Update on Eliminating the Achievement Gap

Presentation to School Committee
June 18, 2014
Summary

- While we have seen improvements in test scores across all student groups, achievement gaps persist, particularly between Black and Hispanic students and their White and Asian peers.

- We are focusing on eliminating achievement gaps through our Academics and Human Capital work, aiming to promote school transformation and turnaround and ensure that all students have high-quality teachers.

- Other key areas include early education, research on best practices, expansion of inclusive and dual language programs, data inquiry, cultural proficiency, family and community engagement, weighted student funding, and Code of Conduct reform.

- Next steps include an expanded role for the Office of Equity, a focus on eliminating the achievement gap at PELP this year, and ongoing reporting to ensure accountability.
NAEP data shows that, in general, Boston students outperform their peers in other urban districts.

In 8th grade math, BPS has closed the gap with the nation.
Black students in Boston outperform their peers across the nation and in other urban districts
Hispanic students in Boston also perform as well as their peers in the best-performing urban districts.
Achievement gaps are narrowing in grade 10 ELA...

Since 2007, the gap between White students and Black and Hispanic students has been halved, from 34 to 15 points in ELA.

...but they persist in Math

In Math, the Black-White gap remains at 29 points and the White-Hispanic gap also remains unchanged at 26 points.
Achievement gaps also persist in the lower grades

Grade 3 ELA

Grade 7 ELA
These gaps are smaller for students from the same socio-economic background, but they still remain.

**Gap in % Proficient/Advanced between Black and White Low-Income Students**

- **2008:** 13% ELA, 16% Math
- **2009:** 12% ELA, 15% Math
- **2010:** 12% ELA, 15% Math
- **2011:** 14% ELA, 16% Math
- **2012:** 16% ELA, 19% Math
- **2013:** 16% ELA, 20% Math

**Gap in % Proficient/Advanced between Hispanic and White Low-Income Students**

- **2008:** 13% ELA, 13% Math
- **2009:** 12% ELA, 12% Math
- **2010:** 12% ELA, 11% Math
- **2011:** 13% ELA, 11% Math
- **2012:** 17% ELA, 15% Math
- **2013:** 17% ELA, 14% Math

* Preliminary data
Achievement gaps are especially evident for Black and Hispanic male students.

**ELA proficiency rates by race and gender**

- Black males: 35
- Hispanic males: 47
- Hispanic females: 48
- Black females: 63
- Asian males: 66
- White males: 75
- Asian females: 76

**Math proficiency rates by race and gender**

- Black males: 29
- Hispanic males: 34
- Hispanic females: 36
- Black females: 38
- Asian males: 64
- White males: 68
- Asian females: 77
- White females: 83

**Proficiency rates for Black males are the lowest of any race/gender group.**

**Proficiency rates for Black males are less than half the rates for White and Asian females.**
Gaps are also evident in the growth rates of students in different racial/ethnic groups.

ELA Median Student Growth Percentile (SGP) by Race

- African Amer./Black
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latino
- White

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>African Amer./Black</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Hispanic/Latino</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We have seen improvements in the 4-Year graduation rate across all student groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>59.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Am/Black</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS Average</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELLs</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWDs</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
District dropout rates are the lowest since 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001-02</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The BPS Policy on Eliminating the Achievement Gap defines 12 goals for the district

1. Alignment of policies and plans with the Achievement Gap policy
2. Diverse, culturally competent leadership
3. Beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of student proficiency
4. Supportive professional learning communities
5. Rigorous, culturally relevant teaching and learning
6. Culturally relevant and responsive practices
7. Professional development for closing the achievement gap
8. Partnerships in family and community engagement
9. Human resources
10. Equity in operations
11. Assessment and accountability for performance
12. Adequate funding
Eliminating the Achievement Gap is a top priority for the district

**ACHIEVEMENT GAP**
Defining a path and implementing an action plan (Quality School Plan) to eliminate achievement gaps

**COMMON CORE**
Continuing the implementation of Common Core and MA curriculum standards & preparing for the PARCC assessments as the means of raising the bar for all students

**INCLUSIVE PRACTICES**
Increasing the number of students recommended for inclusions while Increasing the number of schools offering fully inclusive programs for students with disabilities

Image sources:
http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2013/08/the-story-deepens/
http://bpscurriculumandinstruction.weebly.com/index.html
Our work focuses on these goals

Example: Academics Turnaround and Transformation

Key Goals:
- Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
- Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
- Supportive, Professional Learning Communities
- Rigorous, Culturally Relevant Teaching and Learning
- Professional Development for Closing the Achievement Gap
- Partnerships in Family and Community Engagement
- Assessment and Accountability for Performance

We are defining a turnaround and transformation strategy for the district with a focus on the lowest-performing schools

These schools tend to educate a higher-than-average population of Black and Latino students
- For example, in 2012, Turnaround Schools served 92% Black or Latino students
Example: Early Childhood Education

- **Key Goals:**
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Rigorous, Culturally Relevant Teaching and Learning
  - Professional Development for Closing the Achievement Gap
  - Partnerships in Family and Community Engagement
  - Equity in Operations
  - Assessment and Accountability for Performance
  - Adequate Funding

- We continue to expand K1 seats across the district, with a $1.0 million investment in our FY15 budget to add 106 additional seats.

