The Golden Opportunity Summit
Exploring Equity-Minded Approaches to Student Assignment and School Reform

March 27, 2010

Nancy McArdle
DiversityData.org
The Structure of Metro Boston Schools is Fragmented

- Metro Boston is one of the most fragmented in the U.S. in terms of school districts
- With 162 separate school districts, Metro Boston has about 1 district for every 3,500 students
- In contrast, the similarly-sized Seattle metro has about 1 district for every 10,000 students
- On average, in the 25 largest metros, there is about 1 district for every 7,200 students
Metro Boston Schools are Racially and Ethnically Segregated

Among the 100 largest metros, Metro Boston is the:

- 3rd most segregated for Latino primary school students
- 10th most segregated for Asian primary school students
- 23rd most segregated for black primary school students
  - although segregation levels for black students are higher than for other groups
Metro Boston Schools Disproportionately Expose Minority Children to High Poverty Schools

- On average, Hispanic students attend primary schools with poverty rates of 64%—3.9 times that of white students—the 2nd highest disparity among large metros.

- Black students attend primary schools with poverty rates of 60%—3.7 times that of white students—the 4th highest disparity among large metros.

- Asian students attend primary schools with poverty rates of 34%—2.1 times that of white students—the 2nd highest disparity among large metros.
Research has shown that segregated, concentrated-poverty schools tend to have:

- Rapid turnover of teachers and students
- Lower involvement by parents
- Less experienced teachers
- Lower per student expenditures
- Higher dropout rates
- Lower test scores

Students attending these schools tend to have higher levels of untreated health problems, weaker networks to college and jobs than students in desegregated settings.
27% of Metro Boston School Students are Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch, But . . .

Certain students attend what some have termed “private” public schools, those schools in which less than 5% of primary school students and 3% of middle/high school students are eligible for free/reduced lunch.

20% of white and 16% of Asian students attend such schools, but only:

- 3% of black students and
- 2% of Hispanic students . . .

. . . attend these “private” public schools.

Within the Boston Public School District, Characteristics of Schools Reflect a Distinct Geographic Pattern
Characteristics of BPS Schools with 4th Grades Overlaid on Assignment Zones: 2008-09

Percent Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch

Math 4th Grade MCAS CPI

Percent Black or Latino

Note: Excludes Horace Mann School for the Deaf, McKinley School, and charter schools.
Source: MA Department of Education and BPS
Percent of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch
BPS Schools with 4th Grades
Overlaid on 3 and 5 Zone Plans: 2008-09

Note: Excludes Horace Mann School for the Deaf, McKinley School, and charter schools.
Source: MA Department of Education and BPS
In General, Schools Outside BPS But Within 5 Miles Exhibit Much Lower Levels of Concentrated Poverty

(Percent of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch in Public Schools with 4th Grades: 2008-09)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>School %</th>
<th>5 Zone Median %</th>
<th>3 Zone Median %</th>
<th>Outside BPS Within 5 Miles Median %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kilmer</td>
<td>W. Roxbury</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conley</td>
<td>Roslindale</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winship</td>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mather</td>
<td>Dorchester</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mendell</td>
<td>Roxbury</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliot</td>
<td>Central (N. End)</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otis</td>
<td>East Boston</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MA Dept. of Education.