



Time for a Change:

The Promise of Extended-Time Schools for Promoting Student Achievement

Massachusetts 2020

Massachusetts 2020 is a nonprofit operating foundation with a mission to expand educational and economic opportunities for children and families across Massachusetts. Massachusetts 2020 was founded in 2000 by Chris Gabrieli, a civic and business entrepreneur, and Jennifer Davis, former U.S. Department of Education Deputy Assistant Secretary and Executive Director of the Mayor of Boston's 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative. Over the last five years, Massachusetts 2020 has been a lead partner in launching eight major initiatives, including: Boston's After-School for All Partnership, the largest public/private partnership dedicated to children in Boston's history; the Keeping Kids on Track Statewide Campaign, in partnership with the five largest United Way organizations in Massachusetts; the statewide Middle School Initiative, in partnership with Citizen Schools, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, the L.G. Balfour Foundation and several other funders; the Transition to Success

Pilot, which documented the academic impact of six after-school programs; the School Sites Initiative, expanding after-school programs in 17 Boston schools; the Literacy Coaching Initiative, supporting 40 after-school programs with literacy specialists; and Partners for Student Success, with Boston Public Schools and Boston After School & Beyond, focused on providing children in low performing schools in-school and after-school enrichment and support programs. In 2004, Massachusetts 2020 launched a research and policy effort to restructure public schools to extend their day and year. In 2005, the Massachusetts legislature passed a budget that included funding to support this policy reform.

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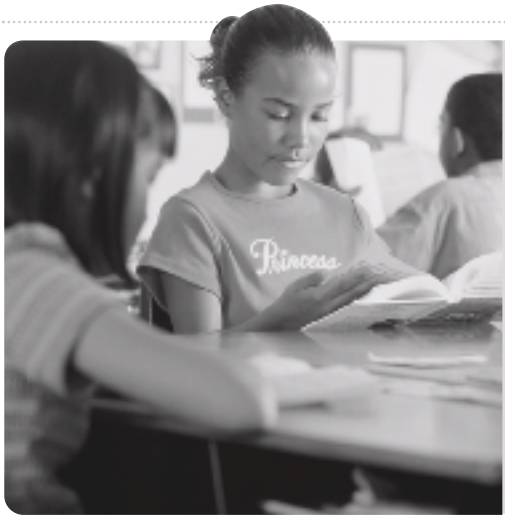
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For more information

A copy of this executive summary and the full research report can be downloaded from Massachusetts 2020's website at www.mass2020.org or can be requested by calling 617-723-6747, ext. 3900.





“**Learning** in America is a prisoner of time. For the past 150 years American Public Schools have held time constant and let learning vary.... The boundaries of student growth are defined by schedules for bells, buses and vacations instead of standards for students and learning.”

— *National Education Commission on Time and Learning, 1994*

Introduction

IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS, AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION has undergone a dramatic transformation. With the implementation of clear and substantial learning standards and accountability systems aligned to those standards, schools now aim to measure their performance by what matters most: how much students know and are able to do. The national target is now that, by 2014, all students should reach proficiency on their state’s learning standards. The question that now confronts us is how our public schools—how our society—can turn this laudable goal into reality.

No state has taken on the challenge of building a high-quality public education system for every student with greater purpose and vision than Massachusetts. Since the Education Reform Act of 1993, the state has nearly tripled the dollars directed to public schools, invested deeply in professional development for teachers, and, through a robust set of curriculum frameworks and a well-aligned accountability test, established one of the strongest models of standards-based education in the country.¹ Despite this string of achievements, however, universal proficiency among Massachusetts students still seems a distant goal. After all, only 60 percent of 10th grade students statewide—and merely 30 percent of students in the poorest districts—achieved proficiency in math and English language arts in 2005.² These results cannot help but lead us to ask why. Why has an ostensibly deep and sustained school reform effort not yielded satisfactory results? Why has it left us with persistent socio-economic and racial achievement gaps? And if success cannot happen in this state where there has been a sustained effort to implement standards-based reforms, what are the prospects for the rest of the country?

