Public Schools. By excluding these students, we were able to get a better picture of student loss at the remaining "public" high schools.

Race

The dropout rates by race varied from a low of 22.38% for asians to a high of 41.49% for hispanics. The dropout rate for blacks was 34.2% and 32.80% for whites.

²⁴ The determination of whether a student was an "examination" student was based on their 9th grade enrollment, even though that enrollment might have changed in later years.

DROPOUT RATE BY RACE

RACE	ALL STUDENTS	EXCLUSIIVE OF EXAM SCHOOLS
BLACK	34.24%	37.18%
WHITE	32.80%	41.60%
ASIAN	22.38%	30.84%
HISPANIC	41.49%	43.18%

By excluding students enrolled in the examination schools, the dropout rates increased for all races, but especially for whites and asians, who are disproportionately enrolled in the examination schools. Whereas 27% of white students and 37% of asian students in the cohort attend the examination schools, only 11.8% of blacks and 6.2% hispanics attend these schools. The dropout rates for non-examination students was 39.02% overall. It was 37.2% for blacks, 41.6% for whites, 30.8% for asians, and 43.2% for hispanics.

It should be noted that racial groupings are likely to mask significant social and cultural differences. Hispanics in Boston, for example, consist of at least three major ethnic groups - Puerto Ricans, Central Americans, and Cubans. Unfortunately, there is no way of determining the dropout rates by nationality or ethnicity, as the schools do not keep such data. There is strong anecdotal evidence, however, to suggest that there would be significant intra-racial differences. For example,

many of the recent Southeast Asian immigrants are refugees who face a much different experience in Boston than do the Chinese, who, because of their longer history in Boston, have much stronger institutional supports. These groups are likely to experience different economic conditions and to hold different orientations towards education.

Gender

The dropout rate for males was higher than for females, 38.63% vs. 29.03%, a pattern that holds across all races. Asian females had the lowest dropout rate, 8.92%, while hispanic males had the highest dropout rate, 49.43%. The relative order among races was maintained across gender lines. For females, hispanics dropped out at higher rates than blacks, who dropped out at higher rates than whites, who dropped out at higher rates than asians. The same was true for males.

	DROPOUT RATES BY RACE AND SEX	
	MALE	FEMALE
BLACK	38.10%	30.76%
WHITE	36.64%	28.33%
ASIAN	32.68%	8.92%
HISPANIC	49.43%	33.88%
TOTAL	38.63%	29.03%

Place of Residence

Dropout rates were tabulated according to student addresses in the 9th grade.²⁵ The city was divided into 20 neighborhoods, as determined by zip codes. The geographical information system that we used did not allow us to sort students according to the Boston Redevelopment Authority's 16 neighborhood planning areas, which is the reason we used zip codes. The dropout rate for each area is reported in Appendices C and D.

At the neighborhood level, the dropout rates showed wide variations. They ranged from a low of 12.8% in West Roxbury to a high of 44.7% in South Boston. Five neighborhoods had rates that exceeded 40% and five had rates less than 25%. These differences were even more apparent when neighborhood dropout rates were broken down by race. The white dropout rate in West Roxbury, for example, was 13.4% while in Uphams Corner it equaled 47.7%. For hispanics, the dropout rate ranged from 31.2% in the South end to 57.6% in Uphams Corner.

²⁵ We debated whether to use the address during the 9th grade or the address at the time of withdrawal/graduation. We chose to use the 9th grade address in order to keep the time dimension consistent. Otherwise, we would be using a 1986-87 address for some students and a 1982-83 address for others (if they dropped out, for example, in 9th grade).

Program Area

The dropout rate for bilingual students was not dramatically different than the dropout rate for non-bilingual students, 37.2% vs. 33.7%, respectively.²⁶ On the one hand, the argument could be made that these students face greater barriers to achievement and, hence, would be more likely to drop out. On the other hand, it can also be argued that these students receive specialized attention and share a commonness of experience that helps them remain in school.

There was a much greater variance in dropout rates between special education and non-special education students, 47.6% vs. 30.7%, respectively. A corrolary set of arguments could be made for special education students as was made for bilingual students. However, it appears as though students with identified learning needs have a much harder time making it in school than students with language barriers.

²⁶ We identified a bilingual student according to their curriculum in the 9th grade. We did the same for students enrolled in special education.

