

Innovations in Education

OVERVIEW

The City of Boston is a hub for Education. Led by a dedicated Superintendent and School Committee, and the unwavering support of the Mayor and City Council, the Boston Public Schools system (BPS) is continuing the long tradition of educating Boston's youth. FY13 presents both great challenge and great opportunity. With a keen focus on early childhood education, closing the achievement gap, celebrating diversity and expanding opportunity for all, BPS is working to make their budget more transparent and equitable.

Since her appointment as Superintendent in August 2007, Dr. Carol R. Johnson has developed an ambitious agenda for BPS. Dr. Johnson is committed to eliminating achievement and access gaps by creating and expanding opportunities for all students. The 2008 Acceleration Agenda is in its fourth year of focusing on key priorities to ensure the success of all children regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status. The Access to Excellence facilities plan follows up on this effort by ensuring the highest performing schools have room to grow.

The most challenging economic conditions in more than a generation have magnified existing financial pressures on the BPS budget. Aid from federal stimulus has ended, and Congress has not reauthorized the \$10 million in education jobs that supported more than 100 positions in FY12. In addition, reductions in federal Title I funding and a drop in projected state appropriations will combine to create a \$22.1 million negative impact on BPS.

Despite these challenging times, the graduation rate has been increasing, the drop-out rate has been decreasing, and BPS students are outperforming their urban peers in nearly every measure. The achievement gap is narrowing and BPS is leveraging additional resources and new authority to turn around underperforming schools. BPS remains committed to protecting these

achievements and continuing the Acceleration Agenda.

Despite the financial pressure, BPS' FY13 budget lays the path for sustained success with a balanced budget. However there is still much work to do in FY13. Parents and the community will join BPS in revamping their school assignment process. With that comes the need to update school transportation processes.

BPS Operating Budget

The BPS FY13 budget totaling \$857.8 million is an increase of \$26.4 million, or 3.2%, from the FY12 general fund appropriation. Salaries and benefits comprise approximately 80% of the BPS budget and health care costs continue to require a larger share each year. BPS will continue to maintain the average class size below the contractual limit, while also increasing central service efficiencies in administrative support. The FY13 BPS Budget invests in key priorities of the Acceleration Agenda. These include:

- Continuing the City's commitment to early childhood education and the needs of Boston young families by adding 132 kindergarten seats available to four and five year old students as well as early childhood special education students;
- Expanding programs and services for English Language Learners (ELL) and continuing to hire and train qualified ELL teachers;
- Replacing isolated and discontinuous substantially separate classes with highly specialized programs for students with disabilities;
- Continuing extended day programs at early education centers and turnaround schools; and opening one Horace Mann charter school and one Innovation School;
- Increasing access to high performing schools with an Access to Excellence plan that helps

link facility resources with the most in demand schools.

Weighted Student Funding

Weighted Student Funding (WSF) is the foundation of the Acceleration Agenda because it ensures resource equity for all students no matter what school they attend. The first year of WSF delivered a budget that was easier to understand, more equitable, and reflective of students' needs. For FY13, the second year using this formula, BPS has refined this need-based method of funding. Before WSF, BPS allocated staff based on the number of programs and students in each school. This system was less effective over the years when BPS had to make difficult choices due to budget constraints. BPS now funds students, based on their academic need – not buildings.

This budget reflects the transparency and equity that last year's shift towards WSF made possible. The difficult decisions made two years ago to fill empty seats and adopt a new funding structure – as well as the significant increase in the City's target appropriation for FY13 – has allowed BPS to increase direct appropriations to schools in the face of budget gaps.

BPS' WSF model is rules-based and predictable, enabling schools to make greater academic progress. Under WSF, dollars follow students based on certain criteria and system wide rules. Each school receives a foundation budget to support essential staff. Then BPS calculates a per-student funding amount by assigning a value to various factors based on a student's academic needs. A school's budget is calculated by adding the individual funding estimates for every student projected to attend that school in the fall. For example, students whose family income is at the poverty level will receive more resources, no matter which school they attend. Other need-based weights include students with disabilities, ELL, off track 9th grade students and vocational education students.

