

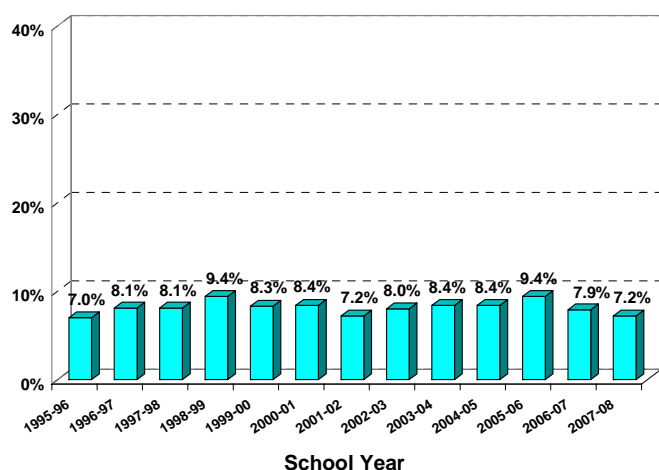
# Q and A

## Boston Public Schools 2007-2008: Student Dropout

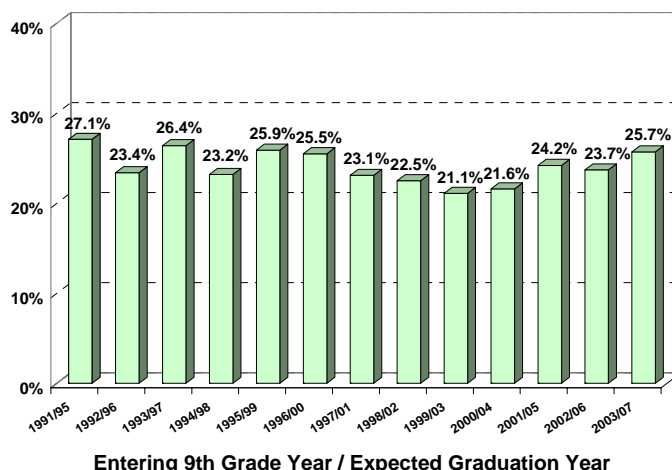
This document presents answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about student dropout in the Boston Public Schools. As defined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE) and the National Center for Education Statistics, a student is considered to be a dropout at the end of the school year if he or she is not in school, has not graduated, and has not transferred to another school system\*.

### How Have Systemwide Dropout Rates Varied Over Time?

**Annual Dropout Rates\* Systemwide: Grades 9-12**



**Ninth Grade Cohort Dropout Rates Systemwide**



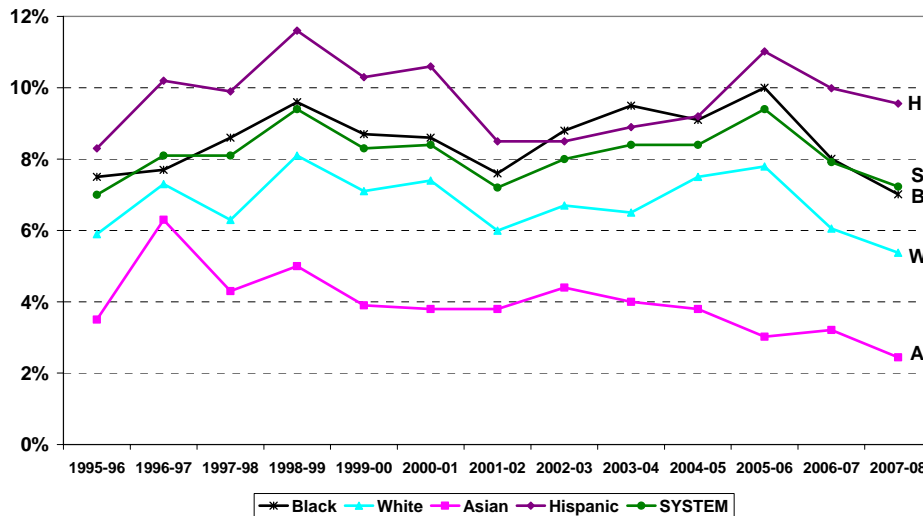
- The annual rate analysis answers the question, “How many students in grades 9-12 drop out in one year?”
- The 9<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> grade annual dropout rate in 2007-2008 (7.2%) represents an 0.7 percentage points decrease from the previous year and is just slight above the low point of 7.0% (1995-1996).
- The cohort rate analysis answers the question, “Of the students who began 9<sup>th</sup> grade, what proportion dropped out over the next five years?”
- Compared to the previous cohort, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort dropout rate increased 2 percentage points to 25.7% for the 2003/07 cohort.
- Historically, the cohort dropout rate has declined substantially since its high point of 39.6% among the students in the 1983/1987 cohort.