The Massachusetts 2020 Foundation believes that our state, like all others, has not achieved its goals because it has failed to recognize a fundamental error built into its education reform efforts.³ On the one hand, states have wisely established higher standards, recognizing that modern society demands that today’s students know and be able to do much more than previous generations. At the same time, policymakers have ignored a simple truth: for any individual, the amount of learning achieved is roughly equivalent to the time spent learning. In other words, if we expect children to master more skills and assimilate more content—the very definition of higher learning standards—they must have more time in which to attain these targets. In real terms, this means that the decades-old school calendar of 180 six-and-a-half hour days, a calendar that was designed originally to meet the labor needs of 19th century farmers, is simply insufficient to accommodate a more substantial curriculum. For students in

The advent of higher standards demands that modern students know and be able to do much more than previous generations, yet they are required to do so within the confines of the decades-old school calendar of 180 six-and-a-half hour days...



“With longer classes every question is answered—no stone is left unturned. There is more individual attention.”

— Student at University Park Campus School

our poorest school districts, who often face considerable barriers to learning and are exposed to fewer enriching educational opportunities outside of school, the antiquated, confining school calendar is especially inadequate.

At the practical level, how can more time in school promote greater learning?

- A longer school day provides an opportunity for longer classes, particularly in core academic subjects, which allows students more time to practice and master key skills and fully explore lessons and material.
- Additional time can offer teachers extra periods for planning and professional development, both essential for enhancing teacher quality.
- An extended schedule can enable schools to offer valuable enrichment activities such as art, drama, music, physical education, and languages, which broaden and enrich learning and engage students more deeply in school.
- The extra hours make it possible for schools to allocate time for one-on-one or small group tutoring sessions to address specific student learning needs.

Despite these clear benefits, only a handful of schools throughout Massachusetts—and the nation, for that matter—have adopted an extended-time schedule. Most of these schools stand as isolated examples of success, with limited impact on district policy and practice. Of course, it is not surprising that the number of extended-time schools is small, as the challenges associated with lengthening the school day and year are hefty. Developing such schools often requires raising additional funds, amending union contracts, reconfiguring teacher and student schedules, building broad support among teachers, parents, and local officials, and managing many logistical issues (e.g., staffing, busing, custodial, and staff coverage, etc.).

The array of challenges suggest that the schools that have persisted in extending their schedule in spite of these barriers yield important lessons for educators and policymakers regarding how schools can and do operate for more hours.

Research Rationale

Massachusetts 2020, with support from the L.G. Balfour Foundation, a Bank of America Company, set out to understand how a select group of extended-time schools in Massachusetts and other nearby states do, in fact, manage to offer a significantly longer day than most district public schools. We defined an extended-time school as one that offers all its enrolled students at least 15 percent more learning time than the conventional schedule. This study is not intended to suggest that these extended-time schools automatically produce better results. Neither is it meant to prove that extended-time schools alone offer a superior educational product. Rather, this research was conducted to understand how these particular

TABLE 1 Names and Characteristics of Profiled Schools

School Name	Location	School Type	Grades Served (Enrollment)	Total Hours Per Year (% more than district)	% Free and Reduced Lunch
Community Day Charter School	Lawrence, MA	Commonwealth Charter	K-8 (306)	1,480 (28%)	68%
KIPP Academy of Lynn	Lynn, MA	Commonwealth Charter	5-8* (75)	1,870 (60%)	87%
KIPP Academy New York	Bronx, NY	New York City Charter	5-8 (250)	1,870 (58%)	95%
Murphy School	Boston, MA	District	K-8 (951)	1,605 (45%)**	69%
Roxbury Preparatory Charter School	Boston, MA	Commonwealth Charter	6-8 (190)	1,592 (43%)	67%
Timilty Middle School	Boston, MA	District	6-8 (661)	1,281 (15%)	83%
University Park Campus School	Worcester, MA	District	7-12 (220)	1,440 (22%***)	73%
Young Achievers Science and Mathematics Pilot School	Boston, MA	Citywide District Pilot	K-8 (296)	1,446 (30%)	64%

