

Public Schools of Brookline

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June 16, 2008

Guiding Questions

- What does the PSB achievement gap look like?
- How did we create the PSB plan?
- How are we closing the achievement gap?
- How are we leading the difficult and dangerous work of changing a high achieving school system?
- What are the beliefs and values that are required for the PSB to eliminate the achievement gap?
- Five years into the Equity Project, what are the data telling us?

What does the achievement gap look like in Brookline? (2003)

- Standardized Tests
 - MCAS
 - SAT
- Classroom Grades
- Course Enrollment
- Discipline records
- Post-secondary plans

2003 Gr. 3 Reading

Race/Ethnicity	P	NI	W/F
African American/Black	50	40	10
Asian or Pacific Islander	77	13	10
Hispanic	60	35	5
White	82	14	4

2003 Gr. 4 ELA

Race/Ethnicity	A	P	NI	W/F
African American/Black	0	36	56	9
Asian or Pacific Islander	9	63	25	3
Hispanic	0	33	38	29
White	15	62	21	2

2003 Gr. 4 Math

Race/Ethnicity	A	P	NI	W/F
African American/Black	2	17	50	30
Asian or Pacific Islander	28	37	31	4
Hispanic	0	19	43	38
White	26	38	30	6

2003 Gr. 6 Math

Race/Ethnicity	A	P	NI	W/F
African American/Black	0	21	35	44
Asian or Pacific Islander	63	21	8	8
Hispanic	17	33	17	33
White	41	36	17	6

2003 Gr. 7 ELA

Race/Ethnicity	A	P	NI	W/F
African American/Black	12	44	39	5
Asian or Pacific Islander	23	62	12	3
Hispanic	9	43	39	9
White	29	59	10	2

2003 Gr. 8 Math

Race/Ethnicity	A	P	NI	W/F
African American/Black	2	29	22	47
Asian or Pacific Islander	41	35	19	6
Hispanic	10	5	55	30
White	32	36	20	12

2003 Gr. 10 ELA

Race/Ethnicity	A	P	NI	W/F
African American/Black	3	41	41	15
Asian or Pacific Islander	24	53	19	3
Hispanic	20	60	7	13
White	42	39	11	8

2003 Gr. 10 Math

Race/Ethnicity	A	P	N I	W/F
African American/Black	6	15	53	26
Asian or Pacific Islander	53	29	14	3
Hispanic	33	27	20	20
White	46	28	14	12

Special Education by Race/Ethnicity

race/ethnicity	Brookline population	SPED population	
African American	9%	17%	1.9
Asian	18%	10%	0.6
Latino	8%	13%	1.6
White	62%	56%	0.9

How did we create the PSB plan to eliminate
the achievement gap?

*Brookline's Educational Equity Project:
Taking Action, Getting Results*

2003 – 2004

Core Team

The Work of the Core Team

- Engaged in comprehensive research
- Reviewed student learning data
- Conducted 80 internal interviews
- Identified shared beliefs and assumptions
- Created an Action Plan

“Arrow”

The Equity Project

The Brookline Public Schools , pre -k to 12, is a well -respected system with a dedicated , skilled staff and diverse student population . While there are many high achieving students , there is a disproportionate number of Black and Latino /a students who are not achieving at their highest levels .

Where are we now ?

The Brookline Public Schools , pre-k to 12 , is a dynamic and effective system in which all students are achieving at increasingly higher levels . To help realize this goal , expectations are continuously examined and challenged , and a student 's race or address is no predictor of achievement . Students , parents , teachers , administrators , and the community expect , support , and facilitate the highest achievement for every student .

Where are we going ?

Equity Project

Organizing Framework

- Beliefs and Assumptions
- Criteria for Long Term Effectiveness
- “The 4 Es”
 - Engagement
 - Expectations
 - Examine Our Practice
 - Evidence of Student Learning

Assumptions Grounding the Work of *The Equity Project*

1. The achievement gap is a tremendously complex issue. It is a symptom of a larger issue of social, economic and educational equity.
2. There are numerous actions/strategies that need to operate simultaneously, synergistically to close the gap; there is no single solution.
3. It is important to frame the problem. The achievement gap is an **adaptive problem**. Eliminating the racial achievement gap will require an investigation and inquiry into our beliefs, values, practices, and expectations.

Beliefs that Guide Our Work

(Based on MSAN's Beliefs)

1. Students of all races can succeed in school.
2. Eliminating the racial achievement gap in our schools is the right thing to do.
3. Excellent schools are committed to the elimination of the racial achievement gap.
4. Schools are most effective in eliminating the racial achievement gap when they take responsibility for the ways in which their practices affect student achievement.

Beliefs that Guide Our Work

5. Racism in school harms students and affects the students' ability to succeed. Excellent schools work to eliminate intentional and unintentional racism by constantly examining curriculum, teaching practices, and administrative policies.
6. Students come to school with a variety of individual strengths and needs. Our responsibility as educators is to recognize and build upon the students' strengths while identifying and meeting the students' needs.
7. Students benefit from strong family-school connections. As educators, we need to take responsibility for fostering effective family-school relationships.

Criteria for Long-Term Effectiveness

Adapted from the work of Beth Miller, Ph.D., “Critical Hours”

- Intentionality and accountability
- High quality staff
- Consistent participation over time
- Stable, strong infrastructure
 - Leadership
 - Financing
 - Reflection, Analysis, Evaluation of Process and Product
 - Public Engagement and Community Partnership
 - Professional Development

Equity Project

2003 – 2004	Core Team
2004 – 2005	System-level Action Teams
2005 – 2006	Building-based Equity Teams
2006 – 2007	Equity Teams
2007 – 2008	Achieving Balance: Equity Teams, Equity Council, and System Actions/Coordination

How are we closing the achievement gap?