Path Analysis

Dropout rates were calculated according to how students progressed in school. Although the aggregate dropout rate was 34.01%, the dropout rate for students who repeated the 9th grade was 62%. In comparison, students who were not held back in 9th grade had a 21% chance of dropping out. Students who made it to the 11th grade without repeating had a 13% probability of dropping out and students that made it all the way to 12th grade without repeating had only a 4% chance of dropping out.

Clearly, students who are held back have a high risk of dropping out. They are nearly three times more likely to drop out than students who get promoted. What these numbers do not tell, however, is the extent to which these non-promotions were avoidable. Was someone held back because, say, they could not master algebra? Or was someone held back because they never showed up for school? What is also significant is the sheer number of students who are held back in the 9th grade - 23%.

Timing of Withdrawal

Approximately 33% of all black and asian dropouts withdrew during the first and second years of high school, compared with 41% for hispanics and 46% for whites. It had been widely speculated that hispanics leave school significantly earlier than all other dropouts. What we found was that there was some difference in the timing of withdrawal for hispanics, though not strikingly large. It is unclear, however, how reliable these figures are in telling us when students actually left school. For example, a student may not have shown up at school for two years, but was not marked as a dropout until he/she was old enough to withdraw.

PERCENTAGE OF DROPOUTS, BY RACE AND YEAR

RACE	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
ALL RACES	15.2%	24.1%	25.3%	23.1%	13.0%
BLACK	11.7	22.1	24.4	26.1	17.0
WHITE	20.8	25.2	27.1	18.5	8.4
ASIAN	11.1	32.1	23.5	24.7	8.6
HISPANIC	15.9	33.9	28.1	19.0	11.5

Note: This chart is to be read as follows: for blacks, 11.7% of dropouts left in the first year of high school, 22.1% the next year, etc.

Student Progress

By the fourth year, about two-fifths of the original cohort were no longer in the school system, two-fifths had made it to the 12th grade ("on-time), and one-fifth were behind one or more grade. These figures show how few members of the original cohort make progress together.

PROGRESS OF STUDENTS BY YEAR FOUR, 1985-86

IN SYSTEM		OUT OF SYSTEM	
GRADE 9	62	TRANSFER	779
GRADE 10	321	DROPOUT	1,053
GRADE 11	612	PROBABLE D.O.	132
GRADE 12	2,275	OTHER	159
TOTAL	3,270	TOTAL	2,123

City Wide Dropout Rates

If we were to include all of Boston's youths in our tabulations, those attending public and private schools, the differences in educational attainment among races would be much more evident. The dropout rate in the private schools is believed to be less than 5%.²⁷ Using this figure, the city-wide dropout rate for all school-aged children in Boston would be 23%. It would be around

²⁷ Based on conversations with parochial school personnel.

17% for whites, 27% for blacks, 37% for hispanics, and 23% for asians.

SUMMARY

The longitudinal analysis of the Class of 1986 has provided us with the first true measurement of student progress in the Boston Public Schools. The overall dropout rate was determined to be 34.01%, lower than previously released estimates by the School Committee but still disturbingly high. It was higher for males than for females. Hispanics had the highest dropout rates and asians the lowest. The differences between whites and blacks were insignificant. By neighborhood, the dropout rates showed wide variances.

CHAPTER THREE

A SOCIAL PROFILE OF DROPOUTS IN BOSTON: BEYOND THE GENERAL MODEL

Over the past several months, I have met with dozens of individuals involved in the education and employment of Boston's youth. I wanted to get beyond the numbers and learn more about which students were dropping out and why. Who are these youth that leave school and in what ways are they different from those who graduate?

According to the conventional research, students drop out of high school for a fairly standard number of reasons, most of which are interrelated. "High school dropouts", writes Harold Hodgkinson of the Intstitute of Educational Leadership, "have a rather typical profile. They are usually from low-income or poverty settings, often from a minority group background (although not often Asian-American), have very low basic academic skills, especially reading and math, have parents who are not high school graduates and who are generally uninterersted in the child's progress in school, and who do not provide a

support system for academic progress."²⁸ When a student finally decides to drop out, according to the research, it is not the consequence of a single action, but the compounding impact of, say, "being poor, growing up in a broken home, having been held back in the fourth grade, and finally having slugged "Mr. Fairlee", the school's legendary vice-principal for enforcement."²⁹

