



Redesign and Reinvest



Improving School Choice

Boston School Committee Meeting
April 13, 2011

The Acceleration Agenda: 2009-2014

We are making progress



Key assumptions

- **This is a difficult process the community has wrestled with since 1849**
 - In Roberts v. The City of Boston, Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw ruled that racially segregated schools are constitutional
- **There are many different opinions and firmly held beliefs across the city about student assignment**
- **The 2004 Task Force started a conversation that has continued to the present**
- **The status quo is not sustainable**

Our goal is to build a family friendly school choice system that gives every student equal access to high quality options

Based on our past conversations with the community, the following draft core values will guide our work

- We value rich educational experiences that foster diversity of our students (e.g., racial / ethnic, special needs, cultural, language, income, etc.)
- We value a family friendly registration process
- We value an equitable, transparent, and comprehensive student assignment process
- We value that students have a range of options for schools and programs
- We believe in more options for inclusion for students with disabilities
- We value efficient use of resources that can be invested in classrooms
- We value stakeholder engagement at every step of the process. The community will affirm and/or help identify additional core values

We are creating more high quality schools where:

1. Students are growing academically

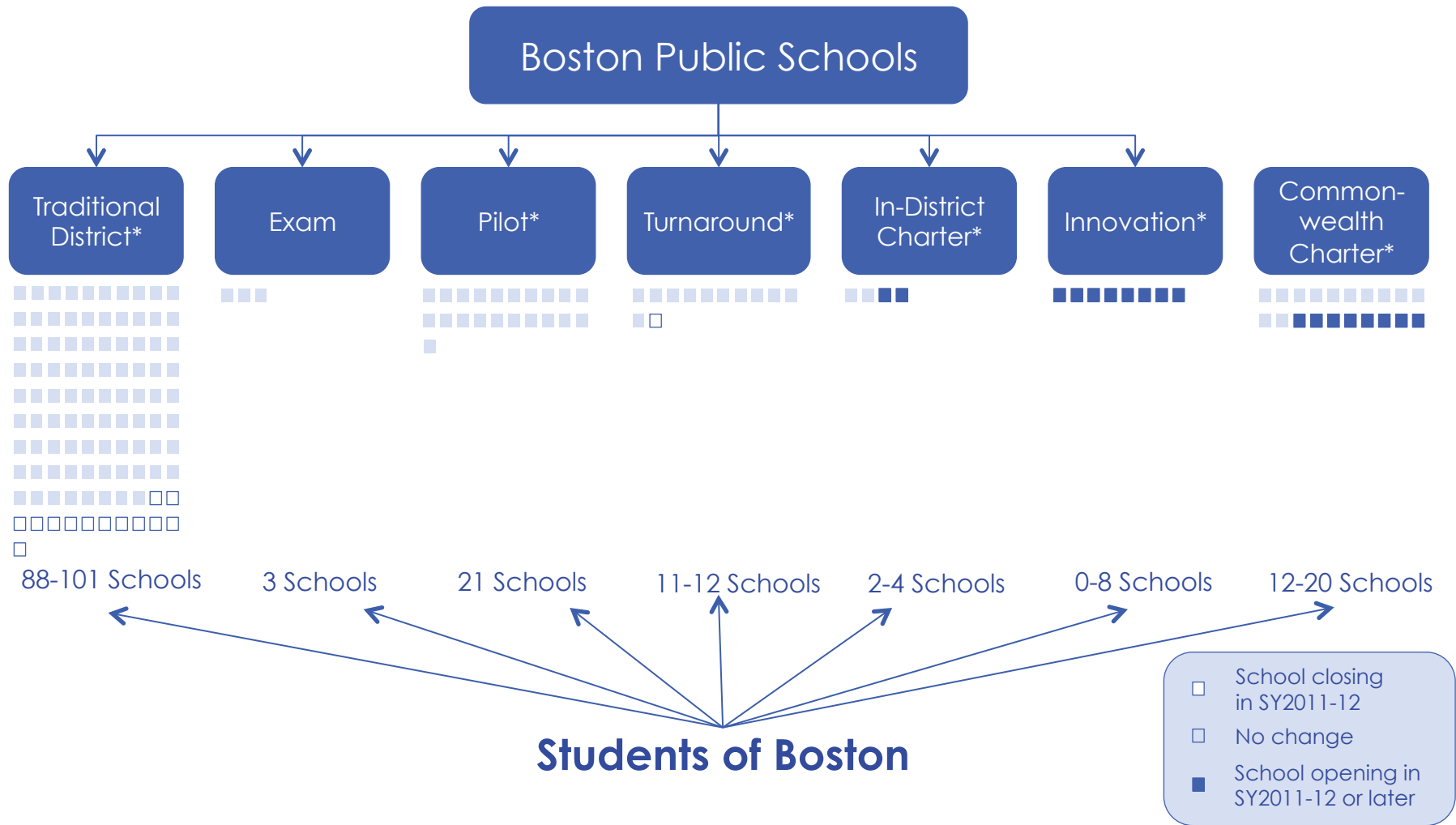
2. Students are on track toward proficiency and graduation