Note: Final annual dropout rates are reported in this document. These final dropout rates differ from the June rates shown in the School Report Cards because they account for changes in student status between June and the following October. This is done to conform with MA DESE guidelines. It should be noted that from the SY2003-04 onward, the student status reported in the next school year October 1 Student Information Management System (SIMS) is used for the adjustment rather than identified by school personnel via a survey as done in the previous years. Also, beginning with SY2006-07, BPS Student Discharge Codes have been changed to align with the enrollment status codes used by the MA DESE’s SIMS.

\* Starting from SY2006-07, students who died or were expelled are excluded from the population instead of being counted as other loss. Caution should be made when comparing data from 2006-07 and later with data from earlier years.

### How Have Systemwide Dropout Rates Varied Over Time by Racial/Ethnic Group?

Annual Dropout Rate by Racial/Ethnic Group:  
1995-96 through 2007-08



	Black	White	Asian	Hispanic	SYSTEM
1995-96	7.5%	5.9%	3.5%	8.3%	7.0%
1996-97	7.7%	7.3%	6.3%	10.2%	8.1%
1997-98	8.6%	6.3%	4.3%	9.9%	8.1%
1998-99	9.6%	8.1%	5.0%	11.6%	9.4%
1999-00	8.7%	7.1%	3.9%	10.3%	8.3%
2000-01	8.6%	7.4%	3.8%	10.6%	8.4%
2001-02	7.6%	6.0%	3.8%	8.5%	7.2%
2002-03	8.8%	6.7%	4.4%	8.5%	8.0%
2003-04	9.5%	6.5%	4.0%	8.9%	8.4%
2004-05	9.1%	7.5%	3.8%	9.2%	8.4%
2005-06	10.0%	7.8%	3.0%	11.0%	9.4%
2006-07	8.0%	6.1%	3.2%	10.0%	7.9%
2007-08	7.0%	5.4%	2.4%	9.6%	7.2%

- There have been year to year fluctuations in annual dropout rates in all groups.
- 2007-08 had the lowest dropout rate in the time period for all racial/ethnic groups except Hispanics.
- Between 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, dropout rates for every group declined slightly including Black students who achieved the largest decrease of 1 percentage point.
- There was a consistent relationship in dropout rates across the groups, from low to high: Asians, Whites, Blacks, and then Hispanics, except 2002-03 and 2003-04 where Blacks were the highest.

### How Do Dropout Rates Vary by Racial/Ethnic Group and Gender?

	Overall		Male		Female	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Black	7.0%	608	7.9%	345	6.1%	263
White	5.4%	150	5.9%	83	4.8%	67
Asian	2.4%	44	3.0%	27	1.9%	17
Hispanic	9.6%	626	9.5%	316	9.6%	310
TOTALS**	7.2%	1,447	7.7%	781	6.7%	666