BPS continues their commitment to a smooth transition to WSF with a second year of providing one-time funding known as "soft landings". The goal of soft landings is to provide a modification period for schools to adjust their programmatic models and/or increase their enrollment for the

following year. Schools received additional funding in FY13 if they qualified in the following categories:

- Schools with more than a 15% reduction in their general budget will have their loss reduced by 40%;
- Schools with more than a 5% reduction in both enrollment and their general fund budget will have their losses reduced by 33%;
- The six schools involved in the Access to Excellence facilities expansion will receive an additional \$80,000 to implement their growth strategy.

BPS recognized that even with its success, there is room to enhance this method. BPS special education schools were held harmless while the appropriate weights and programmatic models are examined during FY13. BPS also has recognized the challenge of managing two sites; therefore, schools with two locations more than a mile apart will receive an additional \$100,000 in their foundation budget, and schools less than a mile apart will receive an additional \$50,000.

BPS STUDENTS

Student Enrollment

As of January 2012, 56,952 students were enrolled in BPS. This is an increase of 201 students over the enrollment in January 2011 and an increase of 612 students from January 2010. The FY13 budget was built on a district wide projection of 57,038 students.

Student enrollment is the bedrock of the BPS budget. The preliminary stage of the budget process involves enrollment projections for each program, grade, and school. This projection is based on current data and historic trends. The projected enrollment at each school for the upcoming school year then determines the allocation of resources at the school level through the WSF formula. Further adjustments are made once enrollment is finalized if the school exceeds their projected enrollment, ensuring that dollars truly follow the students.

BPS plans to revisit the ongoing work of updating the school assignment process. BPS will work closely with the School Committee, parents,

teachers, students and community members to make the assignment process more family friendly.

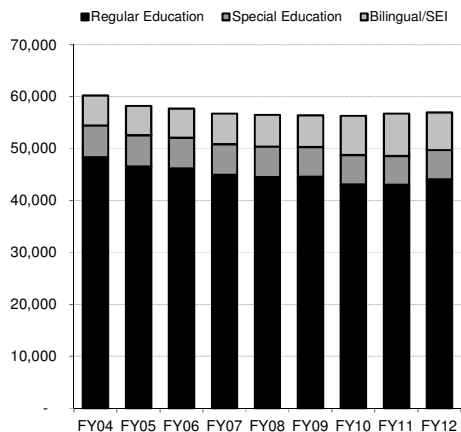
Student Diversity

The BPS student population is racially and ethnically diverse. In FY12, the student body was 35% Black, 42% Hispanic, 13% White, 8% Asian and 2% multi-racial or other. Within those groups BPS students come from an array of backgrounds and cultures. Approximately 42% speak a language other than English as their first language.

BPS seeks to ensure equal educational opportunities and prevent discrimination and inequalities based on race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, or learning ability. To that end, BPS has started conversations to find ways to incorporate culturally relevant material into the curriculum that will foster a celebration of the rich diversity in BPS.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Approximately 77% of BPS students are in regular education programs (including vocational, advanced work, and mainstream special education), 12% are in bilingual education or Sheltered English Immersion (SEI), and 9% are in substantially separate special education programs (Figure 1).



BPS Enrollment by Program
FY04-FY12

Figure 1

Regular Education

Regular education programs at BPS include early learning opportunities, kindergarten and grades 1 through 12. BPS regular education classes vary

from classical academics to technology and the arts, and from advanced work classes to remedial and alternative education. In addition, adult basic education and evening high school programs continue to be a popular resource for Boston's adult community.

English Language Learners

BPS, through its Office of English Language Learners (OELL), ensures that English Language Learners (ELL)/Limited English Proficient (LEP) students acquire proficiency in English while achieving the same standards as their fluent English-speaking peers. There are approximately 24,500 BPS students for whom English is not their first language.

A key component of Dr. Johnson's agenda is early interventions for at-risk youths. The Parthenon report on strategies for off-track youth issued in 2007 found that ELLs who enter BPS for the first time during high school are at high risk of dropping out of school before graduation. To address the needs of these students, BPS opened the Newcomers Academy in March 2009. Here students have a transitional program to help prepare fourteen to eighteen year old ELL students for successful entry into a diploma-granting high school. In addition, BPS has expanded enrollment at the Boston International High School, a school for ELLs that currently serves students from forty-eight countries.

BPS has made investments to expand ELL academic programs and teacher training. BPS expanded the number of Sheltered English Immersion programs in the district, employed 1,295 teachers with English as a Second Language (ESL) licenses and there are approximately 3,000 teachers who have category training. As a result of these efforts ELL students' MCAS proficiency rates across all grades have increased, including double-digit gains in the third and eighth grades.