*School opened in September 2004 and at the time of the site visit served only fifth graders. The school has plans to add one grade each year over the next three years. **The Murphy School does not technically fit our definition of an extended-time school because not all children are required to attend for a longer day, but one third of school population (307 students) participates in a school-run extended-day program. Hours shown are for students enrolled in the extended-day program. ***Hours shown are based on the school's schedule when University Park operated as an extended-time school.

schools, which have already demonstrated themselves to be effective, capitalize on the additional time and how the educators there perceive this additional time as beneficial to their overall educational mission. It is hoped that their examples are both inspirational and informational for those who seek to operate schools that break from the conventional schedule for the express purpose of enhancing teaching and learning. It is also hoped that these schools can help lead to a deeper, more systemic approach to extending learning time for the students of Massachusetts and the nation.

Methodology

Massachusetts 2020 identified eight urban schools that fit our definition of an extended-time school, that serve large populations of poor students, and that have demonstrated higher levels of academic proficiency than surrounding district schools (Table 1).

The Massachusetts 2020 research team spent 1-2 days at each school, meeting with school leaders, teachers, students, and parents, observing classes and examining key documents such as school budgets, annual reports, and test results. At these visits, Massachusetts 2020 sought to understand how these schools schedule, staff, and pay for the additional time and how the additional time impacts student learning.

What follows are some of the key findings from these visits.

Key Findings

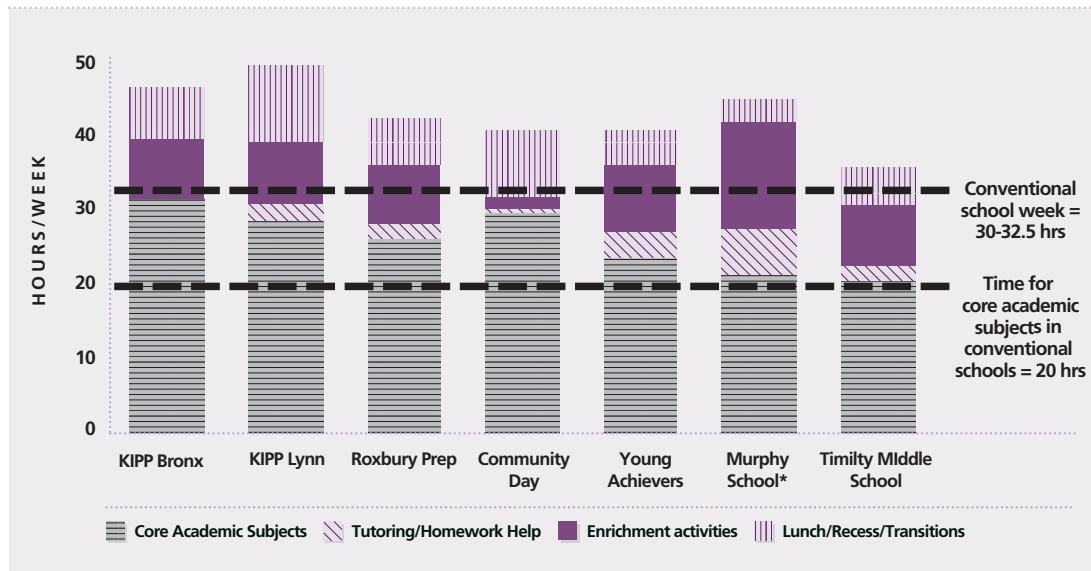
How Extended-Time Schools Make Use of Additional Time To Enhance Teaching and Learning

Students at the schools in this study spend 15 to 60 percent more time (6 to 20 more hours per week) in school than their counterparts at schools in the surrounding or feeding districts. As Figure 1 indicates, schools take advantage of the additional time by expanding four categories of school activities: instructional time, enrichment opportunities, planning and professional development, and tutoring.

