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EDUCATION REFORM IN MASSACHUSETTS:

Education

A Progress Report: 1993 - 1997

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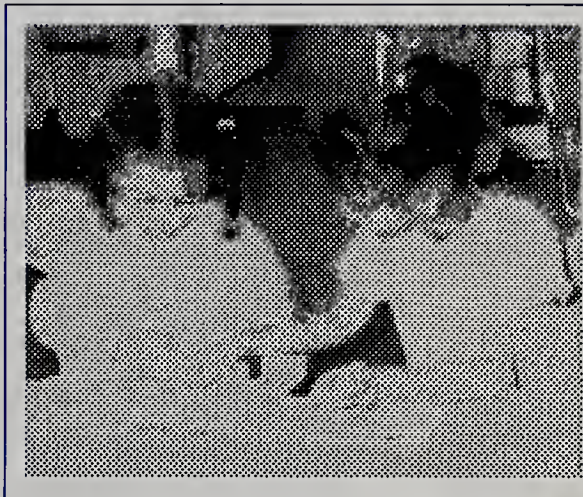
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Dear Friends,

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 calls for dramatic changes in public education over a 7-year period. Among the major improvements are greater and more equitable funding to schools, accountability for student learning, and state-wide standards for students, educators, schools and districts. While there is still much to be done to achieve our goals, substantial progress has been made in schools throughout the Commonwealth. Many people have asked for an update on Education Reform at its midpoint, including the Governor and legislative leaders, members of the State Board of Education and local school committees, the Massachusetts Education Reform Review Commission, advisory councils, and parents. I hope this progress report is helpful in answering your questions.



Since 1993, the Commonwealth has supported school improvement by providing more than \$1 billion in state aid for education. By the end of this decade, more than \$2 billion new state Education Reform dollars will have been provided to Massachusetts public schools. The dramatic increase in spending is largely due to the fact that the state share of the costs is rapidly growing so that, by the year 2000, the state and local shares will be about equal statewide.

Some of the major changes in accountability brought about by the Education Reform Act include these requirements: a school council in every school, continuing education for educators, more authority for every principal, better defined roles for school committees, and clear, concise and measurable statewide standards for students and schools. The capstone will be a "high-stakes" test based on the new curriculum standards which every student will need to pass in order to receive a diploma.

The Board of Education, under the Chairmanship of Dr. John Silber, is aggressively moving forward to address a number of critical issues, including the top legislative priority which is increased state support for early childhood education. Also, the Department is focused on curriculum frameworks and assessment. This is a serious and ongoing effort, and a very exciting and promising time for Massachusetts schools and our 935,000 students. I am pleased to provide you with this update and look forward to working with you to achieve our goals.

Sincerely,

Robert V. Antonucci

*Robert V. Antonucci,
Commissioner of Education*

summaries on:

STATE FRAMEWORKS: GUIDES FOR LOCAL CURRICULUM

Prior to 1993, the only statewide educational requirements written in law were history and physical education. The Education Reform Act called for the development of statewide curriculum frameworks and learning standards for all students in all core academic subjects. During the first year of Education Reform in Massachusetts, the Common Core of Learning was developed to identify the broad statewide educational goals for all students.

Building on the Common Core, the frameworks in science/technology, mathematics, world languages, the arts, and health were approved in December of 1995. The state curriculum framework in English/language arts was approved by the Board of Education in January, 1997. The latest draft of the history/social science framework is undergoing revision and should be approved soon. These guides are designed for teachers to use in preparing their daily lesson plans and for districts to use in planning school district curriculum.

STATEWIDE STUDENT TESTING

The new statewide test, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), will reflect the academic standards in the curriculum frameworks. The purpose of the test is to identify individuals and schools which need attention, not to be punitive. The tests will be given to students in grades 4, 8 and 10. In addition, the Board of Education voted to administer in the spring of 1997 a one-time standardized test in the core subjects to all tenth-graders. Local assessment of student progress, which teachers do in schools every day, and district testing of students in grades other than four, eight and ten will continue to be administered.