Special Education

BPS provides special education services in both public schools and special education private schools to approximately 11,407 students. In keeping with its goal to enable all students to achieve high standards, BPS' special education services are geared towards mitigating barriers to teaching and learning so that all students can reach citywide learning standards, graduate from

high school, have the tools to choose post-secondary education and/or employment and contribute to the community. All special education services are provided in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Massachusetts State Regulations (CMR 28), and Boston School Committee policies. BPS has made great strides in this area by working to keep students in consistent settings with skilled professionals.

Special education teachers nurture the goals and objectives specified in each student's Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs). Speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, adaptive physical education teachers along with other specialists also provide services as determined through the IEP process.

BPS strives to provide appropriate services to students with disabilities and to serve more students within regular education settings. While many special education students receive instruction in regular education classrooms and resource rooms, approximately 50% of students with disabilities are educated in substantially separate settings to successfully meet their special education needs.

In addition to mainstream or substantially separate placements in the district, BPS is responsible for the educational services of approximately 460 students in out-of-district placements. Students receive out-of-district placements when it is determined that their needs cannot be met in a public school setting, and that a private day school or private residential school is required to meet their educational goals and objectives. BPS is currently fully or partly responsible for paying for services for most of these students at an average cost of \$46,414 per year. Tuition rates are established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Rate Setting Commission.

In FY12, BPS implemented significant improvements to provide better services and deliver a higher quality education to our students with disabilities, and that work continues. Highly specialized programs have replaced isolated and discontinuous substantially separate classes. This change has allowed students with disabilities to move from grade to grade within a single school,

supported by highly trained specialized staff, providing more predictability and fewer transitions for families. In addition, BPS increased the number of inclusive schools from fourteen to twenty across all grade levels for FY13.

Student/School Support Services

Students in all programs take advantage of a wide range of support services in the schools. These services create a continuum of support for students with and without disabilities. BPS provides prevention services focused on improving school climate by empowering staff to address issues in a responsive way. BPS collaborates with human services and community agencies to supplement the support services BPS offers.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL DESIGNS

Pilot Schools

Innovation is essential to continuous school improvement. In recognition of this fact, BPS and the Boston Teachers Union (BTU) collaborated in 1994 to create pilot schools that could serve as laboratories for innovative ideas in quality instruction. Pilot schools, exempt from many elements of the BTU contract and School Committee rules and regulations, can test creative educational ideas that can later be introduced to the entire BPS community.

In FY13, twenty-one pilot schools will be in operation, serving over 10,000 students, or 17% of BPS population. This number has grown in recent years due to the hard work of the following schools:

Another Course to College, Baldwin Early Learning Center, Boston Arts Academy, Boston Community Leadership Academy, the Boston Teachers Union School, Fenway High School, Lilla G. Frederick Pilot Middle School, Gardner Pilot Academy, Greater Egleston Community High School, Haley Elementary, Harbor School, Lee Academy, Lyndon K-8 School, Lyon 9-12, Mason Elementary School, Mission Hill K-8 School, New Mission High School, Orchard Gardens K-8 School, Quincy Upper School, TechBoston Academy and Young Achievers Science and Math K-8 School.

Horace Mann Charter Schools

The City of Boston will have five Horace Mann charter schools which serve approximately 1,584 students in FY13. Boston Day and Evening Academy, Boston Green Academy, Edward M. Kennedy Academy of Health Care and Up Academy have experienced measureable success in FY12. This year the Dudley Street Neighborhood School will also be joining the BPS family as the fifth Horace Mann charter school, with plans to serve up to 325 students from K1 through 5th grade.

All Horace Mann charters require the approval of the local school committee, and are ultimately granted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Charters are granted for five years and are renewable. Charter schools must comply with state regulations on testing and assessments, measure their progress against the goals specified in their charter, and produce a formal annual report. In addition, site visits are used to assess progress.

Horace Mann charter schools were originally authorized under the Education Reform Act of 1993, which has since been amended by the Act Relative to the Achievement Gap - Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2010. There are now three types of Horace Mann charter schools, each with varying rules regarding teacher contracts, level of approval needed, and different origins. The three newest Horace Mann charters are all Type III, meaning they are brand new schools and do not require pre-approval by local collective bargaining units. Instead, notice is given in good faith to the involved unions with limited time for negotiation. If agreement is not reached within that time, the school may operate under the terms of its charter. The enabling law limits the number of Type III charters to 14 state-wide, of which at least 4 are reserved for Boston.