The Equity Project's "4 Es"

Engagement

Expectations

Examine Our Practice

Evidence of Student Learning

Curriculum

Program Review – Rigorous evaluation of curricula/programs by multi-stakeholder committees using research/data analysis

Phase I: STUDY

Phase II: PLAN

Phase III: IMPLEMENT

Phase IV: ANALYZE/REVIEW

Curriculum Scope and Sequence

Lack of curriculum coordination is an issue
of educational equity

Example: Simple Machines

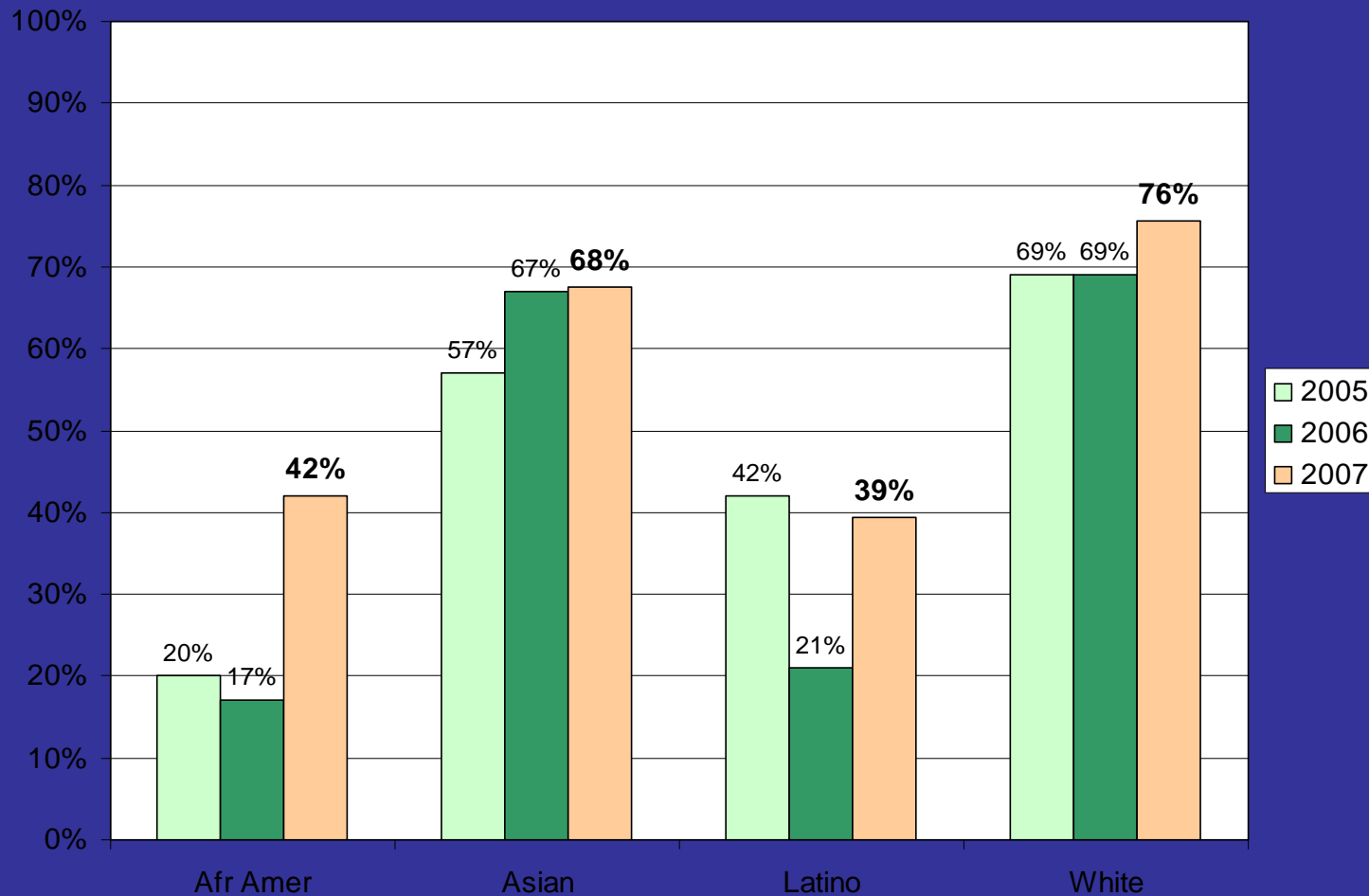
% of 4th grade students passing the Simple Machines pilot Pre- test

	Black	Asian	Latino	White
Pass Pre Test	25%	26%	0%	73%

% of 4th grade students passing the Simple Machines pilot Pre- and Post-test

	Black	Asian	Latino	White
Pass Pre Test	25%	26%	0%	73%
Pass Post Test	62%	71%	25%	80%

% of 5th grade students scoring P + A on 2005-2007 Science MCAS



Instruction

- Child Study Teams
- Tripod Student Surveys
- Teacher Qualifications

Child Study Teams

“Adaptations to teaching and learning styles and classroom climates can and should be designed and implemented before making an assumption that a student’s lack of progress can only be ameliorated by special education.”