GRADUATION STANDARDS

In just a few years, all students will need to pass the state's tenth-grade test, in addition to meeting local requirements, to receive a diploma. Students passing the new 10th-grade test could receive additional certificates in the future - - the Certificate of Occupational Proficiency or a Certificate of Mastery. At this time, the Board and Commissioner are reviewing criteria to set the academic standards for the Certificate of Mastery.

EARLY STUDENT LITERACY

The English/language arts curriculum framework sets the goal that every student will read and write by grade three. The Board voted to administer an annual reading achievement test to all 3rd-graders beginning in the spring of 1997, to identify schools and districts most in need of assistance in meeting that critical goal.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Under Education Reform, state funding for local early childhood programs has increased dramatically from \$6.9 million in FY 92 to \$34.3 million for FY 97. The Board of Education requested \$100 million more for early childhood education in the FY 98 education budget. Dr. John Silber, Chairman of the Board, has made early childhood education funding one of his important priorities.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

As of July 1, 1996, the state law creating the Board of Education was amended, reducing the Board from 15 members to 9. The members appointed by the Governor are: Dr. John Silber, Chairman; Patricia Crutchfield, Vice-Chairperson; Dr. Edwin Delattre; William Irwin, Jr.; James Peyser; Dr. Roberta Schaefer; and Dr. Abigail Thernstrom.

Also on the Board is Alexis Vagianos, elected as Chair of the State Student Advisory Council; and Dr. Stanley Koplik, Chancellor of the Board of Higher Education.

FOUNDATION BUDGET

Under Education Reform, the "foundation budget" was established to bring all schools

to a foundation level of spending. The level differs among communities depending on local demographic and economic factors, but statewide, the average foundation budget in 1993 was \$5500. In FY 94 local districts received \$1.4 billion in state aid for education. This represented an increase of 11.1% over FY 93. In FY 95 the state aid was \$1.6 billion. In FY 96 the figure was \$1.8 billion, and in FY 97 local districts received \$2.0 billion. The Governor and state legislature have fully funded the law for five consecutive years with the goal that by the Year 2000, all districts will be at their foundation level.

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

The Education Technology Bond Bill was passed in the fall of 1996, and school districts with educational technology plans approved by the Department are now receiving, or are eligible to receive, matching grants to support technology in their schools. 159 districts across the state now have approved plans.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools are independent public schools operated under a 5-year charter granted by the Board of Education. These new public schools must be open to all students and meet the same standards and testing requirements set by the Board of Education. Twenty-two are now open. The Board of Education has recommended to the Legislature that fifty more charters be made available.



(summaries continued)

TIME AND LEARNING

Under the Education Reform Act, emphasis is being placed on increasing the amount of serious learning time in schools. Districts have submitted their plans to schedule students for at least 900 hours in elementary schools and 990 hours in secondary schools to study the core academic subjects.

TEACHER TEST/TEACHER TRAINING

The Education Reform Law emphasizes raising expectations for all educators, both new to teaching as well as veterans. Beginning in January, 1998, all new teachers will be required to pass two tests to become certified to teach in Massachusetts public schools: knowledge of subject content, and communication/literacy skills. Current teachers who are provisionally certified, or who seek to be certified in a new field, will need to pass the subject matter test. Also, all educators need to continue their education by participating in serious professional development which will strengthen their knowledge of academic content and skills in teaching.

DISTRICT PERFORMANCE

The Board and the Commissioner are reviewing criteria to determine school and district performance. Indicators of school and district performance could include results on the new statewide student test, dropout and attendance rates, adequacy of facilities and other comparable factors. Under the Education Reform Act, if a district is found to be "under-performing," the state can take it into receivership.

REFORM OF REGULATIONS ON EDUCATION

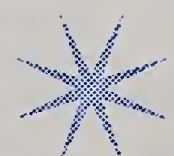
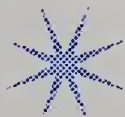
To streamline all regulations governing education, the Commissioner and the Board have repealed or consolidated 25 sets of regulations, and have simplified regulations governing Student Records and School Building Assistance. Currently, the regulations on transitional bilingual education are being reviewed, and the regulations for vocational education and special education also may be reviewed with public comment solicited this year.

