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DOCUMENTS  
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# STUDIES IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

1. A Study of Drop-outs or Early School Leavers in Massachusetts Public Secondary Schools for the School Year 1954-55
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A Study of Drop-outs or Early School Leavers  
in Massachusetts Public Secondary Schools  
for the School Year 1954-55

For the fourth successive year the Department of Education, with the cooperation of secondary school principals and directors of guidance, has made a study of drop-outs in the public secondary schools of the Commonwealth. This study was directed to all public schools which housed any combination of grades seven through twelve. Schools reporting had organizations including three, four, five, and six-year high schools, two and three-year junior high schools, and elementary schools having grades seven or seven and eight.

I. Schools Reporting

Tables 1 and 2 show the number and percent of schools and the average membership in grades seven through twelve which reported.

Table 1 - Number and Percent of Schools Reporting by Organization

Organization	Total Number	Number Reporting	Percent Reporting
High Schools	247	241	98.0
Junior High Schools	196	188	95.9
Elementary Schools Housing Grades 7 and 8	181	162	89.5
Totals	624	591	94.7

Table 2 - Number and Percent of Yearly Average Membership in Schools Reporting by Grades

Grade	Total Number	Number Reporting	Percent Reporting
7	54,909	47,531	86.5
8	46,797	42,184	90.1
9	44,020	43,259	98.2
10	40,830	39,209	96.0
11	35,706	34,446	96.4
12	30,996	30,117	97.1
	253,258	236,745	93.4

II. Drop-Outs

The total number of drop-outs in grades nine through twelve was 8,086, or 5.5% of the 147,031 total average membership in schools reporting. By reference to drop-out studies made by the Massachusetts Department of Education each year since 1951, the data indicate that for every 100 students who entered grade nine in Massachusetts secondary schools in September, 1951, about 78 graduated in June, 1955.

Table 3 shows the number of drop-outs by grade and sex. A consistent pattern has been evident through the drop-out studies of the past four years with the largest number of drop-outs occurring in grade ten, and boy drop-outs outnumbering girl drop-outs.

Table 3 - Number and Percent of Total Drop-Outs by Sex and Grade

Grade	Boys	Girls	Total	Percent
7	288	130	418	4.5
8	525	258	783	8.4
9	1,178	635	1,813	19.5
10	1,630	1,282	2,912	31.3
11	1,317	1,052	2,369	25.5
12	594	398	992	10.6
Totals	5,532	3,755	9,287	

Viewing the drop-out statistics from another angle, as shown in Table 4, the number of drop-outs in each grade is compared to the average membership of that grade. There is clear indication that grades ten and eleven are the most critical years as secondary schools study the implications of drop-outs, in that eight and seven respectively of each 100 pupils in grades ten and eleven dropped out of school in 1954-55.

Table 4 - Number and Percent of Drop-Outs by Grade Compared to Average Membership of Schools Reporting

Grade	Average Membership of Schools Reporting	Number	Percent
7	47,531	418	0.9
8	42,184	783	1.8
9	43,259	1,813	4.2
10	39,209	2,912	8.2
11	34,446	2,369	6.9
12	30,117	992	3.4

### III. Reasons for Leaving

Although the questionnaire asked for the chief reason for each pupil dropping out, some who responded listed more than one reason for some drop-outs. Therefore, the total number of reasons exceeds the total number of drop-outs.

Table 5 - Reasons for Leaving School in 1954-55

Reasons for Leaving <sup>1</sup>	Boys	Girls	Total
1. Preferred work to school	2,300 (41%)	1,477 (39%)	3,777
2. Was not interested in school work	1,186 (20%)	695 (18%)	1,881
3. Needed money to buy clothes and help at home	195	311 (8%)	506
4. Wanted spending money	59	57	116
5. Was failing and didn't want to repeat grade	343 (6%)	163	506
6. Could not learn in school and was discouraged	209	122	331
7. Disliked a certain subject	16	13	29
8. Disliked a certain teacher	14	9	23
9. Friends had left school	32	32	64
10. Could learn more out of school than in school	59	16	75
11. Ill health	146	251	397
12. Parents wanted youth to leave school	156	237	393
13. Marriage	16	423 (11%)	439
14. Entered U. S. armed services	824 (15%)	8	832
15. Other	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>28</u>
Total	5,569	3,828	9,397