“At other schools you don’t always get the extras—music, gym, and art—because you don’t have time. Here the kids get so much more than academics. They don’t get bored—because of the extra-curricular activities.”

— Parent of Student at Timilty Middle School

FIGURE 1 Use of Time at Extended-Time Schools



Notes: Totals based on sixth grade schedules at all schools except KIPP Academy Lynn, which, at the time of this study, served only fifth grade. Core academic subjects include: math, English language arts, science, social studies, and foreign languages (if they are a required part of the curriculum). Enrichment, electives, and other activities include: art, PE, music, dance, clubs, computers, advisory/homeroom, foreign languages (if they are offered as an elective), and other school-wide community-building activities. For the Murphy School the schedule of students in the extended-day program is shown. Though not shown here, most schools also offer optional after-school, Saturday, and summer programming.

The extra time in the school day enhances other vital features of effective schools, so that each individual strength is made even stronger.

The key question for these schools is how does the additional time for students in core academic and extracurricular classes and in group and one-on-one tutoring and for teachers in common and individual planning sessions make a real difference for the education children receive? Table 2 shows how four specific educational enhancements enabled by access to more time lead to some essential impacts on student learning. Not only are the need for each of these particular enhancements supported by research, there also seemed to be a near universal belief among the educators in these schools that they would not be able to meet their own personal educational goals for their students (not to mention the state's educational goals for them) without having the time built into their school day that helped to make a more complete educational experience possible.

TABLE 2 Educational Enhancements with Additional Time and Their Impact

ENHANCEMENT

1. Instructional Time

Most schools provide additional academic time through longer class periods. Classes are increased from the typical 50 minutes to up to 90 (or even 120) minutes for core academic subjects.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

The longer (and differentiated) time spans allow for greater opportunity for interaction with the material introduced in class, and for the integration of hands-on, experiential projects, such as science labs. Further, the longer class periods enable teachers to adjust their curricula to match diverse student abilities by allowing more time for small group work and individual assistance.

2. Enrichment Opportunities

Most of these schools provide more than twice the amount of time conventional schools designate for special activities such as art, music, dance, drama, foreign languages, sports and clubs. Teachers also work hard to integrate these activities within the broader curriculum so that they connect to and reinforce academic learning.

These enrichment classes, which in recent years have too often been squeezed out of school schedules, are designed to furnish students with a fuller educational experience. Through participation in a wide variety of activities, students can gain new skills, build self-confidence, and become more deeply engaged in school and learning. Teachers (and students) also admit that it is often these activities that students find to be the most personally rewarding part of the day.

3. Professional Development and Planning

Three of the profiled schools end the students' school day early on Fridays to provide teachers with 2-3 hours of specially planned professional development sessions, and content and grade-level planning meetings. Other profiled schools embed these sessions into the regular school week while students are participating in enrichment activities.

Teachers believe that their practice is honed through reflecting and planning with colleagues. Without the collegiality built through these sessions, teachers are more likely to feel isolated in their work. Additionally, the common planning time facilitates the development of a more coherent curriculum across subject areas and classes, so that different classes can become mutually reinforcing.

4. Customized tutoring sessions and homework help

Additionally, schools augment instructional time by carving time in the schedule for one-on-one or small group tutoring or scheduling a designated time for students to work on homework and receive assistance, if needed.

Individualized or small group tutoring helps ensure that all students are keeping pace with the class. At schools with shorter days, if such tutoring takes place it often means removing students from other core academic classes, leading them to lose instructional time in other subjects. Not insignificantly, teachers and students alike observe that the addition of one-on-one tutoring promotes stronger student-teacher relationships by allowing teachers and students more time to interact.