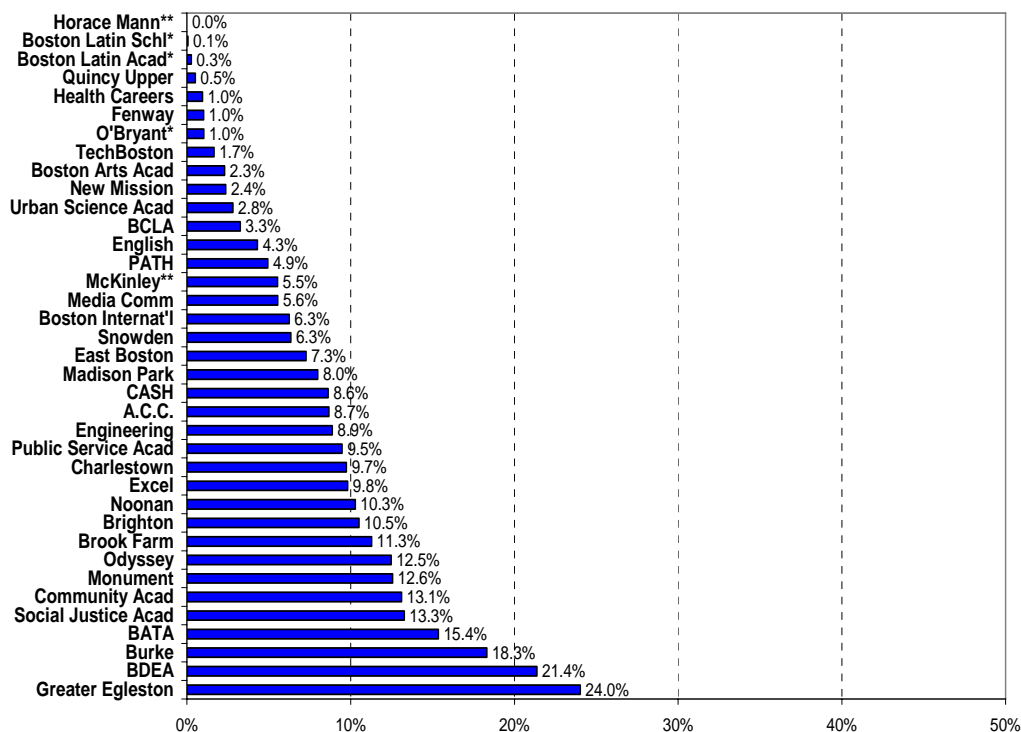
\*\* Totals include 7 Native Americans and 12 Multiracial dropouts who are not shown separately by gender because their numbers are so few.

- Overall, more males than females dropped.
- Dropout is lowest among Asian female students and highest among female Hispanics.
- Gender differences are slightly more pronounced among Black students. The gap is negligible among Hispanics.

# Q and A Boston Public Schools 2007-2008: Student Dropout

## How do Dropout Rates Differ Across Schools/Programs?

Annual Dropout Rate by School: Grades 9-12, 2007-08



- Dropout rates vary substantially across schools/programs.
- Dropout rates range from a low of 0% to a high of 24%.
- School enrollments in grades 9-12 ranged from 37 to nearly 1,600.

\* Examination School \*\* Special Needs School. Note: Students who dropped out are attributed to the last school to which they were assigned.

## How do Dropout Rates Vary Across Neighborhoods?

- Dropout rates vary substantially according to where students live.
- The percentage of dropouts varies from a low of 1.8% in Boston Central to a high of 9.0% in Fields Corner.
- There is also much variation in the numbers of students from each neighborhood who are attending Boston Public Schools.

Annual Dropout Rate by Neighborhood (Zip Code):  
Grades 9-12, 2007-2008

	Percent	Number	Students in Neighborhood
Allston	5.7%	15	265
Back Bay/Kenmore*	4.5%	17	381
Boston Central**	1.8%	5	271
Brighton	4.5%	24	532
Charlestown	8.0%	31	388
Codman Square	7.8%	207	2644
East Boston	6.5%	104	1612
Fields Corner	9.0%	103	1147
Grove Hall	7.9%	133	1693
Hyde Park	6.5%	89	1363
Jamaica Plain	7.4%	69	928
Mattapan	7.6%	109	1429
Roslindale	5.8%	80	1383
Roxbury	8.9%	135	1513
Roxbury Crossing	7.1%	42	595
South Boston	6.2%	50	812
South End	8.4%	56	670
Uphams Corner	8.8%	158	1793
West Roxbury	3.0%	17	564