An analysis of table 5 shows that three reasons, "Preferred work to school," "Was not interested in school work," and "Entered U. S. armed services" accounted for 76 percent of the boy drop-outs. Four reasons, "Preferred work to school," "Was not interested in school work," "Needed money to buy clothes and help at home," and "Marriage" accounted for 76 percent of the girl drop-outs.

<sup>1</sup>Taken from "Early School Leavers," by Harold J. Dillon, with slight revision.

A Study of Time Schedules  
in Massachusetts Public High Schools

The following status studies of various items and factors in the time schedules of Massachusetts Public High Schools were taken from the 1954-55 Biennial Surveys of the Office of Secondary Education, Massachusetts Department of Education. It should be clear that these studies are indications of current practice and must be analyzed on that basis.

Number of Periods per Day

About one-half, or 127, of the high schools of the State include seven periods within the framework of the school day. One-fourth of the high schools, or 63, run a six period school day. The following table indicates the number of schools using a five, six, seven, or eight period day:

<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Periods per Day</u>			
	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
Over 500	5	30	39	4
201 - 500	3	11	23	5
100 - 200	2	7	16	2
Under 100	-	-	5	5
Six-year	1	14	43	10
Regional	-	1	1	-
Totals	11	63	127	26

In addition to the schools represented in the above table, some 21 high schools of the Commonwealth use a combination of five, six, seven, and eight period days. Seventeen of these 21 schools use a combination of six and seven period days.

Gross Length of the School Day in Hours and Minutes  
in 247 Massachusetts Public High Schools

Gross Length in Hours and Minutes	Number of High Schools
7:00 - 7:15	1
6:40 - 6:59	4
6:20 - 6:39	11
6:00 - 6:19	73
5:40 - 5:59	60
5:20 - 5:39	56
5:00 - 5:19	27
4:40 - 4:59	1
4:20 - 4:39	5
4:05 - 4:19	3
	247

Range	4 hours, 5 minutes to 7 hours, 15 minutes
Mean	5 hours, 52 minutes
Median	5 hours, 49 minutes

Net Length of School Day in Hours and Minutes  
247 Massachusetts Public High Schools

Net Length in Hours and Minutes	Number of High Schools
6:10	1
6:00 - 6:09	4
5:50 - 5:59	12
5:40 - 5:49	14
5:30 - 5:39	38
5:20 - 5:29	44
5:10 - 5:19	37
5:00 - 5:09	36
4:50 - 4:59	18
4:40 - 4:49	18
4:30 - 4:39	10
4:20 - 4:29	6
4:10 - 4:19	6
4:00 - 4:09	<u>3</u>
	247

Range 4 hours to 6 hours, 10 minutes  
 Mean 5 hours, 14 minutes  
 Median 5 hours, 17 minutes

Length of Lunch or Noon Period in Minutes  
in 247 Massachusetts Public High Schools

Length in Minutes	Number of High Schools
75	2
70 - 74	2
65 - 69	2
60 - 64	3
55 - 59	1
50 - 54	1
45 - 49	3
40 - 44	7
35 - 39	10
30 - 34	36
25 - 29	67
20 - 24	90
15 - 19	8
10 - 14	4
5 - 9	2
No recess or lunch period	<u>9</u>
	247

Range None to 75 minutes  
 Mean (238 schools) 28.03 minutes  
 Median (238 schools) 25.62 minutes



Periods 45 - 49 minutes

Seventy-six of the 247 schools reported periods of 45 to 49 as standard, with variations in the weekly schedule as follows:

- 1 school with a total of 31 periods per week in the schedule
- 2 schools " " " " 25 " " " " " "
- 20 " " " " " 30 " " " " " "
- 30 " " " " " 35 " " " " " "
- 1 school " " " " 40 " " " " " "
- 13 schools had a majority of 45 to 49 minute periods in the schedule
- 9 schools with 30 periods 45 to 49 minutes in length, and 5 shorter periods for a total of 35 periods
- 21 other schools included periods of 45 to 49 minutes in their schedules, but used different period lengths as standard
- 9 of these schools had 5 or less such periods, 5 schools 10 or less, and 7 had over 10 such length periods.