3. Students' individual needs are met and achievement/access gaps are closing

4. Students are present and ready to learn

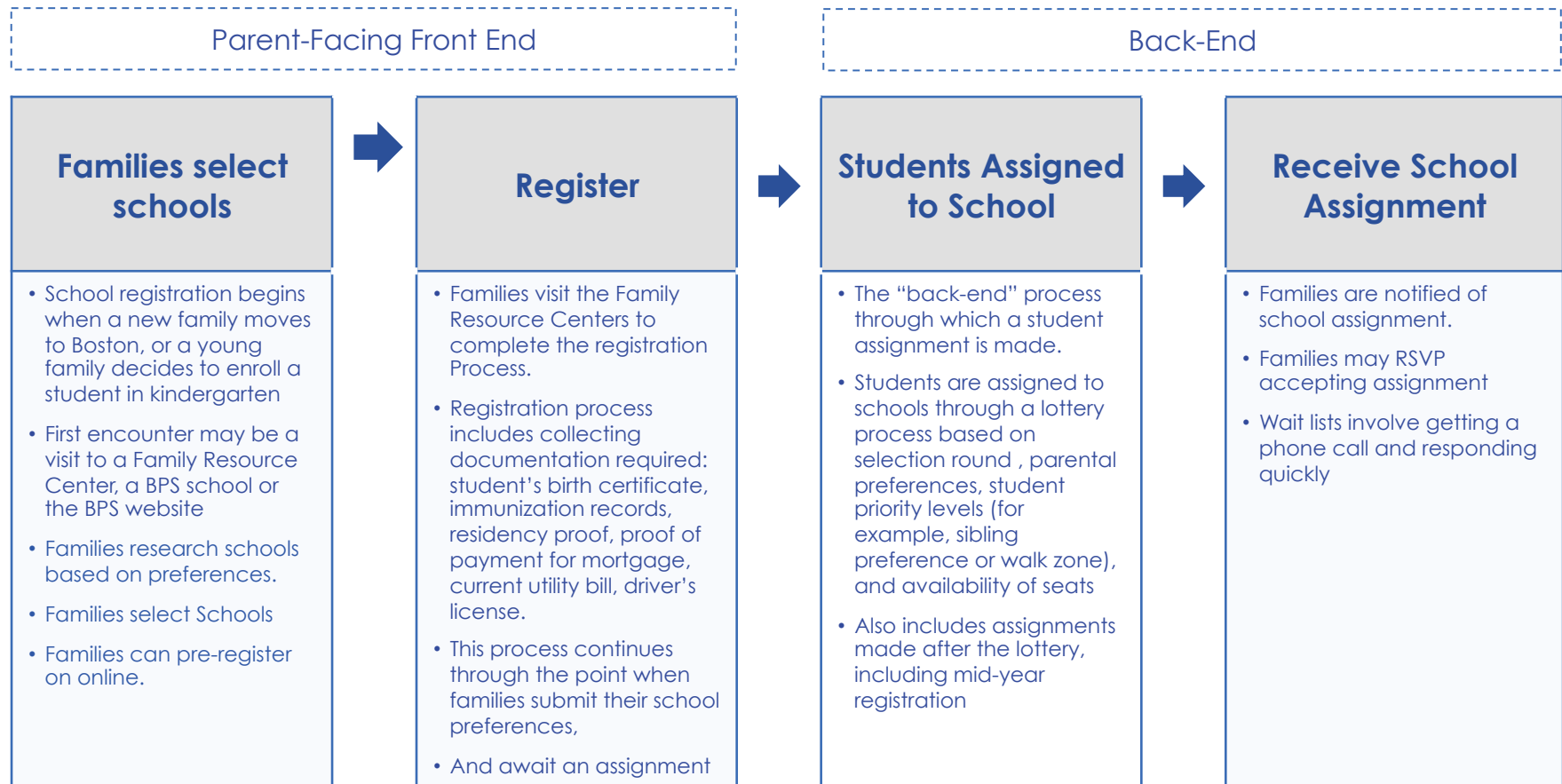
5. Students are safe and the environment is conducive to learning