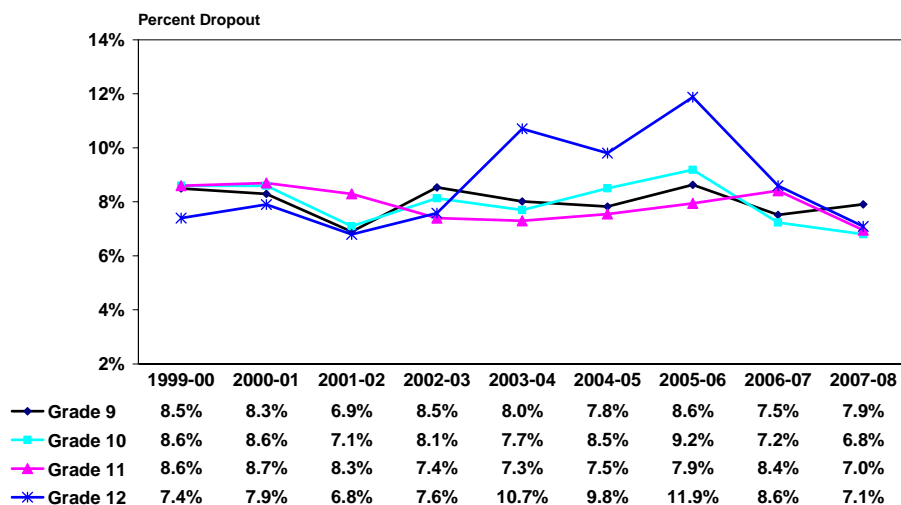
\* 02115, 02116, 02215, 02199

\*\* 02108 through 02111, 02113, 02114, 02210 (Downtown, West End, North End, Chinatown)

# Q and A Boston Public Schools 2007-2008: Student Dropout

## How do Dropout Rates Vary Across Grade Levels?

Annual Dropout Rates by Grade Level: 1999-00 to 2007-08



- Dropout rates across grade levels have fluctuated over the years.
- 2007-08 had the lowest dropout rate in the time period for all grade levels except 9th grade.
- Compared to 2006-07, the dropout rates for 11th and 12th grades each declined about 1.5 percentage points. 10th grade also saw a slight decline while the rate for 9th grade increased slightly.

## How do Dropout Rates Differ Between Competency Determination (CD) Earners and Students without a CD?

- Students without a CD are more likely to dropout than students with a CD.
- Among those who dropped out, 40.2% of the juniors have earned CD and 57.2% of the seniors already earned CD.

2007-08 Dropout Rates and % of Dropouts Among CD Earners and Students without a CD

Grade	CD Status	Total Enrollment	# of Dropouts	Dropout Rate	% of All Dropouts
11	With CD	3,567	129	3.6%	40.2%
	Without CD	1,049	192	18.3%	59.8%
12	With CD	4,372	202	4.6%	57.2%
	Without CD	605	151	25.0%	42.8%

## How do Dropout Rates Vary Among Special Populations?

2007-08 Dropout Rates and % of Dropouts for Special Populations

	Total Enrollment	# of Dropouts	Dropout Rate	% of All Dropouts
Special Education	3,600	320	8.9%	22.1%
Non-Special Education	16,414	1,127	6.9%	77.9%
LEP	2,614	194	7.4%	13.4%
Non LEP	17,400	1,253	7.2%	86.6%
Low-Income	12,395	664	5.4%	45.9%
Non Low-Income	7,619	783	10.3%	54.1%

- Students with disabilities or Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are more likely to drop out of school than their peers who do not have those characteristics, but to a less extent for the LEP students.
- Student dropout does not appear to be associated with low-income status. Among all dropouts in SY2007-08, more than half were not from low-income families.