Periods 50 - 54 Minutes

Thirty-four of the 247 schools reported periods of 50 to 54 minutes in length as standard, with variations in the weekly schedule as follows:

- 4 schools with a total of 25 periods per week in the schedule
- 9 " " " " " 30 " " " " " "
- 2 " " " " " 35 " " " " " "
- 14 schools had a majority of 50 to 54 minute periods in the schedule
- 4 schools with 30 periods 50 to 54 minutes in length, and 5 shorter periods for a total of 35 periods
- 1 school with 25 periods 50 to 54 minutes in length, and 5 shorter periods for a total of 30 periods
- 12 other schools included periods of 50 to 54 minutes in their schedule, but used different length periods as standard, 5 under 5, two 10 or less, and 5 over 10 such periods.

Periods 55 - 59 Minutes

Seven of the 247 schools reported periods of 55 to 59 minutes in length as standard, with variations in the weekly schedule as follows:

- 2 schools with a total of 25 periods per week in the schedule
- 1 school " " " " 30 " " " " " "
- 3 schools had a majority of 55 to 59 minute periods in the schedule
- 1 school with 25 periods 55 to 59 minutes in length, and 5 shorter periods for a total of 30 periods
- 5 other schools included periods of 55 to 59 minutes in their schedule, but used different length periods as standard, 4 under 5, and 1 under 10.



Periods 60 - 64 Minutes

Four of the 247 schools reported periods of 60 to 64 minutes in length as standard, with variations in the weekly schedule as follows:

- 1 school with a total of 24 periods per week in the schedule
- 1 " " " " " 25 " " " " " "
- 1 " had a majority of 60 to 64 minute periods in the schedule
- 4 schools included periods of 60 to 64 minutes in their schedules, but used different period lengths as standard.

Facts Relating to Science Instruction  
in Grades 9-12 in  
Massachusetts Public Secondary Schools

Data taken from 1954-55 High School and Junior High School Biennial Surveys.

Number of High School:	Total -	247
3-year high schools	46	
4-year high schools	120	
6-year high schools	81	
Number of Junior High Schools having Grade 9		88
Total Enrollment Grades 9-12		148,760

Science Subjects Studied	Number of High Schools Offering Subject	Enrollment
General Science:		
High Schools	203	16,469
Grade 9 in Junior High Schools	88	12,588
Biology I	229	25,354
Biology II	4	113
College Chemistry) (alternated in	189	10,954
College Physics ) 76 schools)	178	5,267
General Chemistry	144	4,209
General Physics	79	3,537
Aeronautics	18	569
Astronomy, Astronomy and Physics, Astronomy and Geology	5	173
Botany	4	281
Earth Science	2	111
Electronics	2	40
Health, Hygiene, First Aid, and Physiology	61	17,938
Home Economics Science	1	15
Industrial Arts Science	10	516
Metallurgy	1	29
Meteorology	1	62
Nurses' Biology	1	24
Nurses' Chemistry	2	40
Photography	4	77
Physical Geography	4	141
Physical Sciences	47	1,878
Physics Survey, Electricity and Mechanics, Applied Science	3	107
Radio	7	236
Science II	1	29
Zoology	3	297

Number of Schools that Require All Pupils to take:

General Science --	
High Schools . . . . .	25
Junior High Schools (Grade 9 only) . . . . .	47
Biology . . . . .	24
One unit of any science . . . . .	49
Both General Science and Biology . . . . .	11

Number of High Schools that have:

Individual Laboratory for Chemistry . . . . .	198
Individual Laboratory for Physics . . . . .	193
Individual Laboratory for Biology . . . . .	161
One Laboratory for All Sciences . . . . .	36
Combined Chemistry-Physics Laboratory . . . . .	6
Combined Chemistry-Biology Laboratory . . . . .	3