Our school options are better now, and families of every background have good choices



* In Fall 2011, Boston will open one new Innovation School (7 more are in planning stages) and two new In-District (Horace Mann) charters. Four new Commonwealth Charters will open in Fall 2011 and four more in Fall 2012. BPS will also close 13 traditional schools and 1 turnaround school in Fall 2011. Note that two turnaround schools are also pilot schools, and are reflected in both categories. 2 additional schools are Discovery schools.

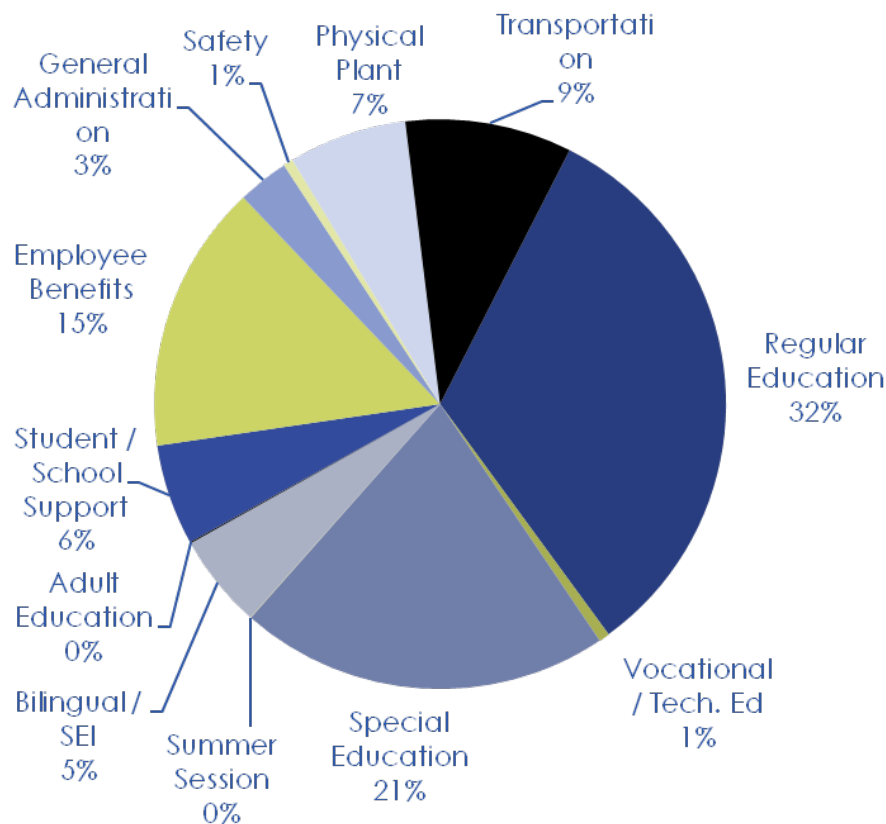
Now, we must make our school choice process less complicated and confusing...



How can we make this process easier for families?

...and redirect resources from operational costs to high leverage strategies that promote achievement