In recent years, researchers have begun to explore the role that schools play in influencing a student's decision to leave. Gary Wehlage, from the University of Wisconsin, argues that students who accumulate a number of negative school experiences, including non-promotion, detention, and poor grades, will eventually "choose between remaining in a school situation that promises more of the same, or dropping out."³⁰ Anne Wheelock, from the Massachusetts Advocacy Center, makes a similar argument when she concludes that it is not students' backgrounds, per se, but "schools' responses to students' backgrounds that determine success in school."³¹ Lastly, Michelle Fine,

²⁸ "All One System", Harold Hodgkinson. Institute for Educational Leadership.

²⁹ "Can We Help Dropouts: Thinking About the Undoable", Dale Mann. Teachers College Record. Volume 87, Number 3, Spring 1986.

³⁰ "Dropping Out: What the Research Says", Anne Wheelock. Equity and Choice, Fall 1986.

³¹ Anne Wheelock, 19886.

who studied a lower- and working-class high school in New York City, concludes that "looking for individual explanations is clearly inadequate and blames the victim."³² Fine urges us to examine such variables as the extent of overcrowding, fiscal arrangements, and staff disempowerment as factors contributing to early school leaving.

Indeed, educators are beginning to shift from examining "background characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of dropouts" to research that takes "school context as problematic and stud(ies) how characteristics of schools...affect dropping out."³³ Natriello, Pallas, and McDill, for example, in constructing a framework for studying the dropout problem, suggest a pattern of reciprocal relationships between the personal and social characteristics of students and the process aspects of their school environment.³⁴ They argue that at-risk youth often find themselves in schools that are unresponsive to their needs, a reverse kind of synergism. "The background

³² "Why do Urban Adolescents Drop Into and Out of Public High School", Michelle Fine. Teacher College Record. Volume 87, Number 3. Spring 1986.

³³ "The High School Dropout Puzzle", Chester E. Fin, Jr. Public Interest. Winter 1987.

³⁴ "Taking Stock: Renewing our research Agenda on the Causes and Consequences of Dropping Out", G. Natriello, A. Pallas, and E. McDill. Teachers College Record, Volume 87, Number 3, Spring 1986.

characteristics of students determine the kinds of school and educational processes to which they have access and the characteristics of schools that play a role in attracting students with certain characteristics."³⁵

Disadvantaged, at-risk students require what Natriello and others refer to as "responsive" or "effective" schools, i.e. schools that are generally smaller (or have smaller classrooms), provide more personal interaction between teachers and students, allow for individualization of curriculum, and combine in-school with out-of-school learning. In our large, urban school systems, just the opposite occurs. The inherent characteristics of a large public bureaucracy - hierarchical control, standardization of product, excessive paperwork, loss of collegiality among staff, etc. - stand in the way of creating schools that are responsive to the diverse and demanding needs of urban students.

A Model of Dropouts in Boston

From my interviews, I have constructed four broad categories of dropouts in Boston: structural, contagious, immigrant, and capable. These categories offer an

³⁵ Natriello, Pallas, and McDill, 1986.

unconventional view of dropouts, but one that nonetheless provides a lense through which the dropout problem can be framed. I found that certain themes emerged repeatedly during the course of my interviews, themes that were not addressed in the traditional literature on high school dropouts, at least not to the extent that they are found in Boston.

Before introducing the model, let me begin by saying that the Boston Public Schools has literally become the schooling of last alternative. There are two processes of self-selection going on here. The first is that residents of Boston are themselves much poorer than residents of neighboring towns. Second, within the city itself, most families with any resources send their children to private/parochial schools or, if they can get in, to the examination schools, preferably Boston Latin School. Students in the "regular" high schools, therefore, are extremely disadvantaged. They come from families that have been left behind in the recent transformation of Boston. During the early 1970s, Boston had one of the highest unemployment rates of any city in the nation. Today, the unemployment rate is among the lowest in the country. Boston has become a symbol of urban renaissance and stands as a premier city for high-order finance and business services. At the same time, however, poverty in

Boston has increased. There are a large number of families that are not making it in the new Boston. Their children attend the public schools.

In the paragraphs below I lay out the four categories of dropouts. Since the way in which these categories were developed was in conversations with school staff, I have included in my descriptions quotes from my interviews. It is in this way that one can best understand the complexity of the dropout problem in Boston.