Horace Mann charter schools submit a budget request to the Superintendent and School Committee each year. The cost of Horace Mann charter schools is included in the BPS operating budget. In accordance with the Massachusetts law governing charter schools, a Horace Mann charter school's budget allocation must be consistent with the allocation to other public schools in the district.

Innovation Schools

An amendment to the Education Reform Act of 1993, Chapter 12 of the Acts of 2010, Act Relative to the Achievement Gap, also authorized the creation of Innovation Schools by districts in the Commonwealth. These schools have greater autonomy and flexibility than traditional district schools with regard to curriculum, staffing, budget, schedule/calendar, and district policies. These schools establish measurable goals for performance and are evaluated annually by the Superintendent. Innovation Schools are authorized by the School Committee for up to five years, and can be reauthorized at the end of that term. Innovation Schools receive the same per pupil allocation as any other school in the district.

BPS is aggressively pursuing this new school model. The Roger Clap Innovation School opened in fall 2011, and six other prospective innovation schools have received preliminary approval to develop a full proposal. These schools include Tobin K-8, Eliot K-8, Madison Park, Mildred Academy, Boston Renaissance charter school, and Paige Academy.

BPS has welcomed the Margarita Muniz Academy as a new innovation school in the district. This school will follow a dual-language high school model similar to the Hernandez K-8, providing students with an opportunity to continue their bilingual studies. The school will serve up to 320 students starting in the 2012-2013 school year.

Commonwealth Charter Schools

Also in accordance with the Act Relative to the Achievement Gap, the Board of Education can grant charters to public schools that allow them to be independent of local school committees.

Commonwealth charter schools differ from pilot schools and Horace Mann charter schools in that the granting of their charters does not require the approval of the local school committee or school unions, and they do not submit an annual budget request to the local school committee.

Commonwealth charters receive per-pupil tuition equivalent to the local foundation tuition from the student's sending district plus facilities tuition. Tuition costs for charter school students who live in Boston are paid for by the City of Boston through a state assessment separate from the BPS operating budget.

The Act Relative to the Achievement Gap of 2010 also lifts the 9% district spending cap most schools face, resulting in an expansion of the number of seats permitted to charter schools in Boston. If a district performs in the lowest 10% on MCAS statewide for the prior two years, the cap increases over several years until it reaches 18% of a district's net school spending. Boston currently falls into this category. Its cap is at 14% for FY13 and will grow by 1% each fiscal year until it reaches 18% in FY17.

Boston residents are attending twenty-nine Commonwealth charter schools in FY12; eighteen of which are in the City of Boston. The state Charter School Office expects that expansions will bring Boston to its 18% cap when those schools reach full enrollment in FY17. In FY12, approximately 5,800 Boston students attend Commonwealth charter schools. In FY13, enrollment of Boston students in charter schools is projected to increase to 6,647 students.

(For more information on charter school funding see Revenue Estimates and Analysis)

Vocational Education

BPS is committed to opening multiple pathways to success. Both the Mayor and Superintendent are seizing that opportunity with efforts to enhance programing at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School. By integrating vocational and academic work, BPS can reach students who are interested in real life experiences while involving the community with participating vocational professionals. This is just one example of alternatives BPS is providing to students throughout the city.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

External funds are critical to the success of BPS. They are targeted for specific purposes that enhance teaching and learning and are part of a strategic all-funds approach to budgeting. External funds are provided through formula grants (called entitlements), competitive grants, reimbursement accounts and other grants, primarily from state and federal sources. BPS expects to receive \$140 million in external funds

in FY13. The FY13 budget for external funds represents a decrease of approximately \$22 million or 14% from the FY12 budget.

Four areas that are decreasing in FY13 are Education Jobs Fund, Title I, Title IIA and the state Extended Learning Time Grant at the two schools. Without the increase of general funds, these changes would have created an even more challenging budget process.

Federal Aid

Federal and state aid to BPS has varied in recent fiscal years. In FY10, federal aid to BPS increased as a result of new funding from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009 (ARRA) and higher funding for Boston in other major federal grants; these were one time funding sources that have since expired.