Is Special Education the Right Service?, MA DOE, March 2001

Tripod Student Surveys

- Student Engagement Targets
- Classroom Learning Conditions

Assessment

Common formative/summative assessment:

- Focus on student learning/seek evidence
- Use information/data to inform instruction
- Multiple data points/fuller picture

I TAUGHT
STRIPE HOW
TO WHISTLE




I TAUGHT
STRIPE HOW
TO WHISTLE




I DON'T HEAR
HIM WHISTLING






I TAUGHT
STRIPE HOW
TO WHISTLE



I DON'T HEAR
HIM WHISTLING



I SAID I TAUGHT
HIM. I DIDN'T SAY
HE LEARNED IT

Challenges of a “high performing school district”

“We are just *tinkering around the edges.*”

Dr. Bill Lupini, Superintendent

Assumptions Grounding the Work of *The Equity Project*

The achievement gap is a tremendously complex issue. It is a symptom of a larger issue of social, economic and ***educational equity***.

It is important to frame the problem. The achievement gap is an ***adaptive problem***. Eliminating the racial achievement gap will require an investigation and inquiry into our beliefs, values, practices, and expectations.

Technical vs. Adaptive

“an adaptive problem requires people in the community to change their values, their behaviors or their attitudes. For this problem to be solved people are going to have to learn new ways of doing business.”

- Ronald Heifetz

Adaptive Change Requires:

- A community committed to continuous learning
- Involvement of key leaders
- A critical mass of stakeholders
- Awareness that people move through stages of change differently
- Use of multiple data points
- A balance of planning, doing and reflecting
- Time, persistence and commitment

Changing Values

New 5th Core Value: Education Equity

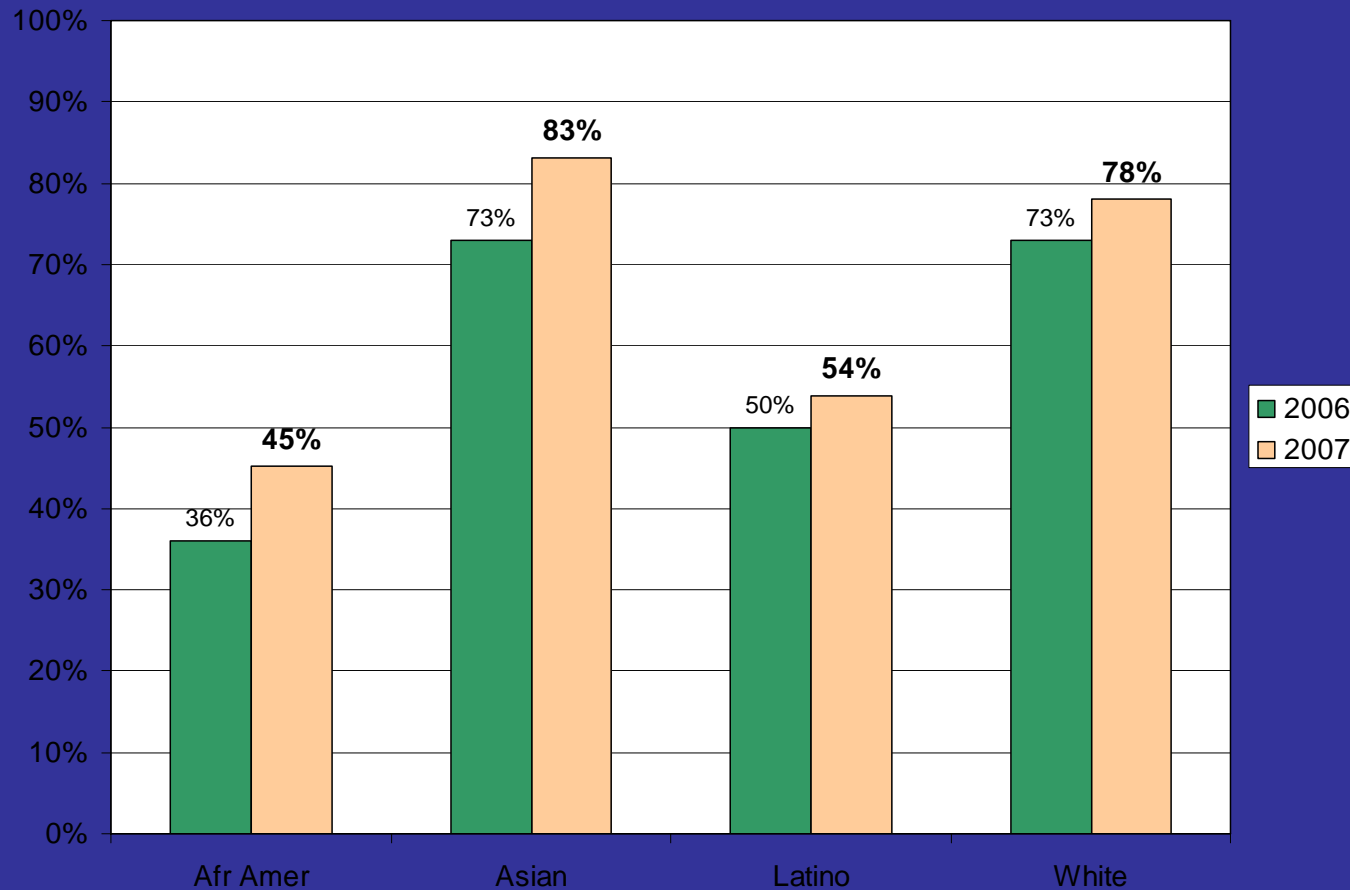
The Public Schools of Brookline strive to identify and eliminate barriers to educational achievement in our schools and in our community. To this end, we create policies and practices that are fair and just and provide educational opportunities to ensure that historically underserved or underrepresented populations can and will meet the same high standards for achievement expected of all students.