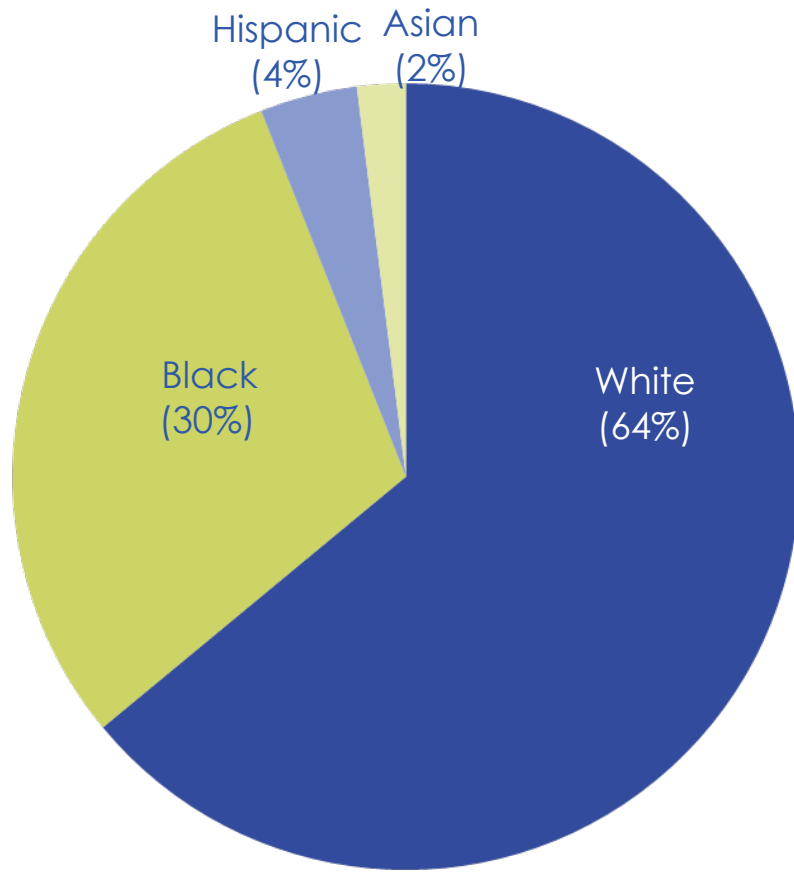
BPS FY11 General Fund Budget \$821.4 million



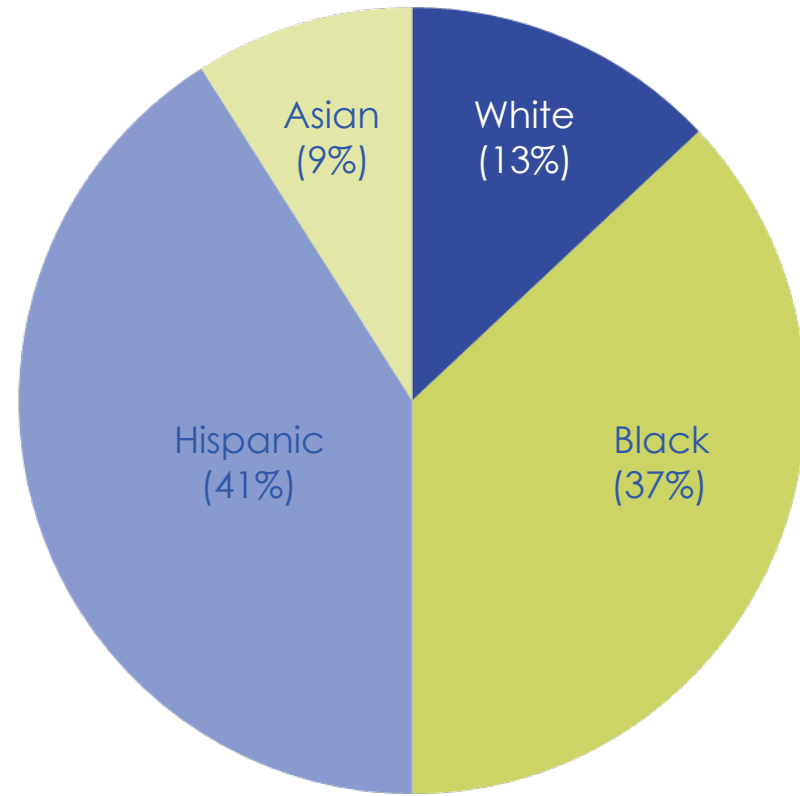
- Our transportation costs are twice the average of other districts
- If we don't reduce them, transportation costs will grow to nearly \$100 million by 2015
- Transportation costs reduce our ability to invest in students and what we know improves student learning

Boston Public Schools student population looks very different than in 1970

BPS Race/Ethnicity in 1970
(96,696 students)



BPS Race/Ethnicity in 2010
(56,020 students)



We have had conversations with families about improving school choices for seven years

2004: Student assignment task force

2005, 2006: Changes made: 50/50% walk zone, sibling preference, new algorithm adopted based on task force recommendations

2009: Five-zone proposal presented but not approved by School Committee

BPS received Technical Assistance for Student Assignment Planning grant from US Department of Education

2010: Golden Opportunity Summit sponsored by external partners examined history of school assignment in Boston and around the nation