BPS' primary source of federal education funding is the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). NCLB, established during the cyclical reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2002, promises resources geared toward improving the quality of education for every child. NCLB funds come with substantial programmatic requirements that BPS has embraced. In FY12 Governor Patrick, along with forty other states, sought a waiver to many of the NCLB programmatic requirements; Massachusetts received this waiver in February 2012. Massachusetts' own educational accountability system will be the standard going forward.

Funding for students with disabilities is provided through another major source of federal funding, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This funding is a revenue source for the district's comprehensive special education program and was level funded in FY13.

American Reinvestment and Recovery Act

On February 17, 2009, President Barack Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) into law. This law provided for two years of economic stimulus funding for school districts with the purpose of preserving jobs and investing in strategic initiatives that create long-lasting results for students. BPS received approximately \$63.2 million over two years from

ARRA Title I and ARRA IDEA grants. BPS used this funding to preserve 180 teachers' jobs and absorb a reduction in the state's "circuit breaker" funding for extraordinary special education costs. BPS also used ARRA funding for strategic initiatives such as:

- Formative assessments for teachers to evaluate student outcomes;
- "Acceleration Academies" offering an additional week of instruction during school vacation weeks;
- Additional teachers, materials and assessments for effective instruction for English language learners;
- Acquiring assistive technology equipment and software for students with autism; and
- Acquiring uniform literacy curriculum in all schools.

Race to the Top

One component of ARRA is \$4.35 billion for Race to the Top, a competitive grant program to encourage and reward states that are creating conditions for education innovation and reform. The Department of Education made grants available in two phases and Massachusetts was one of ten recipients in Phase II. The State was awarded \$250 million over four years. Half of this award is allocated through the Title I formula. BPS will receive \$32 million over four years with the goals of:

- Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance by implementing the statewide evaluation framework.
- Ensuring effective teachers and leaders in every school and classroom by aligning curriculum to the Common Core State Standards and strengthening climate, conditions and school culture.
- Increasing college and career readiness by increasing the number of students completing MassCore – high school programs intended to help high school graduates arrive at college or the workplace well prepared.

- Improving the academic performance of the lowest achieving schools.

School Improvement Grants

Another component of ARRA was the Department of Education's School Improvement Grant program. These grants were awarded to improve student achievement in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Massachusetts was awarded \$59 million, of which \$25.7 million will be awarded to 12 BPS schools over three years. This funding will allow BPS' lowest performing schools, also known as turnaround schools, to extend the instructional day by at least 30 minutes, hold an additional 100 professional development hours for teachers, and provide other school based support, such as after school tutors and literacy coaches.

Education Jobs Fund

On August 10, 2010 President Barack Obama signed the Education Jobs Fund law, providing one-time support to save or create educational jobs. Massachusetts received approximately \$204 million and BPS received \$13.1 million through the Chapter 70 funding formula. These funds were required to be spent by September 30, 2012. In FY11, BPS used funding to retain 57 custodians and in FY12 the remaining \$10.1 million funded teachers. These one-time funds have expired, creating a large portion of the gap BPS had to cover in FY13.

State Aid

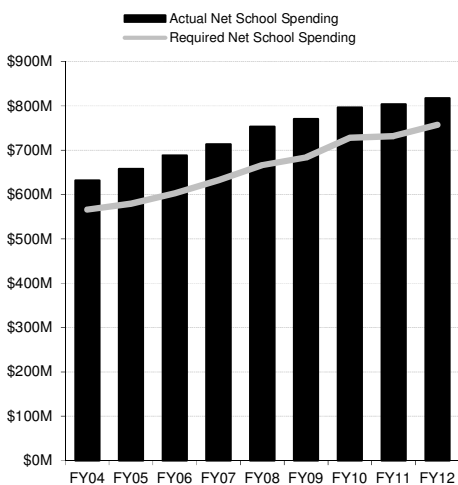
The primary source of state aid to schools is Chapter 70 education aid. (Note: This funding is not included in the BPS external resources total as it is normally distributed as direct general fund revenue to the City.) The state began distributing dedicated education aid after the enactment of the state's comprehensive school reform law, the Education Reform Act of 1993. The City received \$217.0 million in Chapter 70 funds in FY10 and \$204.3 million in FY11. In FY12 the City received \$205.4 million and projects level funding in FY13.

The school funding system in Massachusetts includes a mandated local level of contribution to education spending or a "local contribution" which is increased annually based on local resource

changes measured by the “municipal revenue growth factor.” The City has consistently met these requirements, and contributed beyond the level of funding required. State aid is then added to the local contribution to support a minimum level of total education spending called a “foundation budget.” Figure 2 shows changes in actual school spending versus required school spending.