SCHEDULE FOR STATE EDUCATIONAL TESTING (1997 - 2000)

1996 - 1997 School Year		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	Grade 3 - reading	April 28 - May 9
Iowa Test of Educational Development	Grade 10 - reading/lang. arts, math, sci/tech, social studies	April 28 - May 9
MCAS (<i>Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System</i>) question tryout	Grades 4, 8 and 10 - math, sci/tech	April 28-May 9
1997 - 1998 School Year		
MCAS question tryout	Grades 5, 9 & 11 Engl/lang. arts & history/social science	Fall
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	Grade 3 - reading	Spring
MCAS Tests	Grades 4, 8 & 10 - English/lang. arts, history/soc sci, math, sci/tech	Spring
1998 - 1999 School Year		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	Grade 3 -reading	Spring
MCAS Tests	Grades 4, 8 & 10 - English/language arts, history/social science, mathematics, science/technology	Spring
MCAS tryout	Grades 4, 8, & 10 - world languages	Spring
1999 - 2000 School Year		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	Grade 3 - reading	Spring
MCAS Tests	Grades 4, 8 & 10 - Engl/lang. arts, history/ soc. science, math, sci/tech, world lang.	Spring

For more information on Education Reform, visit our web page at <http://info.doe.mass.edu>, call 617-388-3300, or write to:

Commissioner Robert V. Antonucci,
Massachusetts Department of Education
350 Main Street,
Malden, MA 02148



A Chronological List of Major Accomplishments as a Result of THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 1993



1993

- June • The Massachusetts Education Reform Act signed into law by Governor William F. Weld
- Educators have six years from June 18, 1993 to become recertified
- July • Department of Education began administering new foundation budget formula for funding schools statewide
- September • The Commission on the Common Core of Learning convenes to begin defining the broad educational goals for all students
- More than two thousand teachers began to participate in early retirement incentive
- October • School councils established in every public school
- December • The Department of Education adopted a state plan for professional development, the first in Massachusetts history

1994

- January • The first draft of the Common Core of Learning released for public comment
- March • Curriculum frameworks development committees convened
- May • Ten early childhood Massachusetts Family Network demonstration sites open
- 51 Community Partnerships for Children grants are funded, serving 3,700 3- and 4-year old children
- July • The Common Core of Learning adopted by the Board of Education
- September • Report on the condition of alternative education for disruptive students released by the Commission on Alternative Education and the MassJobs Council
- December • Recertification regulations adopted by the Board of Education require all educators to be recertified every five years by continuing their professional development in line with school, district and state goals
- The Board of Education approved regulations on Time and Learning
- Massachusetts gets \$33.8 million federal grant for school-to work programs

1995

- January • Board of Education accepted the report by the Adult Education Committee on the condition of adult education in Massachusetts
- School districts submitted plans to eliminate their "general track" educational programs
- March • Board of Education approved the Five-Year Master Plan for Education Reform
- May • Study groups of 10,000 teachers review curriculum frameworks drafts
- June • Board of Education adopted the State Plan for Professional Development

1995 (continued)

- July • Board of Education adopted new regulations and evaluation standards, "Principles of Effective Teaching and Administration"
- Summer Institutes in math and science education held in July and August for more than 990 teachers
- September • The first charter schools opened
- Attracting Excellence to Teaching program began distributing payments to qualified teachers to help defray their college student loan debts
- Massachusetts competed for and won status from the U.S. Department of Education as one of six "Ed-Flex" states, advancing Education Reform by giving the MA Commissioner of Education the authority to grant school districts waivers from specified federal rules and regulations
- December • Board of Education accepted and endorsed the curriculum frameworks in mathematics, science/technology, the arts, health, and world languages

1996

- January • The Commission on Early Childhood Education released its report, "Children First," plan for an early education and care system for Massachusetts
- 121 Community Partnerships for Children grants are funded serving 2,900 3- and 4-year old children
- State budget provides \$50 per pupil to all school districts to use for professional development of their teaching staff
- July • New 9-member State Board of Education is named
- Summer • 1000 teachers attend Department-sponsored institutes to learn math, science and technology
- September • Board of Education approved the administration of an annual third-grade reading test
- October • Board of Education reviewed English/language arts and history/social sciences revised curriculum frameworks
- Education Technology Bond Bill passed
- November • Statewide certification test for new teachers approved, effective 1/1/98