Structural Dropouts

Structural dropouts are, more or less, children of Boston's underclass. These youth grow up in families where illiteracy is high, where feelings of alienation, anger, and apathy are pervasive, and where hard work and education appear to lead nowhere. The neighborhoods where these students live are surrounded by poverty and joblessness. Lacking role models at home and in the neighborhood, these students see little reason to stay in school or to excel academically. There is nothing in their life that reinforces the notion that education is meaningful.

There are a greater number of structural dropouts among black youth than white or hispanic youth, in part because they represent a greater percentage of the student body, but more importantly because of historical forces that have produced, within the black community, a "sense of

powerlessness and frustration ... (that) is an unfortunante, but we think accurate assessment of the way things are in Boston."³⁶

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, large numbers of blacks came to Boston from the south, displaced by the mechanization of the agricultural economy. These families arrived in Boston at a time when, unlike earlier in the century, opportunities for the uneducated and unskilled were disappearing and when, unlike contemporary times, open discrimination was still prevalent. As the Boston economy changed, these families got caught in a web of change.³⁷ Today, a large segment of the black community remains deeply rooted in persistent poverty and dependency.

While structural dropouts may be street tough and street smart, they generally have extremely low levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. "It's scary to me", remarked one dropout counselor. "We're working on such a basic level of self-esteem...What we try to do is to get them to experience some success. It's the last shot we have at teaching them important tools...It goes beyond academics...We try to make them responsible about drugs and family...We're dealing with primal needs, (including) self-esteem, life skills, safety, health care, and making responsible decisions."

Rarely do these youth drop out to work, for few could

³⁶ The Emerging Black Community in Boston, Philip L. Clay. Institute for the Study of Black Culture. University of Massachusetts-Boston. 1986.

³⁷ The phrase "caught in a web of change" is borrowed from John Kasarda, 1985.

last in a structured work environment. According to one dropout prevention caseworker, "They (the structural dropouts) may get a job, but they won't last. They'll bounce from one low-skill job to another." Lacking motivation and basic literacy, these youth cannot handle even the minimal amount of work and sacrifice that is expected of them to remain in school. According to one dropout caseworker, who works with a number of youth from several of Boston's troubled public housing projects, "I can't tell you what we try to do to motivate them. Just showing up is a success."

Although these students may wait until they are sixteen to drop out, they have often decided to drop out much sooner. By late elementary school, many have already begun to exhibit serious attendance problems. Even in schools where truancy is closely monitored, at great staff expense, calls to the family go unanswered or unattended. Lamented one teacher, "Can you imagine your parents getting a call from your teacher saying you skipped school! These kids don't have that home support...Many are bringing themselves up."

There is a great question as to whether a traditional school setting works for these students. The life-long patterns of behavior they have acquired cannot be overcome

in 5 1/2 hours of instruction split between 7 periods. "How can we compete with the neighborhood?", asks one teacher. Another spoke about how these students often internalize failure and feel little sense of control over their lives. "You try anything (with these students). There's nothing to lose. They know they're gonna fail...I try to set up some short-term victories for them, like attendance certificates. Anything to give them some feeling of self-worth."

Many of the structural dropouts are gone by the end of sophomore year. Once they leave, it is virtually impossible for them to return. The social pressures are too immense.

Contagious Dropouts

Contagious dropouts are students who are more mildly at-risk and would be far less likely to drop out if they attended a more supportive and socially integrated school system. While they, too, have a number of problems at home that get in the way of educational achievement, they have a greater sense of themselves. "All of our kids are at risk", said one principal. "There are so many crises for these youth. Their exposure to violence is overwhelming."

This group of students attends school for social, not academic reasons. Mostly, they go to school because their friends go to school and they have some appreciation that society expects its youth to graduate (structural dropouts, on the other hand, either do not buy into that social norm or they believe that it is an impossible goal to reach).

The contagious students generally are not college material. They have marginal academic abilities. In fact, a high school diploma will have little consequence for future employment. Most jobs for which they will qualify either don't require a diploma (particularly in Boston's tight labor market) or the absence of a diploma will be overlooked provided the individual has good work habits - show up on time, take orders, able to work with others, etc. What keeps these students in school, therefore, is the school environment. If good things are happening in the school, if it is inviting, challenging, and lively, these students will be less likely to drop out. If, however, the school is, on the one extreme, organized around control and order, or, on the other extreme, is chaotic and possibly dangerous, the chances for dropping out increase greatly.