Strategic Planning

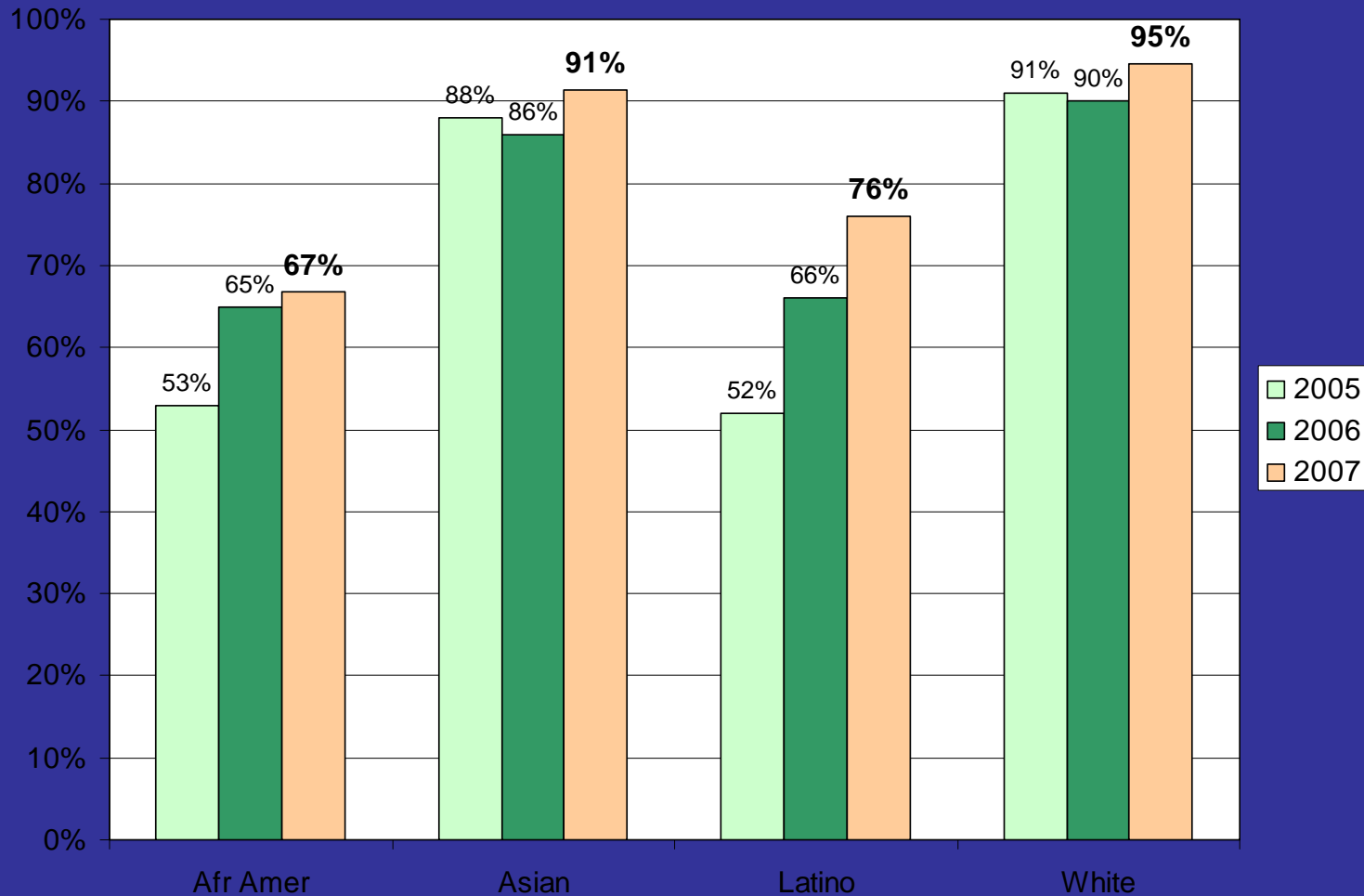
- Vision
- Mission
- Core Values
- Goals and Objectives
- Measurements

What is the evidence that we are making progress?