How Schools Structure Staffing

One of the most complicated challenges to extending the school day is developing a staff schedule that accommodates the added hours. The schools profiled adopt two strategies: they increase the number of hours teachers work, and they hire complementary non-teaching staff and/or form partnerships to provide supplemental programming.

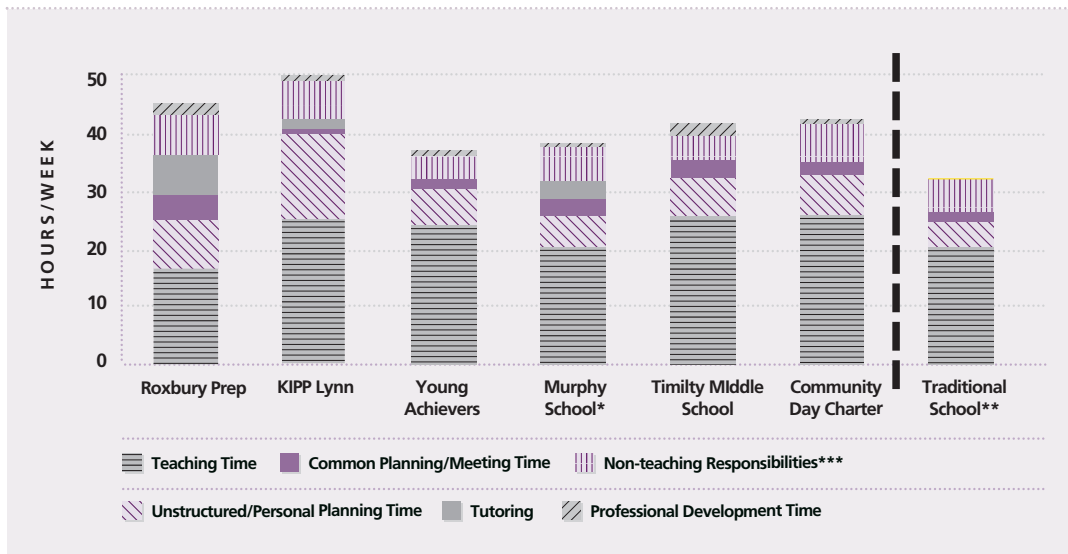
1. INCREASING TEACHER’S HOURS. Each of the schools examined increase teachers’ hours from roughly 32-35 hours per week to 40-50 hours per week.⁴ As shown in **Figure 2**, not all of this additional time is spent teaching in the classroom. Instead, teachers at profiled schools generally spend most of the extra time they work tutoring students, supervising enrichment activities, participating in professional development and group planning sessions, and planning their own classes.

Teachers are generally paid more for the extra hours they work, and schools employ a variety of methods for providing this compensation. Some schools base their teacher pay on the salary schedule of the district and add an additional percentage to compensate for the extra time. At other schools, teachers receive their regular salary based on the district salary schedule and then collect a supplementary stipend for each additional hour they work. At some charter schools, teachers do work longer hours without additional pay.

“With the extra time on Fridays to plan together teachers feel like they are part of a team here. We really work together and learn from each other, which makes us better teachers.”