Special Assignments of Science Teachers, as Reported:

Number of Teachers Who Are Department Heads . . . . .	66
Number of Teachers Who Are Assistant Principals . . . . .	29
Number of Teachers Who Are Coaches . . . . .	23
Number of Teachers Who Are Guidance Counselors . . . . .	13
Number of Teachers Who Are Principals . . . . .	9
Number of Teachers Who Are Assistant Coaches . . . . .	8
Number of Teachers Who Are In Charge of Audio-Visual Aids . . . . .	7
Number of Teachers Who Are Evening School Directors . . . . .	1
Number of Teachers Who Are Deans of Girls . . . . .	1
Number of Teachers Who Are Guidance Directors . . . . .	1
Number of Teachers Who Are Cafeteria Managers . . . . .	1

Number of Science Teachers in Massachusetts (Grades 9-12) . . . . .	882	
Number of Teachers Who Teach Science Only . . . . .	586	.68%
Number of Teachers Who Teach:		
Science and Mathematics . . . . .	143	.16%
Science and History . . . . .	37	
Science and English . . . . .	16	
Science and Physical Education . . . . .	16	
Science, Mathematics and History . . . . .	10	
Science and Driver Education . . . . .	9	
Science and Industrial Arts . . . . .	8	
Science and Commercial Subjects . . . . .	5	
Science and Household Arts . . . . .	4	
Science, Ancient Foreign and Modern Foreign Languages . . . . .	3	
Science, Mathematics and Driver Education . . . . .	3	
Science, English and History . . . . .	2	
Science, History and Commercial Subjects . . . . .	2	
Science, History and Driver Education . . . . .	2	
Science, Mathematics and Commercial Subjects . . . . .	2	
Science, Mathematics and English . . . . .	2	
Science, Mathematics and Industrial Arts . . . . .	2	
Science, Mathematics and Modern Foreign Languages . . . . .	2	
Science, Mathematics and Physical Education . . . . .	2	
Science, Mathematics and Vocational Shop . . . . .	2	
Science and Modern Foreign Languages . . . . .	2	
Science, English and Ancient Foreign Languages . . . . .	1	
Science, English and Commercial Subjects . . . . .	1	
Science, English, History and Industrial Arts . . . . .	1	
Science, English and Household Arts . . . . .	1	
Science and Guidance . . . . .	1	
Science and Public Speaking . . . . .	1	
Science, Mathematics and Safety Education . . . . .	1	
Science, Mathematics and Mechanical Drawing . . . . .	1	
Science, History, Mathematics and Physical Education . . . . .	1	
Science, Mathematics and Household Arts . . . . .	1	
Science, Mathematics, English and History . . . . .	1	
Science, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages and Driver Education . . . . .	1	
Science, Mathematics, English and Vocational Shop . . . . .	1	
Science and Mechanical Drafting . . . . .	1	
Science, Physical Education and Driver Education . . . . .	1	
Science, Industrial Arts and Driver Education . . . . .	1	
Science, History, Commercial Subjects and Driver Education . . . . .	1	
Science, History and Physical Education . . . . .	1	

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1954 - 1955

HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS STUDIED

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS OFFERING SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT IN SUBJECTS
High School Enrollment - 240 schools reporting		126,928 <sup>1</sup>
English	240	128,004 <sup>2</sup>
Speech and Speech Correction	26	2,503
Public Speaking	17	1,187
Dramatics and Debating	10	233
Journalism	8	260
Reading	4	103
Library	2	1,320
Lip Reading	2	18
Word Study	1	29
Biology I	229	25,354
Biology II	4	113
General Science	203	16,469
College Chemistry (Alternated in College Physics 76 schools)	189	10,954
General Chemistry	173	5,967
General Physics	144	4,209
Physical Sciences	79	3,537
Health, Hygiene, First Aid and Physiology	47	1,878
Aeronautics	61	17,938
Industrial Arts Science	18	569
Radio	10	516
Astronomy, Astronomy and Physics, and Astronomy and Geology	7	236
Botany	5	173
Physical Geography	4	281
Photography	4	141
Physics Survey, Electricity and Mechanics, and Applied Science	4	77
Zoology	3	107
Earth Science	3	297
Nurses' Chemistry	2	111
Electronics	2	40
Nurses' Biology	2	40
Meteorology	1	24
	1	62

<sup>1</sup>This figure includes pupils enrolled in 240 of the 247 public high schools in the Commonwealth.