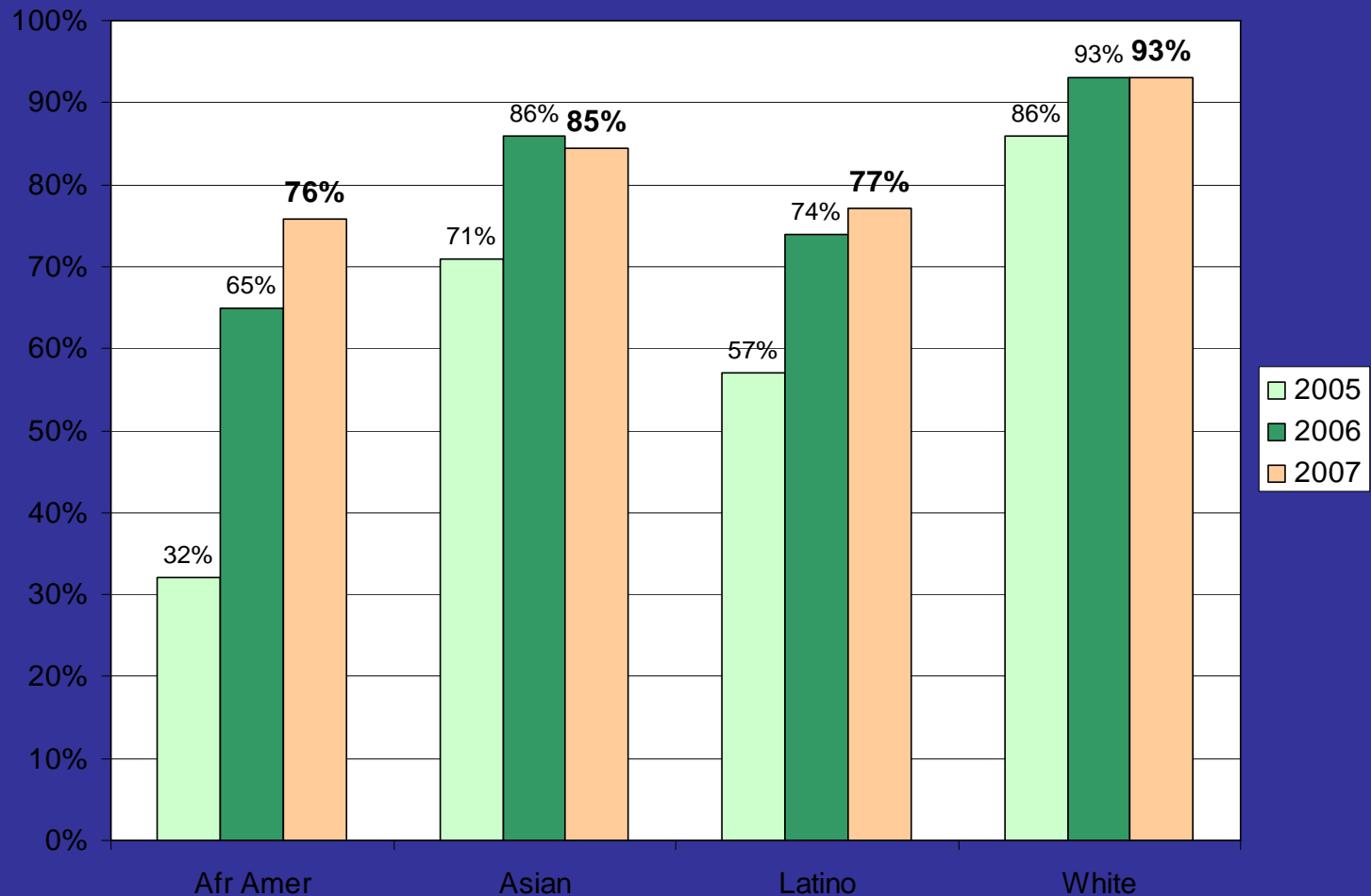
Grade 3 Math MCAS 2006-2007: Proficient + Above Proficient



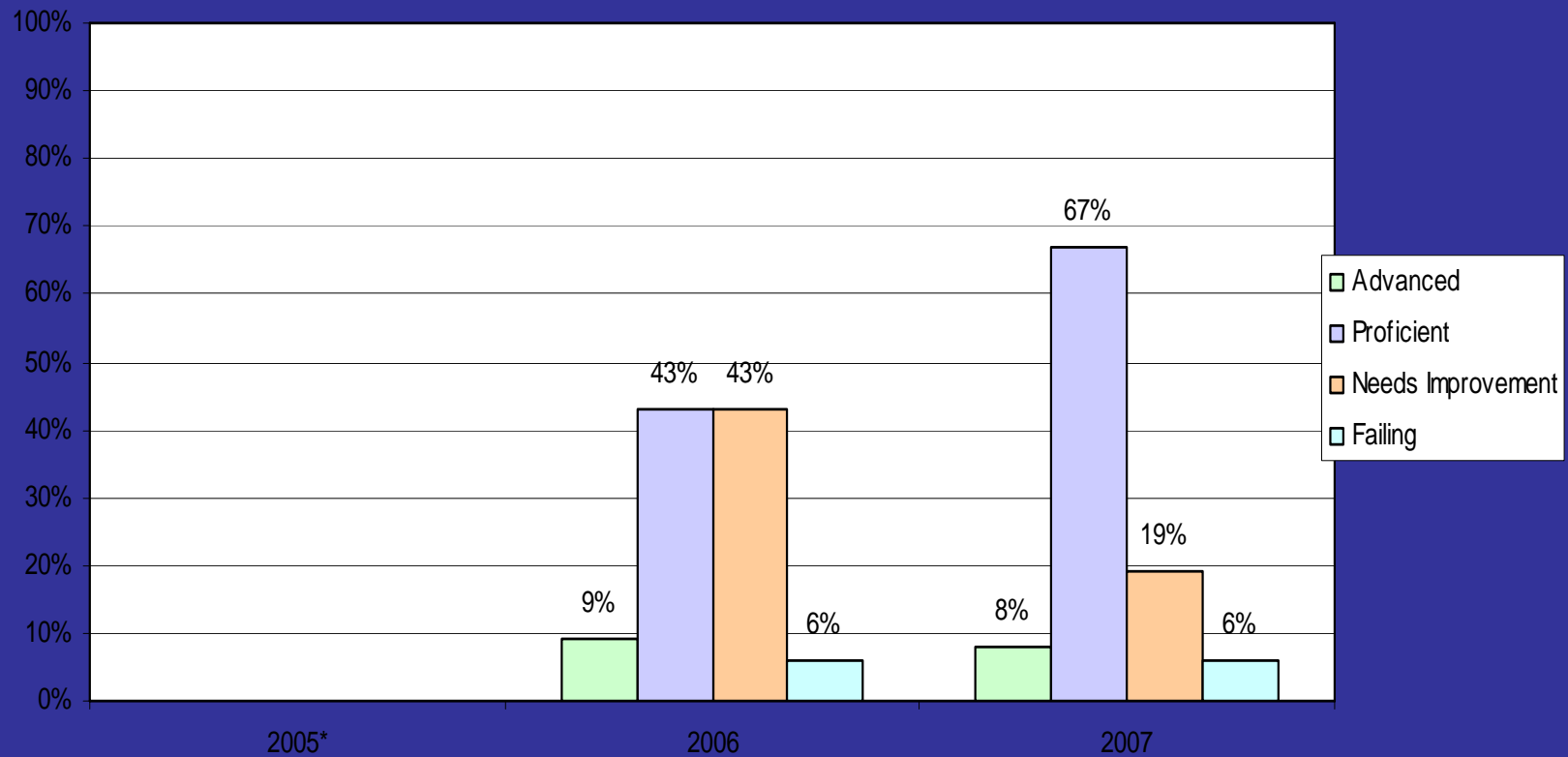
Grade 7 ELA MCAS 2005-2007: Proficient + Advanced