— *Teacher at Young Achievers*

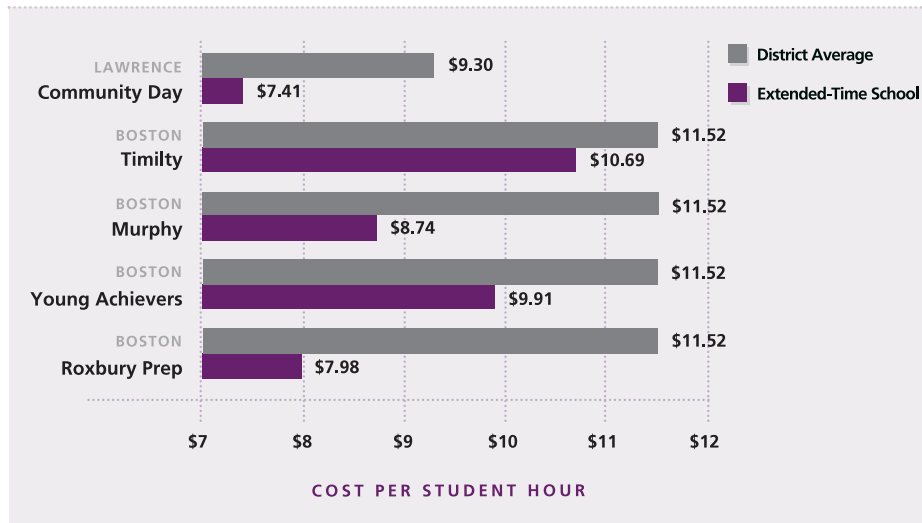
FIGURE 2 Teacher Schedules at Extended-Time Schools



*Calculated for teachers who teach in the school-run extended-day program **Based on a sampling of districts in Massachusetts
 ***Includes supervision of arrival, dismissal, lunch, recess, and enrichment activities

2. HIRING NON-TEACHERS OR FORMING PARTNERSHIPS. While all of the profiled schools extend teachers’ schedules, none of the schools depend solely on teachers to cover the additional time students spend in school. They also hire additional “non-teaching” staff or form partnerships with community organizations to supplement programming and further extend the day. These staff members or community partners primarily lead enrichment activities. In some cases, community organizations provide in-kind services or participate as part of a special grant program, thereby reducing the cost burden of these enhanced offerings to the school.

FIGURE 3 Cost per Student Hour Extended-Time Schools vs. District Schools



The Cost of Extra Time and How Schools Pay For It

There is significant variability in the cost of the extra time among the schools profiled for this report, because each has a different staffing strategy to cover the additional hours and each operates for different lengths of time. The district-operated extended-time schools profiled in this study expend \$900 to \$1,540 more per student to offer their extended-time program, which translates to roughly 7-12 percent more than conventional schedule schools in the district.⁵ These schools do cost more to operate than schools with shorter days. However, because these schools have extended the school schedule

While most extended-time schools do cost more to operate than schools with shorter days, the increase in cost is not directly proportional to the time added. There are significant cost efficiencies associated with lengthening the school day.

by 15-60 percent, the increase in cost is not directly proportional to the time added. Analyzing the budgets of the extended-time schools by dividing the per pupil expenditures by the total number of hours per year students attend school (a “cost per student hour” metric) confirms this point (Figure 3).⁶ The reason cost efficiencies in extended-time schools appear is because the primary cost driver is increased teacher salaries (in accordance with the additional hours they work) and not the whole assortment of costs arrayed to support schools (facilities, administration, books, transportation, healthcare benefits, etc.). With only one budget element rising to any significant degree, the aggregate budget does not increase proportionally with the added time.

Regardless of these cost efficiencies, all the schools must work hard to raise the additional funds required to operate as extended-time schools. Each of the profiled schools has substantial fundraising operations. Schools raise a mixture of private funds from corporations, foundations, and individuals, as well as public funds from special grant programs. In many cases, schools also leverage partnerships and in-kind support from outside organizations to provide assistance, particularly with enrichment programming.

Extended-Time Schools: Education Reform’s Next Frontier

The extended-time schools profiled for this report receive strong, enthusiastic endorsement from a vast majority of teachers, students, and parents with whom the research team spoke. Teachers appreciate how the extra time enables them both to manage their classrooms more effectively, and to confer frequently with their peers during set common planning times. Parents appreciate the additional attention and learning opportunities their children receive, as well as the greater congruence of the school day with their work hours. Even students, who would be most likely to complain about the longer days, articulate strong benefits to attending their school, such as the additional time from teachers and exposure to new activities. Figures 4 and 5 (page 9) show that these positive experiences are accompanied by positive academic outcomes.