1997

- January • The Board of Education approved the English/language arts curriculum framework
- 56 Community Partnerships for Children grants are funded, serving 1,500 3- and 4-year old children
- March • Eight new Mass Family Network demonstration sites were added
- History/social science draft curriculum framework released for public comment
- Board reviewed criteria which could identify under-performing schools

\$\$\$ A Financial Snapshot \$\$\$

INCREASE IN STATE AID PER PUPIL (FY'93- FY'97) (districts above state average)

School District	Per Pupil State Aid Increase from FY'93 to FY'97	School District	Per Pupil State Aid Increase from FY'93 to FY'97
Worcester Trade	\$2,629	Wareham	\$1,273
Florida	\$2,381	Westfield	\$1,272
Orange	\$2,343	Springfield	\$1,267
Lawrence	\$2,225	Leominster	\$1,253
Holyoke	\$2,148	Northeast	\$1,232
Greater Fall River	\$2,132	Metropolitan Shirley	\$1,228
Lowell	\$1,912	Greater Lowell	\$1,228
Athol Royalston	\$1,846	Conway	\$1,214
Greater New Bedford	\$1,839	Mohawk Trail	\$1,208
Brockton	\$1,824	Shutesbury	\$1,204
Lynn	\$1,808	Minuteman	\$1,203
Carver	\$1,794	Everett	\$1,180
Brookfield	\$1,744	Clinton	\$1,174
Ayer	\$1,725	Revere	\$1,166
North Brookfield	\$1,720	Gardner	\$1,159
Hawlemont	\$1,636	Dudley Charlton	\$1,153
Winchendon	\$1,635	North Middlesex	\$1,136
Middleborough	\$1,534	Petersham	\$1,134
Palmer	\$1,523	Dracut	\$1,129
Wales	\$1,520	Gill Montague	\$1,119
Southbridge	\$1,501	Narragansett	\$1,070
Northbridge	\$1,500	Norton	\$1,060
Fall River	\$1,496	Hull	\$1,046
Acushnet	\$1,491	Greater Lawrence	\$1,045
Hopedale	\$1,478	Amherst	\$1,044
Whitman Hanson	\$1,473	Franklin	\$1,036
New Bedford	\$1,466	Uxbridge	\$1,035
Clarksburg	\$1,451	Ludlow	\$1,030
Belchertown	\$1,435	Plympton	\$1,012
Oxford	\$1,424	Rockland	\$1,002
Berkley	\$1,413	Fairhaven	\$998
Haverhill	\$1,408	Ralph C. Mahar	\$984
North Adams	\$1,389	Greenfield	\$980
Ware	\$1,386	Adams Cheshire	\$969
Fitchburg	\$1,385	Montachusett	\$955
Worcester	\$1,372	Halifax	\$950
Wrentham	\$1,371	Quabbin	\$949
Brimfield	\$1,334	Pioneer	\$932
Chelsea	\$1,317	Lakeville	\$931
Douglas	\$1,313	Tyngsborough	\$930
New Salem Wendell	\$1,304	Chicopee	\$926
Monson	\$1,299	Leicester	\$915
East Bridgewater	\$1,294	Granville	\$912
		Kingston	\$904
		Plymouth	\$901
		State Average Increase	\$879

STATE EDUCATION AID FOR THE CITIES

(in millions of dollars)

City	FY93	FY97	%Increase
Agawam	5.8	8.0	37
Amesbury	4.3	7.1	65
Attleboro	10.6	16.3	54
Beverly	3.2	4.6	45
Boston	59.4	115.5	95
Brockton	36.6	65.9	80
Cambridge	2.2	4.0	80
Chelsea	13.7	23.9	74
Chicopee	16.9	25.7	52
Easthampton	4.9	6.3	29
Everett	2.5	7.9	214
Fall River	44.0	64.9	47
Fitchburg	14.7	22.9	55
Gardner	6.2	10.2	65
Gloucester	1.4	3.4	140
Haverhill	11.4	24.0	110
Holyoke	30.1	46.3	54
Lawrence	41.3	73.2	77
Leominster	10.0	18.1	82
Lowell	35.4	70.9	100
Lynn	28.8	57.6	100
Malden	11.0	14.3	30
Marlborough	1.4	2.6	78
Medford	7.6	8.9	18
Melrose	3.3	4.1	23
Methuen	8.9	14.3	61
New Bedford	51.3	71.0	39
Newburyport	1.6	2.2	40
Newton	3.1	5.4	72
North Adams	7.3	10.6	45
Northampton	5.7	6.5	13
Peabody	6.6	8.7	32
Pittsfield	16.4	22.1	34
Quincy	7.7	9.6	25
Revere	6.8	13.7	101
Salem	3.4	7.0	105
Somerville	12.3	17.6	43
Springfield	100.5	133.5	33
Taunton	16.8	24.2	44
Waltham	3.0	4.2	41
Westfield	11.0	19.6	79
Woburn	1.7	2.7	61
Worcester	57.7	98.1	70