Grade 10 ELA MCAS 2005-2007: Proficient + Advanced

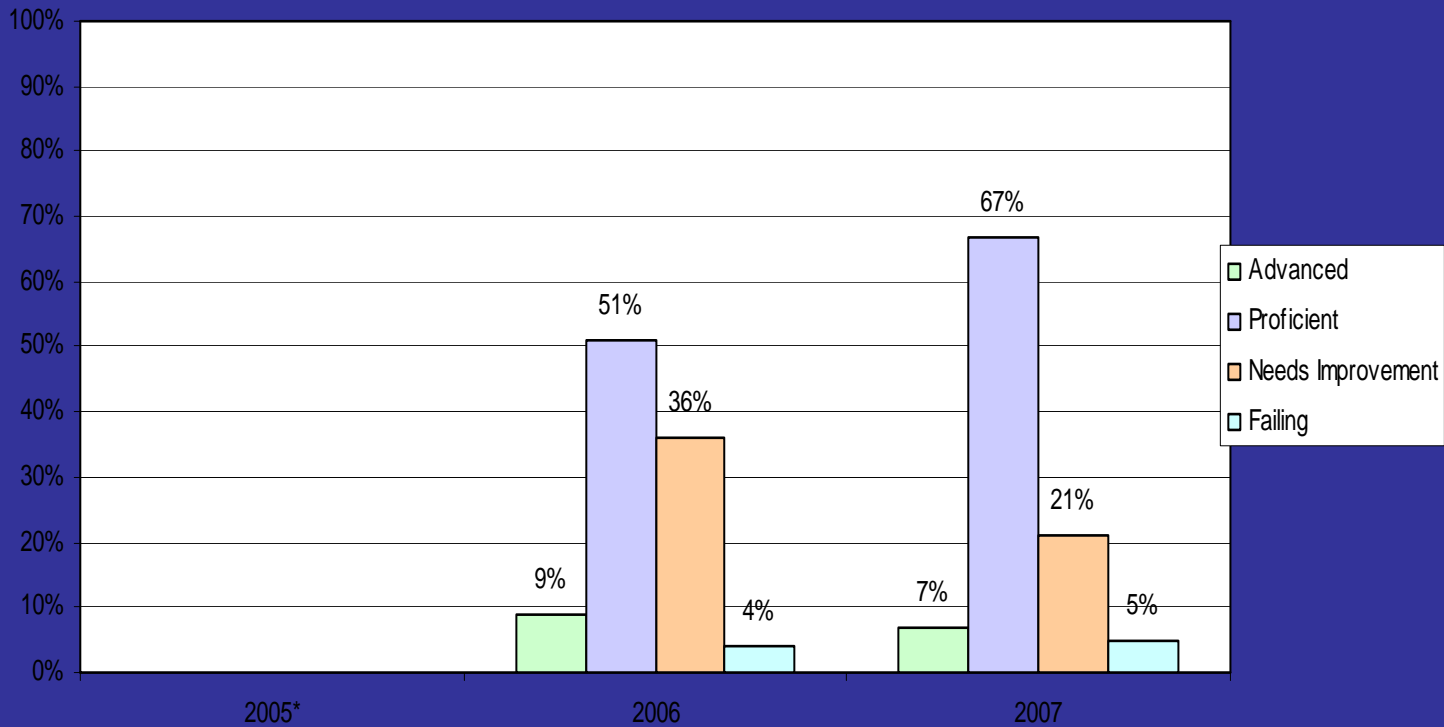


Gr. 6 ELA MCAS 2006 – 2007 African-American/Black



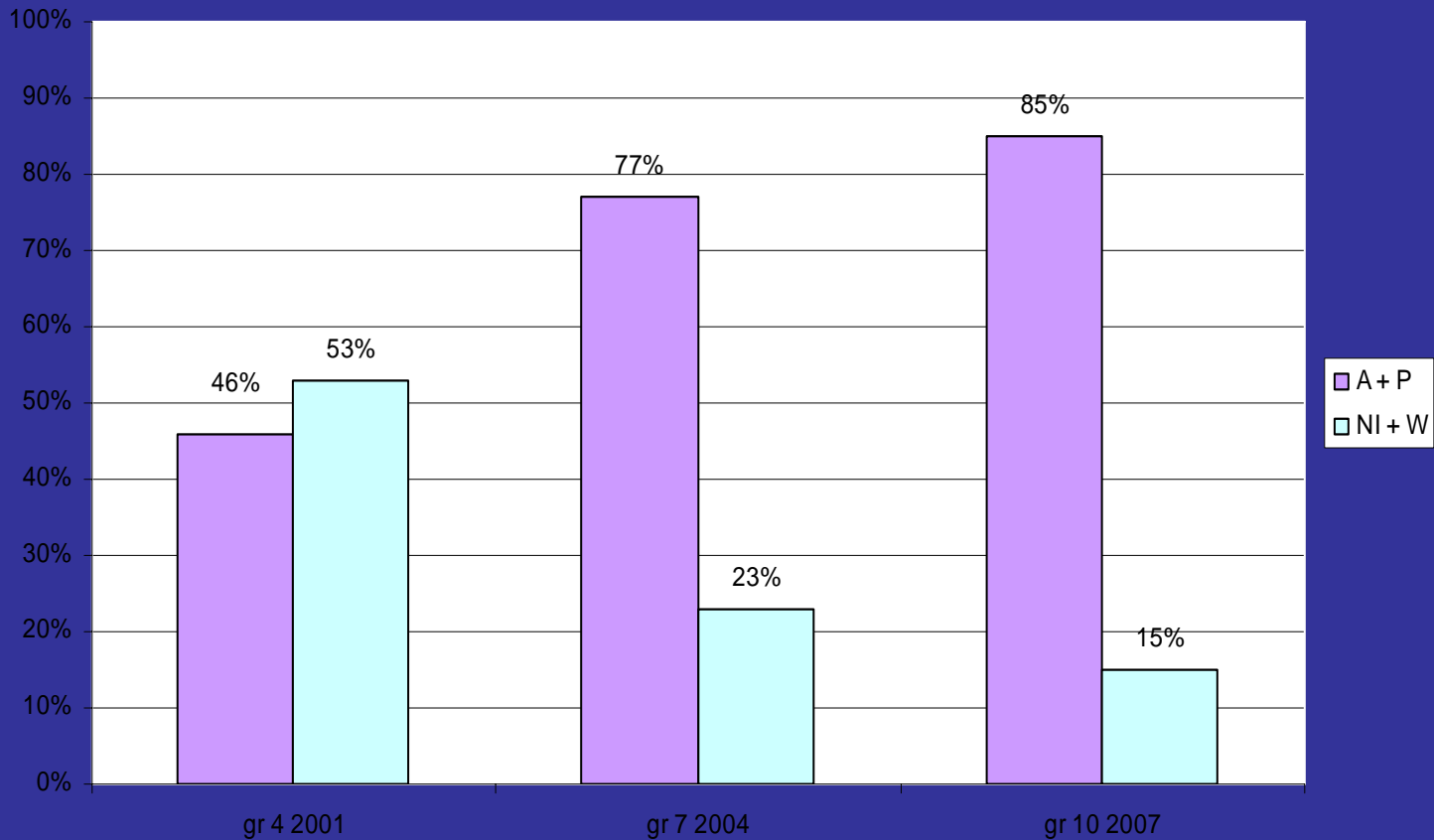
Gr. 8 ELA MCAS 2006 – 2007

African American/Black



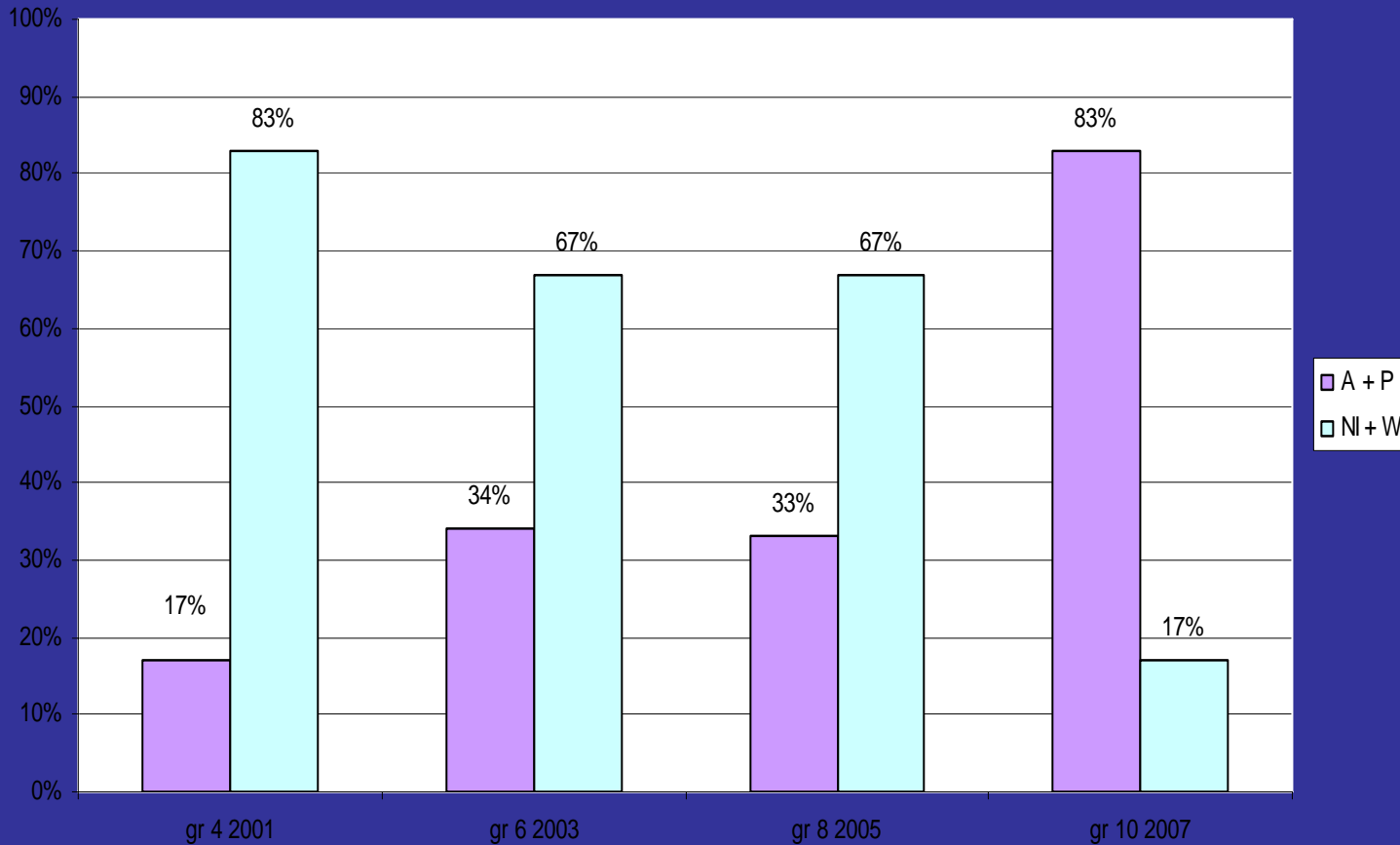
Cohort

ELA African American/Black



Cohort

Math African American/Black



Conclusions

We have not closed the achievement gap in the Public Schools of Brookline.

We are making meaningful progress.

Key Learnings

- Comprehensive planning is essential.
- Multiple stakeholder involvement is key.
- It is critical that educational equity be a system-wide goal and a communicated priority.
- This is long-term work. It is important to frame it as long-term work from the beginning.
- Be accountable. Go public with the data.
- Learning is “Taking Action.”

Key Learnings

- The structure should be dynamic; form and function need to match.
- Thinking big is essential, yet actions need to be focused.
- The actions must impact the classroom.
- Constant, clear, and open communication is essential.
- Identify and celebrate successes.

Extras

Addressing Two Common “Pushbacks”

- “What about students who are already high achievers? What about their needs?”
- “Are you hiring people based on race or on their qualifications?”

Equity newsletter apology

Quotes from letter:

“Not recognizing the stereotypes embedded in the photo is a painful and important example of our need for greater cultural awareness and sensitivity.”

“... we need feedback to broaden our perspectives and to develop our collective understanding beyond the dominant culture. We need to be certain that what we are communicating to this school system is always respectful of all.”

Equity newsletter apology

“... we need feedback to broaden our perspectives and to develop our collective understanding beyond the dominant culture. We need to be certain that what we are communicating to this school system is always respectful of all.”