Contagious dropouts experience varying degrees of

attachment to school. For some, a major event would have to push them to the brink of dropping out. For others, a smaller incident could spark their leaving. The critical thing for these students is not to be held back in grade. If they reach the 11th grade without being held back, they can ride out the remaining two years. Once held back, they become much more susceptible to the distractions of the street.

Dropout prevention programs are more successful with the contagious dropout than the structural dropout. According to the headmaster of an alternative school, "Even the alternative education programs cream. No one's really taking the hard core dropout. They work with the ones who have more a chance of success."

The manner in which our high schools are organized prohibits the kind of individualized attention that so many of these students need. "I had one kid who spent the month of December living in a car with his dad. None of us knew." Another teacher commented that "just about all of these kids could use counseling...Every high school could use at least two extra full-time counselors. But they're the first to get cut in the budget...Most principals are forced to use them (counselors) as extra administrative staff." As a consequence, many students fall through the

cracks.

Immigrant Dropouts

Although black migration from the south essentially stopped in the early 1970s, Boston has become home to a large wave of "new" immigrants, principally Puerto Ricans, South East Asians, Central Americans, and Carribean Islanders. The experiences and backgrounds of these groups vary widely. While some come from the middle class of their native country, many more are the urban or rural poor. In some circumstances, like some of the recent Haitain immigrants, students may have had limited prior educational instruction.

Immigrant families face great struggles in their efforts to make it in Boston's service economy. Their reasons for dropping out are varied, a combination of both economic and cultural. Hispanic youth, for example, typically have family responsiblities that draw them away from school. Language, of course, is also a major barrier for non-english speaking immigrants.

Not enough is known about the cultural differences among the various immigrant groups. It would be a mistake, however, to deny that such differences exist, since they

greatly affect educational achievement. Many teachers commented, for example, that Haitian students, who come from a culture where there is high regard for persons of authority, make good students.

One factor that will influence whether an immigrant student will drop out is whether the student or the parent is a first generation immigrant. First generation immigrant students, who are usually male, often are expected to provide financial support for their family left behind.

A number of immigrant youth are here in this country without their parents or siblings. While some are under the care of a guardian, others have no extended family and live on their own. This seems particularly true, for example, of Amerasians. According to someone who works with refugee resettlement programs in Boston, "It really differs. Some of these refugees came here committed to uphold their family name and to make good. They work very hard...at great sacrifice. There is a strong sense of family honor...It depends on who they are what culture they came from...We also have a lot of troubled teenagers who have not adjusted well."

Capable Dropouts

This last group of students, which is the smallest percentage of Boston's dropouts, leave school for a variety of personal and familial reasons, but without the same motivational or psychological problems as structural dropouts. "Not all dropouts are troubled," remarked one middle school principal. "I've sent good, solid students to high school and they drop out." The capable students are the most likely to return to school some day or to earn a General Equivalency Degree. The abundance of jobs in the Boston area may strongly contribute to their leaving. "I think a lot of these youth work during the summer and get used to earning money", a retired principal commented. "When they come back to school, it's harder to stay. Most of them plan to return to school, but once you leave, it's hard to come back." Even if these students do not return to school, we are less concerned about their future life chances.

The above typology is intended to show that there are several different groups of dropouts and that they operate at different levels. The group that would be the easiest to save would be the contagious dropouts, particularly since so many of them leave for lack of attention. The structural dropouts are the hardest to reach and there is

question as to whether the traditional high school is right for them. The immigrant group is varied and presents a number of different policy options. As for the capable dropouts, they may may have encountered a family crisis that is beyond the control of the school. Most of Boston's dropouts, however, are in the first three categories.

During the course of my interviews I kept asking whether there was anything that differentiated those who drop out from those who do not. The answers were qualified in the positive, i.e. there was some difference, but more motivationally than academically. "Those who we graduate (in terms of academics) look very much like those who we do not graduate", said one area superintendent. The problem is that so many of these students come from disadvantaged backgrounds and that there are so many different ways for them to get pulled off track. Unfortunately, because of the creaming of middle class students to private and parochial schools, there are few students in Boston's high schools who are serious about academics and who could affect school atmosphere. It is a system without role models and where marginal students become more marginal.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

"The reason (why) high school (students) drop out is because of precnangcy (sic) and because they don't like it and peer pressure. And they think that they know nothing or there (sic) parent droped (sic) out and they think they have to do the same.