Additional time is not a silver bullet, however. Simply extending the school day will not transform a failing school into a successful one. To excel schools need:

- strong and visionary leadership;
- excellent teaching;

- a data-driven focus on continuous improvement; and
- a positive school culture that nurtures student growth.

Based on extensive observations, it appears that the extended hours of the school day (and, in some cases, year) enhance these other vital features of effective schools so that each individual strength is made even stronger. Conversely, among schools that boast these other non-time related assets but still operate on a conventional schedule, many fall short in their efforts to promote consistently high educational performance because there is not sufficient time for these other factors to take full effect.

Beyond demonstrating the effective practices of individual schools, the analysis of these extended-time schools highlights what the National Education Commission on Time and Learning declared over a decade ago: time is the neglected element in school reform and educational design. Until schools and districts build educational settings that recognize that the human capacity to learn is governed by how much time the learner has to assimilate a given set of concepts or information, students in those schools will not be able to achieve higher standards to any significant degree. Further, schools and districts must also recognize that the obstacles to extending school beyond the conventional schedule are not as great as might be assumed. First, the costs do not rise proportionately with the amount of time increased, and second, there are ways to defray some of these costs, such as staggering schedules and forming partnerships to supplement programming.

At the same time, schools and districts cannot be expected to transform the conventional school schedule without significant support from the state. The right policy environment and sufficient resources must be in place if such schools are ever to be brought to scale and sustained beyond the life of a single grant or a particularly adept fundraiser. As Massachusetts's own Time and Learning Commission wrote a decade ago, "[I]t has become increasingly obvious that campaigns for higher standards of learning on the one hand, and for sufficient time to achieve those standards on the other, are wholly interdependent. They stand or fall together.... [O]nly more and better time will provide the teaching and learning needed to open the way for students to reach those standards."⁷

Ultimately, if universal proficiency at high standards is to remain the goal of this state (and the nation), then we have no choice but to allot more time to enable all students to learn to these standards. Massachusetts 2020 believes that it is our collective obligation to help schools and districts break from a rigid and out-dated school calendar that constrains student learning. To achieve universal proficiency, we must usher in a new era in which students' learning needs drive the development of school schedules and determine how we dispense the resource of time.

FIGURE 4 Percent of Free and Reduced Lunch Students Achieving Proficiency on 2004 MCAS *In Boston: Profiled Schools vs. District*

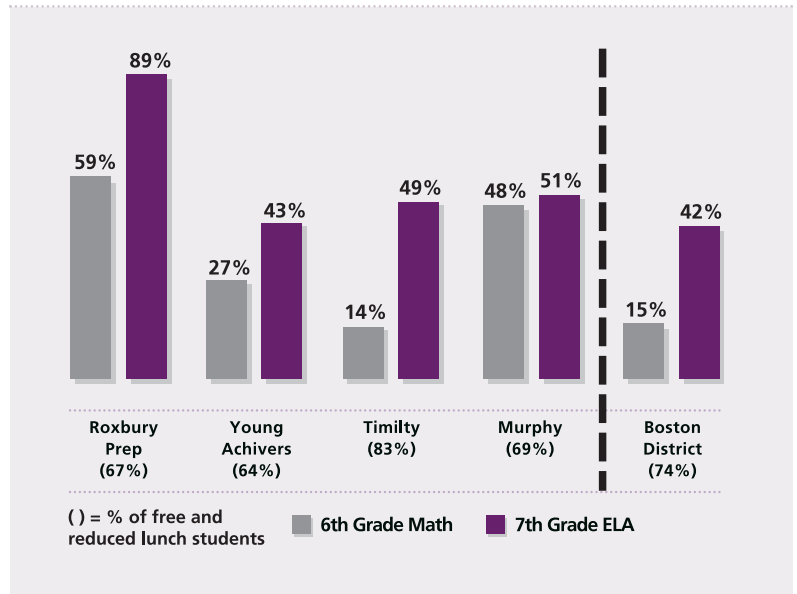
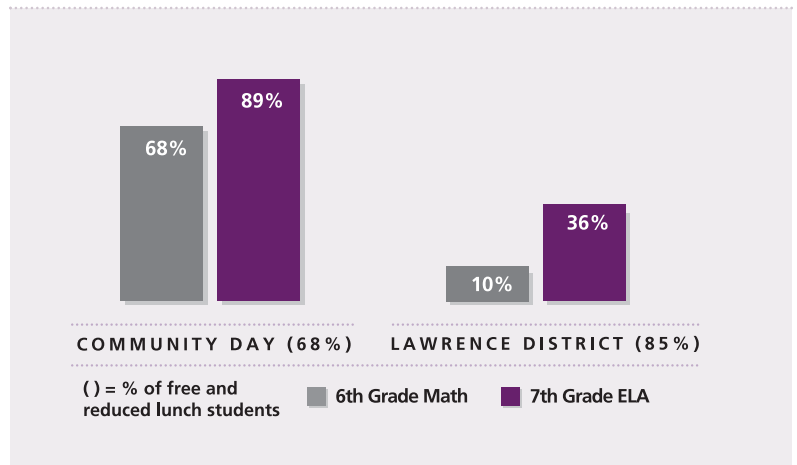