<sup>2</sup>Enrollment in special elective English courses not so reported and pupils taking more than one regular English course accounts for the variation with total enrollment.

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS OFFERING SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT IN SUBJECTS
Science II	1	29
Metallurgy	1	29
Home Economics Science	1	15
U. S. History and Civics	239	34,490
Problems of Democracy	201	13,251
World History	184	14,504
Civics	159	13,366
Economics	89	3,444
Modern History	67	4,326
Ancient History	63	5,120
Consumer Education	55	1,688
World Geography	38	2,207
Economic Geography	35	2,238
Sociology	29	1,414
European History since 1700	23	1,240
Latin America, Canada and Far East	4	193
International Relations	2	102
Local History	1	16
Plane Geometry	227	19,735
Elementary Algebra	224	16,727
Intermediate Algebra	209	14,592
General Mathematics I	187	10,858
General Mathematics II	21	759
General Mathematics III	2	78
Solid Geometry and Trigonometry	168	3,131
Review Mathematics	73	2,361
Trigonometry	26	979
Solid Geometry	17	770
Advanced Mathematics	13	397
Advanced Algebra	12	375
Refresher Arithmetic	4	102
French I	222	12,508
French II	122	9,545
French III	90	3,747
French IV	25	650
French V	2	61
Latin I	196	8,640
Latin II (Caesar)	213	8,585
Latin III (Cicero)	59	1,762
Latin IV (Virgil)	37	870
Latin III and IV (Cicero and Virgil)	21	265
Spanish I	108	5,465
Spanish II	51	3,230
Spanish III	37	663
Spanish IV	4	49

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS OFFERING SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT IN SUBJECTS
Italian I	26	1,112
Italian II	19	504
Italian III	6	110
German I	30	1,175
German II	29	857
German III	14	174
Portuguese I	3	97
Portuguese II	3	97
Polish I	2	53
Polish II	2	34
Greek I Modern	1	13
Greek I	1	44
Greek II	1	96
Hebrew I	1	30
Hebrew II	1	34
Lithuanian II	1	14
General Language	1	54
Physical Education	209	102,369
Choral Music	174	21,165
Band	150	6,500
Orchestra	101	2,485
Harmony I	36	929
Harmony II	3	52
History and Appreciation of Music	30	649
Glee Club	29	3,982
Music Appreciation	17	1,312
Drum and Bugle Corps	2	57
Freehand Drawing	144	9,884
Art Appreciation	47	1,774
Art I	35	2,615
Art II	8	199
Art III	4	37
Arts and Crafts	17	1,042
Fashion and Design	9	375
Commercial Art	4	358
Freehand Drawing and Art Appreciation	3	85
Composition and Painting	1	24
Clothing I	132	5,499
Clothing II	98	2,152
Clothing III	56	975
Clothing IV	8	166
Foods I	118	4,093
Foods II	89	1,991
Foods III	44	569
Foods IV	5	59

