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## BPS Graduation Rate Reached Record High in 2011

*Schools see improvement in graduation and dropout rates, but achievement gap remains*

The graduation rate of students in the Boston Public Schools (BPS) has been increasing since 2007, reaching a record high of 64.4% in 2011 according to a recent BPS report. At the same time, the BPS's four-year dropout rate has been declining since 2008, reaching a record low in 2011 at 15.1%. In spite of these improvements, the BPS is still challenged by large achievement gaps across racial/ethnic groups.

### Cohort Graduation Rate

The most recent BPS four-year cohort graduation rate, as reported by the Massachusetts Department of Education, increased to 64.4%, an increase of 1.2% since 2010 and 6.5% since 2007. The cohort graduation rate tracks the number of 9th graders entering high school who graduate after four-years. This 2011 data marks the fourth straight year of increases in the four-year graduation rate.

Ten, or 28%, of Boston's 36 high schools have [graduation rates](#) above 80%, the BPS's goal for all high schools by 2014. However, the graduation rate for 11 BPS high schools is below 50%.

Despite the systemwide improvement, the cohort graduation rates by racial/ethnic group show a dramatic difference indicating the continuing challenge facing the BPS.

The BPS's efforts to retain students who do not meet graduation requirements in four years are

centered on ten credit recovery sites, where students can work after school and over the summer to complete their degree. Last year 281 members of the 2011 cohort students took part in such programs and participated in summer graduation.

### Cohort Dropout Rate

The most recent cohort dropout rate, as reported by the Massachusetts Department of Education, fell to a record low of 15.1% for the 2011 cohort, a 6.4% decrease from the 2008 Cohort. Even so, as seen in Table 1, significant differences in dropout rates remain across racial/ethnic groups.

**Table 1**  
**Graduation and Dropout Rates by Racial/Ethnic Group**

Racial/Ethnic Group	4-Year Graduation Rate	4-Year Dropout Rate
Black	62.3%	15.0%
White	76.6%	12.2%
Asian	80.4%	6.3%
Hispanic	57.4%	18.5%
<b>System-wide</b>	<b>64.4%</b>	<b>15.1%</b>

### Annual Dropout Rate

The 2011 annual dropout rate, as reported by the BPS, was 6.0%, a 0.3% increase from 2010. The current dropout rate is double the BPS's stated goal of 3% by 2014. Thirteen of BPS's high schools have annual dropout rates below the 3% goal. However, the annual dropout rate for 11 BPS high schools is above 10%.