# Boston Public Schools

## Annual Dropout by Racial/Ethnic Group and Systemwide: 1980-1981 through 2007-2008: Grades 9-12\*

	Black		White		Asian		Hispanic		Native American		Multiracial		Systemwide	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
2007-2008#	7.0%	[608/8668]	5.4%	[150/2790]	2.4%	[44/1799]	9.6%	[626/6552]	10.3%	[7/68]	8.8%	[12/137]	7.2%	[1447/20014]
2006-2007#	8.0%	[727/9075]	6.1%	[171/2825]	3.2%	[59/1838]	10.0%	[642/6427]	4.1%	[3/73]	8.1%	[8/99]	7.9%	[1610/20337]
2005-2006****	10.0%	[965/9648]	7.8%	[234/3003]	3.0%	[55/1821]	11.0%	[670/6081]	10.1%	[7/69]	9.3%	[5/54]	9.4%	[1936/20676]
2004-2005****	9.1%	[887/9789]	7.5%	[226/3029]	3.8%	[69/1806]	9.2%	[510/5551]	8.1%	[6/74]	--	[1/5]	8.4%	[1699/20254]
2003-2004***	9.5%	[932/9845]	6.5%	[197/3036]	4.0%	[75/1864]	8.9%	[463/5201]	9.7%	[7/72]	-	-	8.4%	[1674/20018]
2002-2003***	8.8%	[872/9932]	6.7%	[203/3033]	4.4%	[82/1855]	8.5%	[404/4774]	11.4%	[8/70]	-	-	8.0%	[1569/19664]
2001-2002***	7.6%	[756/9923]	6.0%	[185/3065]	3.8%	[73/1924]	8.5%	[395/4629]	9.1%	[7/77]	-	-	7.2%	[1416/19618]
2000-2001***	8.6%	[824/9625]	7.4%	[225/3059]	3.8%	[71/1883]	10.6%	[469/4416]	7.2%	[5/64]	-	-	8.4%	[1594/19052]
1999-2000***	8.7%	[839/9624]	7.1%	[221/3103]	3.9%	[72/1862]	10.3%	[451/4394]	8.2%	[5/61]	-	-	8.3%	[1588/19044]
1998-1999***	9.6%	[899/9337]	8.1%	[254/3153]	5.0%	[92/1840]	11.6%	[498/4288]	10.9%	[6/55]	-	-	9.4%	[1749/18673]
1997-1998***	8.6%	[781/9088]	6.3%	[194/3094]	4.3%	[76/1769]	9.9%	[416/4188]	13.5%	[7/52]	-	-	8.1%	[1474/18191]
1996-1997***	7.7%	[683/8890]	7.3%	[227/3096]	6.3%	[113/1794]	10.2%	[421/4140]	8.2%	[4/49]	-	-	8.1%	[1448/17969]
1995-1996***	7.5%	[649/8626]	5.9%	[182/3102]	3.5%	[62/1796]	8.3%	[325/3925]	13.0%	[7/54]	-	-	7.0%	[1225/17505]
1994-1995**	9.7%	[822/8501]	7.2%	[220/3055]	5.4%	[99/1837]	10.4%	[393/3773]	7.0%	[3/43]	-	-	8.9%	[1537/17209]
1993-1994**	8.1%	[682/8412]	8.6%	[274/3192]	4.3%	[81/1880]	10.3%	[382/3697]	22.4%	[11/49]	-	-	8.3%	[1430/17230]
1992-1993**	9.0%	[745/8319]	8.5%	[284/3328]	3.4%	[65/1888]	10.6%	[379/3567]	21.4%	[12/56]	-	-	8.7%	[1485/17158]
1991-1992**	9.5%	[787/8323]	8.5%	[281/3313]	7.4%	[140/1898]	13.1%	[451/3448]	11.8%	[6/51]	-	-	9.8%	[1655/17033]
1990-1991**	10.3%	[848/8199]	7.6%	[251/3292]	4.8%	[88/1816]	13.5%	[432/3211]	10.0%	[6/60]	-	-	9.8%	[1625/16578]
1989-1990**	10.3%	[833/8118]	9.2%	[319/3485]	5.6%	[98/1753]	13.8%	[409/2971]	15.3%	[9/59]	-	-	10.2%	[1668/16386]
1988-1989	11.2%	[929/8330]	10.7%	[406/3799]	4.7%	[76/1628]	14.7%	[412/2808]	10.0%	[7/70]	-	-	11.0%	[1830/16635]
1987-1988	13.5%	[1145/8502]	13.0%	[541/4156]	6.3%	[97/1545]	17.7%	[481/2713]	16.4%	[12/73]	-	-	13.4%	[2276/16989]
1986-1987	13.4%	[1167/8735]	14.3%	[659/4621]	8.0%	[123/1536]	18.0%	[482/2678]	17.6%	[13/74]	-	-	13.9%	[2444/17644]
1985-1986	14.4%	[1293/8963]	14.9%	[738/4944]	9.4%	[140/1496]	18.9%	[493/2605]	15.6%	[10/64]	-	-	14.8%	[2674/18072]
1984-1985	17.0%	[1637/9644]	16.9%	[923/5465]	9.7%	[150/1542]	22.9%	[582/2537]	20.0%	[13/65]	-	-	17.2%	[3302/19253]
1983-1984	15.4%	[1500/9711]	16.5%	[922/5582]	12.2%	[175/1440]	19.8%	[470/2379]	31.3%	[25/80]	-	-	16.1%	[3092/19192]
1982-1983	14.3%	[1433/10008]	16.3%	[1033/6333]	11.8%	[172/1462]	16.8%	[377/2238]	11.9%	[10/84]	-	-	15.0%	[3025/20125]
1981-1982	11.5%	[1161/10073]	13.3%	[936/7047]	13.4%	[195/1456]	15.2%	[325/2139]	13.9%	[11/79]	-	-	12.6%	[2628/20794]
1980-1981	10.4%	[1043/10009]	11.5%	[873/7624]	6.2%	[71/1141]	16.6%	[348/2101]	6.0%	[5/84]	-	-	11.2%	[2340/20959]