A Sample of Districts' Educational Improvements during the Education Reform Years 1993-1997

Following are excerpts from much longer reports, prepared by several Massachusetts school superintendents, on the positive impact of state funding for public education as a result of Education Reform.



SELECTED URBAN DISTRICTS

Boston

Boston has introduced four new curricula in English, math, science and social studies, has begun to connect every school to the Internet, has adopted a tough new standardized student test, opened state-of-the-art library media centers in several high schools and is upgrading library services in all the schools, is strengthening its school site councils, and is opening more full-day kindergarten classrooms for five-year olds.

Fall River

The district added 118 new positions including three new attendance officers, increased its budget for textbooks from \$221,000 to \$755,000 and for materials and supplies from \$340,000 to \$445,000, shifted to block scheduling at the high school (beginning in September of 1997) to add time for core subjects, initiated a new elementary reading and writing program based on successful national models, started a science center with kits for classrooms, designed middle school science units with the state curriculum framework, opened a center for professional development with night and weekend hours for teachers, reported that its 1996 MEAP test results show significant improvement, reported that its percentage of educators with advanced degrees has increased from 33.6% in 1995 to 49.7% in 1996, and provides a 17-minute longer elementary school day and a 34-minute longer day at the secondary level.

Holyoke

Holyoke has purchased new curriculum materials at all grade levels, updated supplies and materials for all secondary science labs, updated computers system-wide, provided after-school literacy, tutoring and homework programs for middle and high school students, provide a cost-free option for teacher recertification, designed a parent training program, and initiated a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) preparation program. Average student performance on the California Achievement Test (CAT) has shown an increase between 1994 and 1996.

Lowell

Lowell has provided a new curriculum for students in grades Pre-K through 2, provided all kindergartners with full-day programs, is implementing the CAT-5 in grades 3 and 9 as a benchmark for the new Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), provided a summer reading program in the schools, provided in-class tutors for students with limited English proficiency, strengthened school security measures, started peer counseling and mediation programs for students in middle and high school, expanded parent programs to provide workshops for parents on reading and writing, offered extended learning time programs including after-school homework and enrichment activities, integrated educational technology throughout the grades connecting every class-

room in each school, provided Internet access for students on 3,000 system-wide computers, and provided 30 hours of computer training to every high school educator in the system.

New Bedford

Education Reform funding has resulted in providing PALMS (Partnerships for the Advancement of Learning in Mathematics and Science) specialists in all 22 elementary schools where there were only 2 system-wide teachers prior to 1993, professional development in the curriculum frameworks with PALMS-TO-GO for substitute teachers, and more professional development days have been added to the school year.

Pittsfield

A world languages program has been instituted at the Williams Elementary School where 420 students are now learning another language, new math and science textbooks have been purchased for grades K-5, spending has increased for student supplies and equipment, two additional professional days have been added to the school year, new performance standards for teachers were negotiated, all teachers are receiving a minimum of 12 hours of computer training, a school attendance coordinator was hired this year to address excessive absenteeism, and a new elementary librarian was hired.

Springfield

Springfield has implemented K-12 learning outcomes for every grade and academic area to support the curriculum frameworks. A comprehensive Education Reform program designed to prepare students for the 21st Century has led to implementation of several initiatives: full-day kindergartens in all schools, world language programs in K-12, computer technology in all schools, development of assessments for system-wide evaluation, new construction of modern school facilities at every level, new alternative high school programs, expanded after school and summer-school programs, and increased professional development for all staff.