- Research shows that BPS K1 programs help close achievement gaps in the early grades.

![DIBELS Next: K2 Students Meeting Benchmark by Race/Ethnic Group](image-url)
Example: Research into Best Practices

- **Key Goals:**
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
  - Culturally Relevant and Responsive Practices
  - Assessment and Accountability for Performance

- Research on the Achievement of Black and Latino Males within the Boston Public Schools currently being conducted by the Center for Collaborative Education and the Annenberg Institute

- BPS has also investigated the best practices at BPS schools where student achievement in literacy is high in 3rd and 4th grades

- Other examples: Gastón Institute report on English Language Learners in the Boston Public Schools, case study of inclusive practices at the Henderson Elementary School
**Example: Cultural Proficiency Workshops**

- **Key Goals:**
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Diverse, Culturally Competent Leadership
  - Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
  - Rigorous, Culturally Relevant Teaching and Learning
  - Culturally Relevant and Responsive Practices
  - Professional Development for Closing the Achievement Gap

- Staff from more than 30 schools have participated in workshops to examine the influence of race and culture on interactions, instruction, and institutions within BPS

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**Example: 10 Boys Initiative**

- **Key Goals:**
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District’s Achievement Gap Policy
  - Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
  - Partnerships in Family and Community Engagement

- Over the past 5 years, more than 2,000 boys have participated in the 10 Boys program, receiving personal attention and targeted instructional support to promote academic proficiency and boost self-confidence
Example: Expansion of Dual Language and Inclusive Programs

Key Goals:

- Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
- Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
- Rigorous, Culturally Relevant Teaching and Learning
- Culturally Relevant and Responsive Practices
- Professional Development for Closing the Achievement Gap
- Human Resources
- Adequate Funding

- We are rolling out a dual language program at the Umana in 2014-2015
- We are also implementing a strategic plan to expand inclusive practices across schools and clusters in the coming years
Example: Data Inquiry

- Key Goals:
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
  - Supportive, Professional Learning Communities
  - Rigorous, Culturally Relevant Teaching and Learning
  - Professional Development for Closing the Achievement Gap
  - Assessment and Accountability for Performance

- Data inquiry is a process where facilitators guide teams of teachers and school leaders to identify student learning challenges, design appropriate instructional strategies, assess student progress, and refine their practice.

- The goal of inquiry is to drill down into student data and focus on specific student needs in order to succeed with all learners.

- The Data Inquiry Team will work with up to 16 BPS schools in the 2014-15 school year (chosen based on need and readiness for inquiry process).
Example: Office of Engagement

- Key Goals:
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Diverse, Culturally Competent Leadership
  - Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
  - Culturally Relevant and Responsive Practices
  - Partnerships in Family and Community Engagement

“The BPS Office of Engagement is a capacity-building catalyst for authentic and effective partnerships among students, families, schools and the community to ensure student readiness and achievement from pre-entry to graduation.”

Office of Engagement Mission Statement
Example: Restructuring the Office of Human Capital

- Key Goals:
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Diverse, Culturally Competent Leadership
  - Supportive, Professional Learning Communities
  - Rigorous, Culturally Relevant Teaching and Learning
  - Professional Development for Closing the Achievement Gap
  - Human Resources

- We have transformed our recruitment and hiring process to ensure that we have excellent teachers in every school, in every classroom, every single day

- Through our Teacher Diversity Action Plan, we aim to recruit, retain and promote a diverse, highly qualified workforce that is reflective of our student population
Example: Weighted Student Funding

- Key Goals:
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Adequate Funding

- Entering its 4th year of implementation, WSF distributes general fund dollars based on students’ needs, not on what school they attend or what neighborhood they come from.

- We continue to reflect on and revise our practice based on what we hear from families, school communities, and school leaders.

Example: Code of Conduct

- Key Goals:
  - Alignment of Policies and Plans with the District Achievement Gap Policy
  - Professional Development for Closing the Achievement Gap
  - Beliefs, Attitudes, and Expectations of Student Proficiency
  - Equity in Operations

- BPS is a leader in implementing a Code of Conduct that minimizes school exclusions and preserves learning time.

- The new Code continues moving toward an approach focused on progressive discipline, supporting students, and keeping students in school.
Next steps

- The **Office of Equity** will help oversee our work on eliminating the Achievement Gap.

- A team from BPS will focus on elimination of the achievement gap as the problem of practice at **PELP (Public Education Leadership Program)** this summer.

- We will continue to share **frequent updates** on our key initiatives and our progress toward eliminating achievement gaps:
  - These will include references to the Achievement Gap Policy.
  - We will ensure alignment with the aspirational goals and priorities determined by the School Committee.