Creating the Culture

Professional Learning Community:

- Shared norms and values
- Focus on student learning
- Deprivatization of practice
- Collaboration
- Reflection, inquiry, and analysis

Creating the Conditions: Structural

- Time to meet
- Physical proximity
- Interdependent teaching roles
- Communication structures
- Teacher empowerment and school autonomy

Creating the Conditions: Human/Social

- Openness to improvement
- Trust and respect
- Cognitive and skill base
- Supportive leadership
- Socialization

About Brookline

www.brookline.k12.ma.us

- Urban/suburban district next to Boston
- 8 elementary schools, 1 high school
- Considered a “high achieving school district” with a “tradition of excellence”

Enrollment

District

- Total Count 6,142

Race

- African American/Black 8.3%
- Asian 17.8%
- Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic 3.6%
- Native American 0.1%
- Native Hawaiian, Pacific Isl. 0.0%
- White 62.0%

Enrollment

Ethnicity

- Hispanic/Latino 8.1%
- Non-Hispanic/Latino 91.9%

Gender

- Male 48.9%
- Female 51.1%

Selected Populations

- Limited English Proficiency 7.2%
- Low-income 12.2%
- Special Education 18.0%
- First Language Not English 28.3%

An example of
“a new way of doing business”

Incoming Teachers' Orientation
PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE
AUGUST 29, 2007

Equity, Race and Cultural Competence: Beginning the Conversation

We will:

- Review data
- Explore a *continuum of cultural proficiency*
- Listen to the voices of Brookline students as they talk about the development of racial identity, equity and achievement
- Consider modern forms of racism, and how they impact teaching and student achievement
- Commit to one action

Reviewing the Data

What do you see?

What questions are raised for you?