\* Transfers from BPS are excluded from these analyses. Dropout rates, number of dropouts, and total populations are shown for each group.

\*\* New methods of counting and reporting dropouts were introduced in 1991-1992 to conform to new guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Education (MA DOE) and the National Center for Educational Statistics. In order to present consistent historical data, the dropout data were recalculated back to 1989-1990 according to the new methods. The impact of the changes was relatively small (less than one percentage point), but the changes do mean that the data for years before 1989-1990 are not directly comparable with the data from more recent years. Note: Effective in 1993-1994, the discharge code '28' ("Special Services", such as commitment to DYS with participation in an approved educational program) is no longer considered a dropout discharge code.

\*\*\* For annual rate data from 1995-1996 on, BPS accounts for "returned dropouts" who re-enroll by the following October 1 or process a request to transfer out of the system. 1995-1996 and later data are therefore not directly comparable with data from earlier years.

\*\*\*\* Beginning from 2004-05, students who turn age of 22 are counted as "Other Loss" rather than dropouts. Also, as a result of the revised federal government's reporting categories on student race codes, "Multiracial" category is added. "Multiracial" refers to any student with multiple non-Hispanic race/ethnic codes. Dropout rate is not reported if a student group has fewer than 10 students.

# Beginning with SY2006-07, death and expulsion are also excluded from the analyses. In addition, updated student discharge codes were implemented to be aligned with the enrollment status codes used by the MA DOE's SIMS. Hence, caution should be made when comparing data from 2006-07 and later with data from earlier years.