A Vocational Education Student on Why Students Drop Out

This paper has explored Boston's dropout problem from a number of different angles. First, a longitudinal analysis of student progress was conducted of the 1982-83 9th grade class. It was found that 34.01% of this cohort dropped out after five years, a figure that was substantially less than the 46.12% rate officially reported by the School Committee. The major reason for this difference had to do with the fact that the School Committee had been including in its cohort students who were repeating 9th grade for at least the second time. Since these students are three times more likely to drop out than other students, the effect was to inflate the dropout rate.

While this finding is encouraging, it is no cause for celebration. The dropout rate remains intolerably high. The longitudinal analysis also found that there were significant differences according to sex and race. Males

drop out at higher rates than females. Hispanics drop out at higher rates than blacks or whites, who drop out at higher rates than asians. The lowest rate was recorded among asian females and the highest rate among hispanic males. By neighborhood, the dropout rate varied dramatically, but in only a few instances did it reach a socially acceptable level.

Second, this paper attempted to put a face on the dropout problem. A typology of dropouts was constructed based on conversations with school staff and others working with youth in Boston. The argument was made that there are different dimensions to the dropout problem and that a dynamic operates among the different groups.

This paper has taken as a given that it is desirable for students to finish high school. The unfortunate reality is that, for a great many of these youth, with or without a diploma, they face tremendous barriers to employment. Their lives are such that there is little reason for them to believe that they will ever go on to college. Focusing on the dropout rate is, to some extent, to misperceive the problem. The problem is jobs and housing. These students come from families that are too poor to choose where they would like to live and what schools their children should attend.

Although the schools cannot change the nature of the labor market or the housing market, schools can do a much better job of keeping youth in school. There is an enormous body of literature on the characteristics of effective schools. We know what makes a good school. Indeed, there are examples of success in our own backyard. Unfortunately, these successes are at the elementary and middle schools. Except for the examination schools, we do not have the same kind of successes at the high schools. The question is whether we can move from knowledge to practice.

APPENDIX A

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS' DISCHARGE CODES

1. TRANSFER

BOSTON PAROCHIAL

MASS. PAROCHIAL

BOSTON PRIVATE (NON-PAROCHIAL)

MASS. PUBLIC

MASS. PRIVATE (NON-PAROCHIAL)

OUT OF STATE

2. DROPOUT

WORK

MILITARY SERVICE

OVER 16

MARRIAGE

REGISTERED - DID NOT REPORT

MOVED - NO FORWARDING ADDRESS

3. PROBABLE DROPOUT

HOME

NO INFORMATION

4. OTHER

DEATH

EXPULSION

APPENDIX B

DROPOUT RATES WITHOUT TRANSFERS IN THE DENOMINATOR

	MALES	FEMALES
BLACK	43.42%	35.46%
WHITE	46.80%	36.41%
ASIAN	37.85%	10.94%
HISPANIC	58.90%	41.41%

OVERALL RATE WITHOUT TRANSFERS = 40.76%

R

APPENDIX C

DROPOUT RATES BY NEIGHBORHOOD
(ACCORDING TO ZIP CODE DESIGNATION)

	CASES	NON- DROPOUTS	DROPOUTS	RATE
1 SOUTH BOSTON (02127)	228	126	102	44.74%
2 ROXBURY (02119)	411	236	175	42.58%
3 ROXBURY CROSSING (02120)	196	113	83	42.35%
4 EAST BOSTON (02128)	347	204	143	41.21%
5 UPHAMS CORNER (02125)	446	264	182	40.81%
6 FIELDS CORNER (02122)	212	128	84	39.62%
7 CHARLESTOWN (02129)	78	48	30	38.46%
8 JAMAICA PLAIN (02130)	393	247	146	37.15%
9 GROVE HALL (02121)	490	312	178	36.33%
10 CODMAN SQUARE (02124)	756	500	256	33.86%
11 SOUTH END (02118)	241	167	74	30.71%
12 ROSLINDALE (02131)	271	199	72	26.57%
13 MATTAPAN (02126)	481	355	126	26.20%
14 BACK BAY/BEACON HILL (note 5)	112	83	29	25.89%
15 ALLSTON (02134)	120	90	30	25.00%
16 HYDE PARK (02136)	167	128	39	23.35%
17 CENTRAL BOSTON (note 6)	82	63	19	23.17%
18 BRIGHTON (02135)	164	128	36	21.95%
19 WEST ROXBURY (02132)	164	143	21	12.80%
20 FENWAY/KENMORE (02215)	10	9	1	*
TOTAL	5369	3543	1826	34.01%