Taunton

Since 1993, Taunton has eliminated annual lay-offs, and has added eighty new positions to serve the needs of its students, including 800 new children. Class sizes have been reduced at each level, and more teaching assistants have been added to early childhood classrooms. Taunton added two days for professional development. Additionally, the district has solidified its model elementary library program, expanded pre-school and early childhood programs, maintained its Gifted/Talented and Community Outreach programs, and enhanced Project B.E.S.T. (Building Educational Success Together) a business/school/civic leader partnership aimed at supporting and promoting opportunities in every school. Taunton has increased the availability of educational technology system wide, and provided staff with technology training.

Worcester

More than 700 educators and community members designed curricula aligned with the curriculum frameworks, the teacher work year increased, MEAP test results indicate significant growth in student achievement, the school day was lengthened, average class size decreased from 23 to 21 students, 98 additional kindergarten teacher aides have been hired, 355 teachers in total were hired, educational spending for every pupil in every school increased from \$23 to \$100, new textbooks for all students have been purchased, all secondary science labs were refurbished, the district education technology plan has been approved and 1,200 new computers have been installed, and 500 staff have been trained in using technology to support students in achieving the new curriculum standards.



SAMPLE SUBURBAN/RURAL DISTRICTS

Amesbury

Elementary music, art and physical education classes (which were eliminated as a result of Proposition 2 1/2) were restored, average class sizes were reduced from 27 to 22 or 23, \$150,000 is now allocated annually for educational technology, contracts now include a teacher evaluation program aligned with the state's Principles of Effective Teaching and Supervision, assistant principals responsible for directly supervising classroom instruction are now in place in the elementary schools and collective bargaining has resulted in more time in school for teaching all students.

Douglas

Douglas' MEAP scores have moved from a low of 1180 in grade eight reading in 1988 to 1390 in 1996, the district has added 31 new professional staff, all outdated text books have been replaced, world languages are now being taught in pre-K and kindergarten and in the middle school, and first-graders will begin world language instruction in the 1998 school year. High schoolers now take a mandatory six courses per quarter, and Douglas was the sixth district in Massachusetts to have its educational technology plan approved.

Dracut

Dracut has been able to replace many of the 88 staff positions eliminated in the 5 years prior to 1993, replaced outdated textbooks in all the schools, expanded its foreign languages program at the junior and senior high, instituted a professional development program focusing on reading/language arts, has received approval for its district educational technology plan, eliminated the general track at the high school, and lengthened its school day.