FIGURE 5 Percent of Free and Reduced Lunch Students Achieving Proficiency on 2004 MCAS *In Lawrence: Profiled School vs. District*



To achieve universal proficiency, we must usher in a new era in which students' learning needs drive the development of school schedules and determine how we dispense the resource of time.

Notes

¹ In 2001 the policy group, Achieve, Inc., a Washington, D.C.-based bipartisan education analysis group made up of governors and business leaders, rated Massachusetts's standards and its MCAS test as the best among the 10 states it has reviewed since 1996. This rating took into account both having the standards and test aligned with each other and their content and design. For an online copy of the report, <http://www.achieve.org/achieve.nsf/StatePro-Massachusetts?OpenForm>

² The socioeconomic status of districts is determined based on the Gaudet Index, a rating based on five key indicators from the 2000 Census, including the percentage of college graduates and median income. A full explanation of the analysis is available online at [www.mass2020.org/portraitofboston-youth\(final\).ppt](http://www.mass2020.org/portraitofboston-youth(final).ppt), p. 3

³ "A Nation at Risk," the 1983 report that most see as one of the sparks of standards-based education reform nationwide, certainly recognized the full implications of introducing rigorous standards. The report proposed raising educational standards and holding students accountable to them—and declared that only a longer day and year would allow students to reach the standards. Unlike the report's other proposals, however, this recommendation remains the only one that no state or district in the country has acted upon in a comprehensive way. (The five key recommendations were to: implement rigorous standards, strengthen accountability, improve teaching, strengthen leadership and financial support, and increase learning time.)

⁴ These hours refer to the length of time teachers work while school is in session, but do not incorporate time teachers work during the evening or on weekends to prepare for classes or grade papers.

⁵ The difference in cost between the extended-time charter schools profiled in this report (Roxbury Prep and Community Day) and traditional public schools in their district is more complicated to analyze. The charter schools do not break out the costs of operating for a longer school day, and their cost structures are very different from those of district schools. The per-pupil expenditures for these charter schools are roughly comparable to per-pupil expenditures at regular district schools, primarily because they offset the costs of operating for longer hours with other cost savings such as lower teacher salaries (resulting primarily from a teaching corps with fewer years of experience) and lower costs for transportation, facilities, and administrative overhead.

⁶ Three schools are not presented in this financial analysis. During FY 2004, KIPP Academy Lynn was not in operation and University Park was no longer an extended-time school. KIPP Academy New York is not analyzed because the funding structure for charter and district schools in New York is significantly different from that in Massachusetts.

⁷ The Massachusetts Commission on Time and Learning, "Unlocking the Power of Time," November 1995, pp. 4-5.



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