Additionally, the state provides important aid to mitigate the financial costs of educating students with disabilities. With Circuit Breaker reimbursements, the state shares the cost of educating students with disabilities once the cost to educate those students exceeds a threshold amount. Circuit Breaker aid was enacted in 2000 and implemented in 2004. BPS received \$11.8 million in Circuit Breaker funding in FY09. In FY10, Circuit Breaker funding decreased to \$7.0 million and to \$7.2 million in FY11. In FY12 the allocations climbed again; BPS is projected to receive \$9.7 million in Circuit Breaker funding. Circuit Breaker funding is projected to be level funded in FY13.

While state aid has increased in some areas, funds have been taken away in others. For example, prior to FY05 the Commonwealth provided annual funds to offset the cost of school transportation. The City received \$9.1 million in FY04 for the cost of student transportation. In the absence of this funding, BPS has had to absorb this cost in its



BPS Actual Net School Spending (FY12 Budgeted) vs. Required Net School Spending FY04-FY12

Figure 2

budget. These types of losses have contributed to the overall budgetary pressure BPS faces.

(Please see the Revenue Estimates Section for more detail on school aid.)

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND STANDARDS

Overview

BPS has been evaluating its progress using measurable outcomes for a number of years. Through a collaborative process that involved the Superintendent and School Committee, BPS has developed and refined performance indicators and standards to promote continuous improvement in teaching and learning in every classroom and every school. In the Acceleration Agenda, BPS outlined three key goals, and set academic performance measures and targets to measure progress towards these goals. Federal and state funding guidelines also require BPS to track student progress. Changes in federal and state law over the past several years have changed the district’s role with respect to accountability.

(Performance Indicator & Standards data can be found in the Education chapter in Volume 2 of the City of Boston FY13 Budget.)

Federal and State Standards

Under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), federal regulations define the specific criteria for which schools will be held accountable, and on which sanctions and/or rewards are based. NCLB requires that states set standards for achievement and implement testing for students to see whether those standards are being attained, not only by the population as a whole, but also by student subgroups. Subgroups include students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency and students from all major ethnic and racial groups. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is the amount of improvement toward student proficiency that a school or district must demonstrate each year, on average, to close performance gaps and have all students performing at proficient or advanced levels in English language arts and mathematics by 2014. AYP is determined separately for English language arts and mathematics. These standards were in effect until February 2012. With the waiver

Massachusetts was able to obtain, BPS will follow the Massachusetts state standards going forward.

At the state level, a provision in the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 stipulated that all students from the class of 2003 forward must pass the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) in order to receive a high school diploma. The MCAS is a statewide standardized test that measures student performance and serves to seek educational accountability from their respective school systems. MCAS data present the percentages of students at each school that fall into each of the four MCAS Performance Levels. Level 1 denotes “failing,” Level 2 denotes “needs improvement,” Level 3 denotes “proficient,” and Level 4 denotes “advanced.”

In the analyses of MCAS scores, percentages are based on the total number of students required to take the test. This includes regular education students, students with disabilities tested with standard accommodations, and limited English proficient (LEP) students. BPS expects that the percentage of students in Level 1 will continuously decrease and the percentages of students in Levels 3 and 4 will increase.

Acceleration Agenda Performance

The Acceleration Agenda lays out three key goals for BPS:

- To ensure all students achieve MCAS proficiency;
- To close access and achievement gaps; and
- To graduate all students from high school prepared for college and career success.

BPS has developed performance measures with targets against which they will measure progress towards their academic goals. BPS seeks to have all students learn to read by the end of Grade 1 and read to learn in Grade 3. To that end, BPS is paying careful attention to its measure of first graders meeting the DIBELS benchmark. DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) is a formative early literacy assessment. BPS is also monitoring the percentage of third-grade students passing the ELA MCAS, and the gap between the highest and lowest student subgroups in the ELA MCAS. This work has shown progress, as illustrated by the May 2011 results of 67% reading at or above their grade level.

BPS has set a goal of having more eighth grade students prepared to take Algebra I. As of May 2011, there has been a 25% increase in non-exam students in Algebra I, indicating the goal is being achieved.

