BPS Graduation and Dropout Rates Improve in 2014

Progress is tempered by individual school results and the ethnic achievement gap

The slowly improving graduation rate of students in the Boston Public Schools (BPS) reached a record high of 66.7% in 2014. Also, the BPS's four-year-cohort dropout rate reached a record low of 17.1% last year. In spite of these improvements, the BPS is still challenged by too many high schools with graduation rates below 60% and notable performance gaps among racial/ethnic groups.

Cohort Graduation Rate

The most recent BPS four-year cohort graduation rate rose to 66.7%, an increased of 5.3% since 2009. The cohort graduation rate tracks the number of 9th graders entering high school who graduate after four years.

The graduation rates by high school indicate the challenges still ahead. Of the 32 Boston high schools reporting graduation rates, only eight or 25% have graduation rates above 85%, the federally approved standard. Thirteen high schools or 41% had graduation rates below 60% and seven were below 50%.

Graduation Rates by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	2009 Graduation Rate	2014 Graduation Rate
Black	60.7%	65.8%
White	71.7%	72.3%
Asian	78.8%	87.6%
Hispanic	52.6%	59.8%
System-wide	**61.4%**	**66.7%**

The 2014 cohort graduation rates by racial/ethnic group also showed dramatic differences. Asian students graduated at a rate of 87.6%, while Hispanic students graduated at a rate of only 59.8%.

Cohort Dropout Rate

The most recent four-year cohort dropout rate declined to a record low of 17.1% for the 2013 cohort, a significant improvement from the 2008 cohort of 24.4%. The number of students who dropped out of school decreased from 1,062 in 2008 to 668 in 2013. Despite this improvement, a significant gap existed among racial groups, as shown below. The cohort dropout rate for Asian students was 9.0% compared with the 22.8% dropout rate for Hispanic students, a difference of 13.8%.

Dropout Rates by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	2008 Cohort Dropout Rate	2013 Cohort Dropout Rate
Black	24.1%	15.9%
White	19.9%	11.4%
Asian	11.8%	9.0%
Hispanic	31.2%	22.8%
System-wide	**24.4%**	**17.1%**
No. of students	**1,062**	**668**

Annual Dropout Rate

The 2014 annual dropout rate was 3.8%, a 0.7% improvement from 2013 and a more significant improvement from 6.4% in 2009 and 7.9% in 2007.