## Boston Public Schools

### Dropout by Racial/Ethnic Group for 9th Grade Cohorts: 1979/83 through 2003/07

	Black		White		Asian		Hispanic		Native American		Systemwide	
	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
2003/07***	27.9%	[561/2011]	21.5%	[145/673]	9.9%	[42/426]	29.8%	[365/1226]	**	[6/16]	25.7%	[1119/4352]
2002/06***	24.9%	[519/2087]	17.6%	[117/665]	7.3%	[28/384]	31.0%	[330/1063]	**	[3/12]	23.7%	[997/4211]
2001/05***	26.1%	[540/2067]	21.0%	[140/666]	9.5%	[39/409]	28.2%	[291/1031]	**	[3/20]	24.2%	[1013/4193]
2000/04***	23.8%	[459/1932]	17.6%	[114/646]	7.6%	[29/380]	25.0%	[245/979]	**	[6/15]	21.6%	[853/3952]
1999/03*	20.7%	[422/2036]	19.9%	[141/707]	10.7%	[42/394]	26.9%	[256/953]	**	[5/17]	21.1%	[866/4107]
1998/02*	23.3%	[451/1939]	20.9%	[139/665]	8.0%	[32/402]	28.4%	[260/914]	**	[3/13]	22.5%	[885/3933]
1997/01*	24.1%	[456/1889]	18.3%	[121/662]	10.7%	[40/374]	29.4%	[266/906]	**	[4/12]	23.1%	[887/3843]
1996/00*	25.2%	[460/1822]	22.2%	[142/641]	12.3%	[43/350]	33.4%	[303/907]	**	[4/9]	25.5%	[952/3729]
1995/99*	27.3%	[498/1821]	21.6%	[148/686]	14.6%	[55/378]	31.3%	[268/855]	**	[4/13]	25.9%	[973/3753]
1994/98*	23.9%	[417/1744]	21.0%	[139/661]	9.2%	[31/338]	29.1%	[239/821]	**	[3/9]	23.2%	[829/3573]
1993/97*	27.3%	[458/1678]	24.1%	[142/588]	12.0%	[39/324]	32.7%	[242/471]	**	[2/9]	26.4%	[883/3340]
1992/96*	25.9%	[415/1602]	20.8%	[144/692]	11.5%	[39/338]	25.7%	[189/736]	**	[6/14]	23.4%	[793/3382]
1991/95*	26.2%	[447/1703]	25.4%	[178/702]	12.3%	[41/334]	37.3%	[269/721]	**	[4/11]	27.1%	[939/3471]
1990/94*	26.6%	[422/1585]	27.2%	[182/670]	13.7%	[39/285]	33.8%	[230/680]	**	[7/12]	27.2%	[880/3232]
1989/93*	25.6%	[408/1593]	25.2%	[174/691]	13.3%	[44/332]	38.8%	[264/680]	**	[6/11]	27.1%	[896/3307]
1988/92*	28.9%	[490/1698]	27.7%	[220/794]	9.9%	[34/343]	36.4%	[220/604]	**	[8/15]	28.1%	[972/3454]
1987/91*	31.0%	[515/1663]	29.0%	[238/822]	15.2%	[53/348]	40.5%	[244/602]	**	[9/19]	30.7%	[1059/3454]
1986/90*	33.5%	[608/1814]	31.3%	[287/916]	17.4%	[58/333]	39.9%	[252/631]	**	[8/15]	32.7%	[1213/3709]
1985/89*	31.6%	[577/1825]	33.3%	[337/1013]	17.8%	[53/297]	44.2%	[275/622]	**	[4/14]	33.0%	[1246/3771]
1984/88*	35.6%	[699/1964]	37.9%	[447/1180]	20.7%	[63/305]	48.5%	[311/641]	**	[9/18]	37.2%	[1529/4108]
1983/87*	37.0%	[719/1942]	40.8%	[468/1147]	22.7%	[68/299]	53.8%	[314/584]	**	[9/16]	39.6%	[1578/3988]
1982/86*	38.8%	[819/2111]	40.6%	[516/1271]	24.3%	[72/296]	49.1%	[272/554]	**	[7/19]	39.7%	[1686/4251]
1981/85*	36.5%	[794/2175]	40.0%	[606/1514]	29.3%	[79/270]	49.9%	[254/509]	**	[10/19]	38.8%	[1743/4487]
1980/84*	35.2%	[834/2370]	38.4%	[628/1636]	21.6%	[54/250]	48.3%	[243/503]	**	[4/16]	36.9%	[1763/4775]
1979/83*	33.0%	[720/2179]	33.5%	[574/1712]	12.9%	[26/202]	42.5%	[214/504]	**	[4/7]	33.3%	[1538/4614]

\* The beginning (9th grade) year (for September) is shown along with the expected year of graduation for the cohort. Dropout rates, number of dropouts, and total populations are shown for each group.

\*\* The numbers of Native Americans are too small to permit reliable comparison of percentages.

\*\*\* From 2004-05 and onward, students who turned 22 are counted as "Other Loss" rather than dropouts. Also, as a result of the revised federal government's reporting categories on student race codes a new, "Multiracial" category, is added. "Multiracial" refers to any student with multiple non-Hispanic race/ethnic codes. Since the cohort dropout rate is reported by 9th grade race/ethnicity code, the "Multiracial" category was not used before SY2004-05.

Note: In 1991-1992 and again in 1995-1996 there were changes in the procedures for counting dropouts which were introduced to conform to guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the National Center for Educational Statistics. Because of the specifics of how cohorts are defined, these changes had a very small impact on cohort dropout rates. For practical purposes, the data across all years are essentially comparable.