Day of Dialogue pilot process asked “what makes a high quality school” at nearly 20 community meetings across the city

Now, working with families and our community, we will:

Phase I		Phase II
<p>1. Make the registration process family friendly (Implement for School Year 2012-13)</p> <p>Desired outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier access to information about schools • Shorter wait time at Family Resource Centers and less need to visit in person • Streamlined and clarified documentation requirements • Families will view the registration process as easier and more welcoming 	<p>2. Continue improving school quality and options (Implementation ongoing)</p> <p>Desired outcomes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn around low performing schools and replicate successful models • Increase access to early childhood programs, particularly in Circle of Promise • Broaden opportunities for students to pursue advanced work • Strengthen programs for ELLs, including incorporating ELL Task Force recommendations and expansion of dual-language programming • Expand inclusion options and build highly specialized programs for students with disabilities • Support great teaching, leadership, and school team success 	<p>3. Redesign the student assignment process (Implement for School Year 2013-14)</p> <p>Desired outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School choice boundaries that are fair, provide opportunity and reduce travel time to and from school • Families will have a range of options for schools and programs offering rich educational experiences that foster diversity • Comprehensive student assignment policy for all public schools • Additional resources to invest in school improvement efforts • Access and achievement gaps narrowed and students achieve proficiency

Community Engagement: Create opportunities for stakeholders to engage in an ongoing dialogue where they can share their perspectives and provide feedback that shapes our policies.

Here is how we will work together

Core Coordinating Team

WHO: In-house Coordinating Team composed of key BPS leaders and experts as needed

Teams and Purpose:

- 1. Technical Teams:** (1) Improve family enrollment experience, (2) Improve school program quality and (3) Student Assignment Redesign. Conduct research, analysis and detail design for the phases of the project:
- 2. Stakeholder Engagement Team:** Plan and implement community engagement process
- 3. Communication Team:** Develop and implement ongoing external and internal communications plan

Listen to ideas, feedback, & priorities

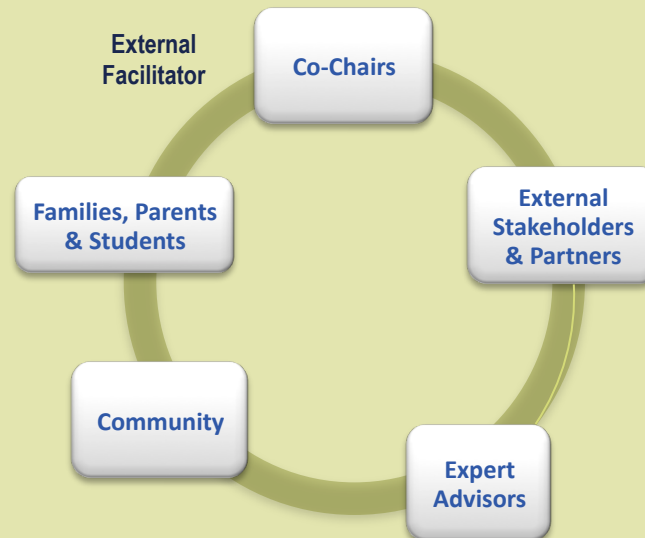
Shape recommendations based on ideas, feedback, & priorities

External Work Team

Who: Team of parents and students, families, expert advisors, and other community stakeholders

Purpose: Provide advice and input/feedback on priorities, policy options, and community engagement.

Leadership: Facilitated team co-chaired by two community leaders. Solicit recommendations from the School Committee.



And what we will accomplish

- **BPS will engage the community in a meaningful discussion**
 - We have created an 18-month process to have time for meaningful community engagement, debate and shared decision-making
 - We welcome your thoughts on how we can improve the choice process
 - This conversation is already beginning at choice@bostonpublicschools.org
- **For the 2012 – 2013 school year**
 - Families will experience a simplified process of comparing, choosing, and selecting schools
 - This means less paperwork, fewer hurdles, better customer service
 - More options, and better options for families
- **For the 2013 – 2014 school year**
 - Any changes to school choice will take effect
 - Students will spend less time on school buses
 - Any transportation savings will be directly reinvested in improving school quality
 - Families will have greater predictability as they transition pre-kindergarten through high school graduation

If you would like to participate...

If you have questions or would like to participate, please contact us at **choice@bostonpublicschools.org**