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS OFFERING SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT IN SUBJECTS
Home Management	54	1,176
Household Arts - Homemaking I	53	2,182
Household Arts - Homemaking II	19	342
Household Arts - Homemaking III	11	164
Household Arts - Homemaking IV	6	54
Home and Family Living	22	1,276
Home Nursing	14	680
Special Clothing	9	260
Chef's Class	7	167
Special Foods - Nutrition	6	282
Home Design - Decoration	6	88
Child Care	3	96
Typewriting I	230	20,666
Typewriting II	226	10,291
Typewriting III	81	2,974
Typewriting I and II	1	116
Typewriting II and III	1	300
Stenography I	227	8,823
Stenography II	207	4,710
Stenography III	18	511
Bookkeeping I	125	12,557
Bookkeeping II	148	5,753
Bookkeeping III	39	1,230
Bookkeeping IV	5	187
Business Training	150	8,787
Office Practice	146	6,926
Commercial Law	102	4,142
Commercial Geography	86	6,215
Business Mathematics I	73	4,322
Business Mathematics II	7	589
Secretarial Practice	47	750
Salesmanship	44	1,936
Personal Typewriting	35	1,895
Office Machines	28	1,900
Commercial Arithmetic and Business Mathematics	24	1,383
Retail Selling	20	948
Clerical Practice	19	1,163
Transcription	19	494
Penmanship	15	3,718
Business Law	13	624
Special Typewriting	13	559
Filing	9	664
Consumer Mathematics	9	251
Consumer Education and Economics	9	469
Accounting	8	420
Distributive Education	5	79
Commerce and Industry	5	525
Business Management	3	107



SUBJECT	NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOLS OFFERING SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT IN SUBJECTS
Civil Service	3	522
Record Keeping	3	125
Clerical Bookkeeping	1	110
Applied Business Writing	1	178
Banking	1	122
Mechanical Drawing	178	13,516
Woodworking	96	5,785
Industrial Arts - General Shop	70	4,158
Automobile Repairing	32	956
Shop Mathematics	29	2,100
Metal Working	29	1,173
Printing	28	1,305
Machine Shop	26	1,993
Agriculture	20	549
Electrical Shop	16	811
Carpentry	6	96
Power Mechanics	4	174
Shop I	3	102
Shop II	1	51
Shop III	2	40
Shop IV	3	22
Shop III and IV	1	22
Blueprint Reading	3	70
Cabinet Making	3	34
Television	1	41
Upholstery	1	22
Vocational School Shop	1	29
Boat Building	1	9
Pattern Making	1	12
Psychology - Personality	21	1,010
Human Relations - Social Living	17	1,745
Occupations	7	1,649
Military Drill	6	3,243
Orientation	3	351
Driver Education and Driver Training	211*	
Driver Education - Classroom course only	33*	

\*This information was secured from the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Note: In an effort to shorten this report, we have taken the liberty of combining some courses under more general subjects.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1954 - 1955

SUBJECTS STUDIED IN GRADE 9 OF THE  
MASSACHUSETTS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OFFERING SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT IN SUBJECTS
Enrollment (Including reports from 9th grades of twenty six-year high schools)	111	17,333
English	111	17,333
Public Speaking	3	318
Remedial Reading	2	459
General Science	88	12,297
Health	21	4,378
Physiology and Hygiene	13	1,169
Community Civics	64	6,955
Ancient History	35	2,398
Social Studies and Civics	20	2,322
World History	19	1,121
U. S. History and Government	7	1,204
Geography	3	142
Algebra	96	8,243
General Mathematics	74	3,978
Business Arithmetic	44	2,382
Latin I	86	4,482
French I	61	3,128
Spanish	9	345
Italian	3	106
General Business	44	3,015
Typewriting	17	1,640
Bookkeeping I	11	663
Penmanship	8	925
Physical Education	99	15,665
General Music	61	6,795
Band	42	388
Glee Club	41	1,513
Orchestra	37	326
Choral Music	25	2,798
Music Appreciation	5	300

SUBJECT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS OFFERING SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT IN SUBJECTS
Art	90	5,888
Crafts	7	158
Art Appreciation	1	293
Clothing	86	3,156
Foods	76	2,855
Home Nursing	9	838
Foods and Clothing	8	357
Home Management	4	321
Mechanical Drawing	66	2,747
Woodworking	57	1,849
Printing and Graphic Arts	41	1,103
Metal Work	33	1,085
General Shop	33	1,111
Electricity	7	245
Machine Shop	3	57
Agriculture	1	7
Group Guidance	24	4,644
Orientation	7	1,512
Group Conference	4	750

Note: In an effort to shorten this report, we have taken the liberty of combining some courses under more general subjects.