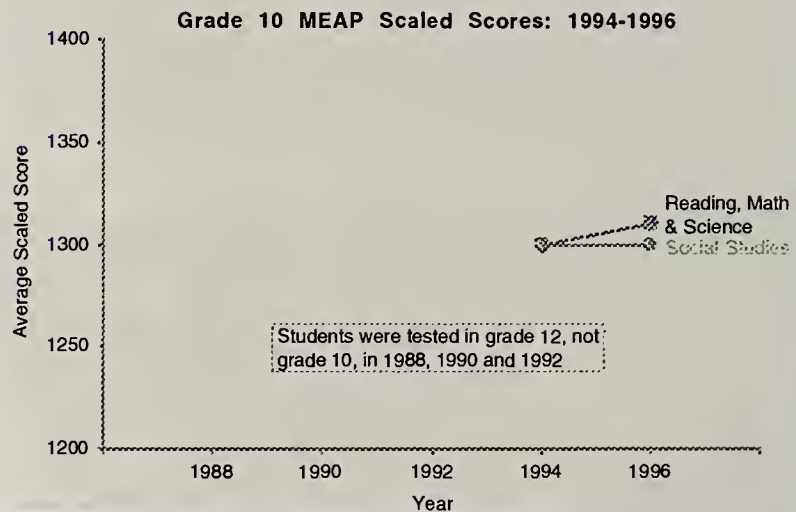
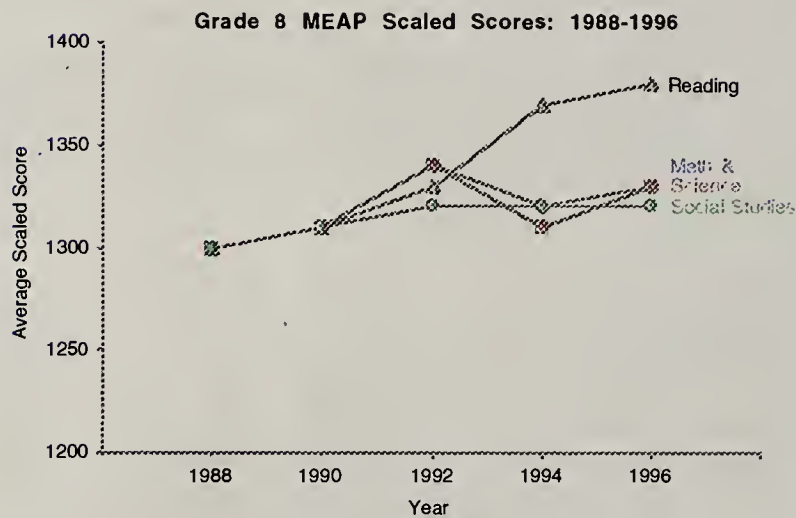
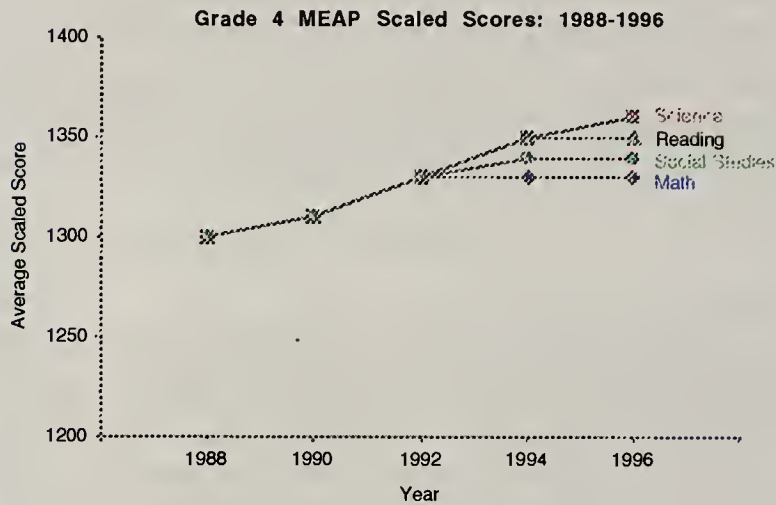
Orange

As a result of Education Reform, Orange now offers full-time kindergarten, has been able to increase the number of educational staff and decrease class sizes, now fully includes all students with special needs, has a district-wide certified school librarian, a school library with a full-time aide in every school, an approved technology plan, a full-time technology teacher, a computer lab in each school, an expanded school day and year (by the addition of before- and after- school and summertime tutoring programs and mini courses), and strengthened professional development including summer curriculum development projects.

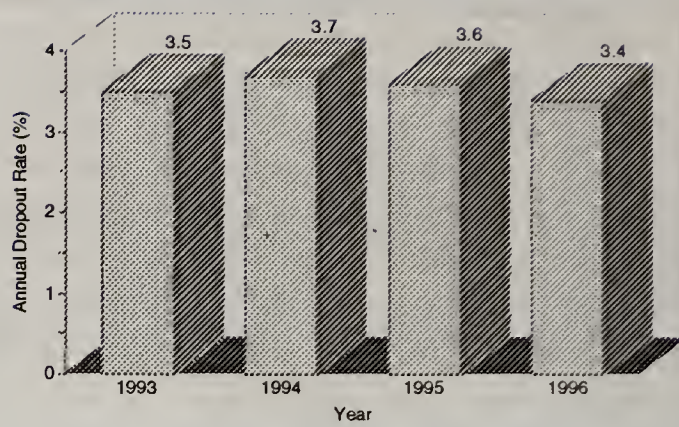
State Educational Statistics

Test Scores

(The Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program, MEAP, ended in 1996. Unlike the MEAP, the new state test, MCAS, will measure individual student achievement and will be tied directly to the state curriculum frameworks.)