1. Based on student addresses as reported in 9th grade (1982-83)
2. Total cases do not add up to 5,393 since some students do not live in Boston.
3. Zip Codes in Parenthesis
4. Includes codes 02115 and 02116
5. Includes codes 02113, 02114, 02118 thru 02111 and 02210)
6. Rate not calculated for Fenway because of small number of cases.

DROPOUT RATES BY NEIGHBORHOOD AND RACE

	BLACK			WHITE			ASIAN			HISPANIC		
	CASES	DROPOUTS	RATE	CASES	DROPOUTS	RATE	CASES	DROPOUTS	RATE	CASES	DROPOUTS	RATE
1 ALLSTON	7	2	*	42	10	*	53	10	18.87%	18	8	*
2 BACK BAY	34	15	*	14	2	*	47	6	*	16	6	*
3 BRIGHTON	27	5	*	82	19	23.17%	41	8	*	14	4	*
4 CENTRAL BOSTON	2	1	*	24	4	*	53	13	24.53%	3	1	*
5 CHARLESTOWN	1	1	*	68	26	38.24%	8	2	*	1	1	*
6 CODMAN SQUARE	577	192	33.28%	109	40	36.70%	8	4	*	59	20	33.90%
7 EAST BOSTON	6	2	*	309	129	41.75%	14	3	*	17	8	*
8 FENWAY/KENMORE	4	0	*	2	1	*	3	0	*	1	0	*
9 FIELDS CORNER	59	25	42.37%	107	43	40.19%	9	3	*	37	13	*
10 GROVE HALL	458	164	35.81%	2	1	*	1	0	*	25	10	*
11 HYDE PARK	30	6	*	131	33	25.19%	2	0	*	3	0	*
12 JAMAICA PLAIN	119	47	39.50%	104	35	33.65%	10	4	*	160	60	37.50%
13 MATTAPAN	429	111	25.87%	37	10	*	5	0	*	8	4	*
14 ROSLINDALE	44	17	*	196	44	22.45%	6	0	*	25	11	*
15 ROXBURY	322	135	41.93%	3	0	*	2	1	*	75	37	49.33%
16 ROXBURY CROSSING	115	49	42.61%	6	1	*	7	4	*	68	29	42.65%
17 SOUTH BOSTON	0	0	*	226	101	44.69%	1	0	*	1	1	*
18 SOUTH END	97	35	36.08%	10	1	*	54	13	24.07%	80	25	31.25%
19 UPHAMS CORNER	221	71	32.13%	107	51	47.66%	18	3	*	99	57	57.58%
20 WEST ROXBURY	1	0	*	157	21	13.38%	5	0	*	1	0	*
TOTAL	2553	878	34.39%	1736	572	32.95%	347	74	21.33%	711	295	41.49%

NOTE: Dropout rates not calculated where number of cases less than 50 (approximately where 95% confidence interval is under 20 percentage points).

APPENDIX E

STUDENT PROGRESS FOR THE 1982-83 9TH GRADE ENTERING CLASS

CATEGORY	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	TOTAL
NORMAL PROGRESS	59	19	15	2031	461	2585
TRANSFER	402	223	154	78	37	894
DROPOUT	207	401	442	391	220	1661
PROBABLE DROPOUT	71	40	21	22	19	173
OTHER	42	13	11	8	6	80
TOTAL	781	696	643	2530	743	5393

NOTE:

1. This chart shows in which year students left the Boston Public High Schools and for what reason. There is only one entry for each student, which is the last entry (in cases of multiple transfers in and out).
2. There were 93 students who were incorrectly who were coded as Normal Progress in one year but who did not appear in the next year. These students appear in the first three columns of Normal Progress. We treated them like transfers.
3. Students who made normal progress in 1986 but who did not appear in 1987 we assumed were graduates.

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