BPS is also focused on ensuring that English Language Learners (ELLs) acquire language mastery and fluency. In order to monitor this, BPS is looking at the percentage of ELLs who move two or more Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) steps within the same grade span or one or more steps between grade spans, across all levels.

BPS is monitoring the steady increase in graduation rates, SAT scores and the percentage of students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses as it focuses on graduating all high school students college-ready and success bound. BPS also monitors the dropout rate, a significant indicator of a school's effectiveness. According to state guidelines established in FY92, students in grades 6-12 are counted as dropouts if they leave school during the year from July 1 to June 30 for any reason other than transfer, graduation, death or expulsion with an option to return. BPS is seeing encouraging progress and expects the dropout rate to continue its decline.

FORMAL BUDGET PROCEDURES

Governance

The seven-member Boston School Committee is appointed by the Mayor to staggered appointment terms and serves as the policy-making body of the BPS. The School Committee appoints a Superintendent who serves as the Chief Executive Officer of BPS. The Superintendent, who is responsible for the management and supervision of the public schools, reports directly to the School Committee and also serves as a member of the Mayor's cabinet. At each school, site councils, consisting of the building administrator, parents, teachers, representatives from collaborating institutions and a student (at the high school level), assist principals and headmasters in decision-making processes.

The Operating Budget Process

The operating budget serves as the financial plan for carrying out the educational mission of the

school system. The operating budget is developed in accordance with the goals and objectives approved by the School Committee and with extensive input from principals, headmasters, school site councils, the Superintendent's leadership team, and the larger school community.

The public school operating budget is developed under the following statutory schedule:

- The Superintendent is required to submit to the School Committee a proposed budget for the next fiscal year by the first Wednesday in February.
- The School Committee is required to submit to the Mayor estimates of the next fiscal year's operating budget by the fourth Wednesday in February.
- The School Committee is required to take "definite action" on the proposed budget by the fourth Wednesday in March. The School Committee may adopt, reject, reduce, or increase any item in the Superintendent's recommended operating budget. If the School Committee fails to take action on the Superintendent's recommended operating budget by the fourth Wednesday in March, the budget recommended by the Superintendent is automatically and officially approved.
- After School Committee approval of the next fiscal year's annual budget, the Superintendent submits the budget to the Mayor who may approve or reduce the total recommended budget, but who may not allocate among expenditures.
- The Mayor must submit the school's operating budget to the City Council for appropriation on or before the second Wednesday in April.
- The City Council shall vote on the total amount of the appropriations requested by the Mayor, but neither the Mayor nor City Council shall allocate the appropriations among accounts.

As BPS continues to face a difficult fiscal climate, participation is more important than ever. Feedback from students, parents,

school leaders and the community has helped stimulate meaningful conversations. Budget hearings, emails and open forums have helped inform decisions along the way.

Capital Improvements

The capital plan funds projects that support education and youth achievement in all neighborhoods across the City. The goals of the capital plan are to ensure that Boston's educational facilities are equipped to meet the needs of the City's families and support the academic agenda of the district. Capital expenditures for schools between FY09 and FY11 totaled \$93.1 million. FY12 capital expenditures for schools are estimated at \$45.2 million. FY13 capital expenditures are projected at \$43.9 million.

The FY13-17 capital plan includes \$246.0 million for school facilities and technology. In FY13 \$56.3 million in new authorization is proposed. The capital plan includes the following:

- The "Access to Excellence" initiative renovates facilities and supports the relocation or expansion of nine high performing school programs including ACC, Boston Arts Academy, BCLA, New Mission High School, DSNS, Kennedy Academy for Health Careers, Fenway High School, Mission Hill K-8, and the Margarita Muniz Academy.
- The Charlestown High School energy improvement project replaces the HVAC system, upgrades lighting throughout the building and installs a new fire alarm and sprinkler system.
- Feasibility studies for the Quincy Upper Pilot School and the Dearborn School partly funded through the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

- Continued support of the Schoolyard Initiative by constructing three new school yards at the Henderson, Harvard/Kent, and Grew schools.
- Upgrades to the School Department's technology infrastructure, the continued development of the district-wide Student Information System, and implementation of a new cloud-based email/messaging system.

In addition to these highlights, the FY13-FY17 capital plan includes maintenance projects for fire alarm replacement, classroom renovations and other interior and exterior repairs at schools throughout the City. Specific budget and scope of work information for each project is available in the Education section of Volume II of the FY13 Recommended Budget document.