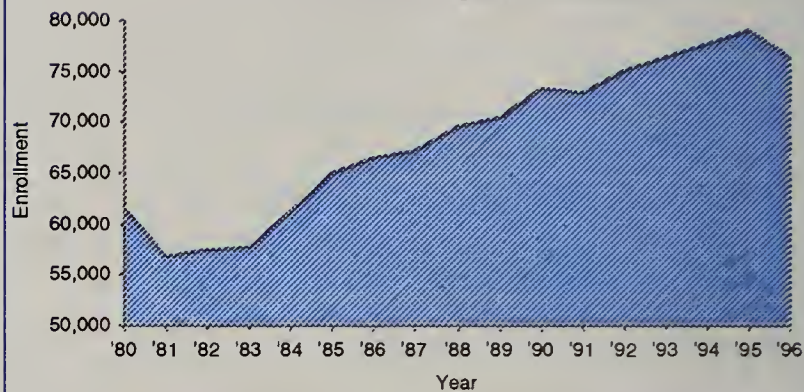


Annual MA Dropout Rates: 1993-1996



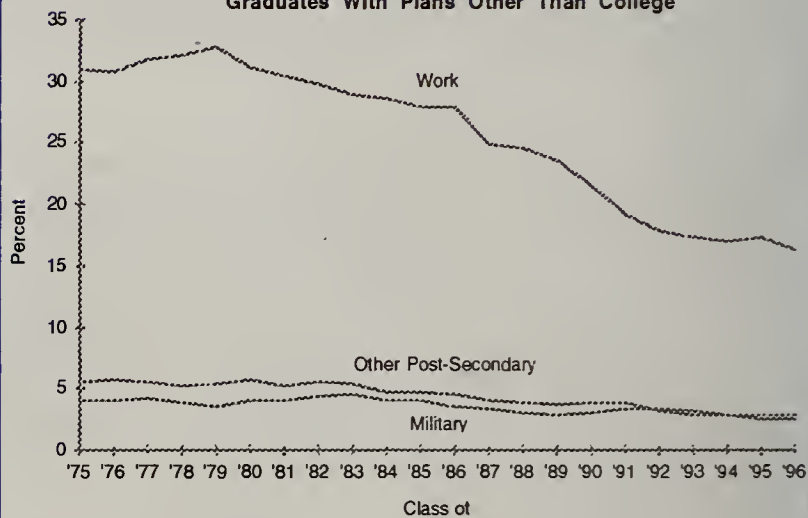
Here come the children!

Public School Kindergarten Enrollment

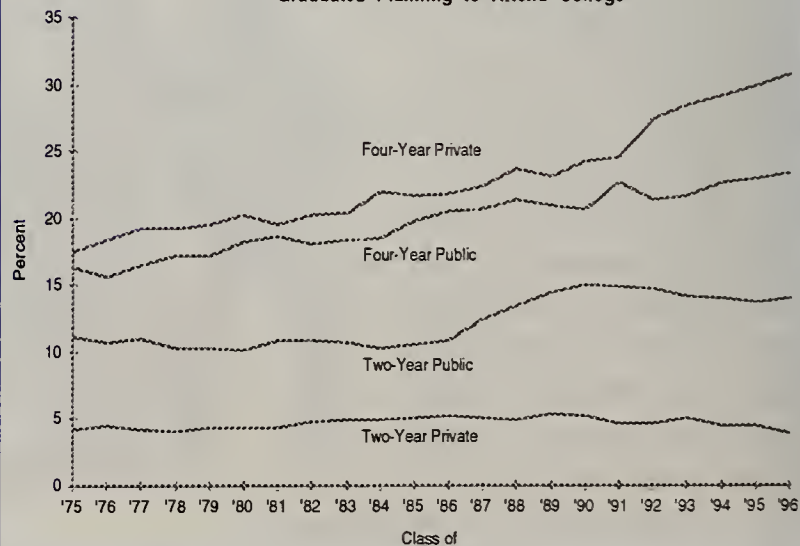


Where are they going?

Graduates With Plans Other Than College



Graduates Planning to Attend College



1996 Scholastic Aptitude Test

	MA	USA
Verbal	507	505
Math	504	508
Participation Rate (%)	80*	41

*National Leader