At first glance, what does the data seem to say about race and achievement in Brookline?

Actions

- ✓ Talk to your principal about the work of the Equity Team.
- ✓ Work with your mentor to set a clear equity goal.
- ✓ Communicate with the families of your students. Ask parents to tell you about their children.
- ✓ Expand what you know. Question what you think you know. Read.
- ✓ Examine your pre-conceptions. Are they based on stereotypical views?

- ✓ Take an EMI course offered in Brookline.
- ✓ Learn about your own racial identity and how it can impact achievement.
- ✓ Examine your curriculum and teaching practices with colleagues.
- ✓ Set clear, consistent expectations.
- ✓ Be encouraging and demanding.

Program Review 2007-2008

Phase I: Study

- Social Studies
- Performing Arts

Phase II: Plan

- English Language Arts
- Science
- Physical Education/Health

Program Review 2007-2008

Implementation - Phase III/IV:

- Educational Technology
- Enrichment, Challenge & Support Program (ECS)
- Mathematics
- Visual Arts

Brookline's Assessment System

- Assesses what is valued
- Uses a variety of assessments
- Documents student growth/learning over time
- Common across grade/course
- Generates results that are collaboratively analyzed to inform curriculum and instruction

Brookline's Assessment System

- Provides multiple student learning data points for decisions about students
- Provides appropriate levels of accountability
- Provides evidence of what students are learning across multiple disciplines
- Provides a more complete picture of student learning in Brookline

Teachers' Reactions

- Phase 1: Confusion and overload
- Phase 2: Feeling inadequate and distrustful
- Phase 3: Challenging the test
- Phase 4: Examining the results objectively and looking for causes
- Phase 5 – Accepting data as useful information, seeking solutions, and modifying instruction

(S. Trimble, A. Gay, J. Matthews, March 2005)