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Latinos in Massachusetts Public Schools: Everett

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A large, stylized geometric pattern in shades of blue, resembling a traditional textile or rug design, occupies the top left and center of the page. It features concentric squares, circles, and zig-zag lines.

Latinos in Massachusetts Public Schools Everett

by Michael Berardino

April, 2015

THE MAURICIO GASTÓN INSTITUTE
FOR LATINO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND PUBLIC POLICY

Everett

This report provides a snapshot of current educational outcomes for Latino students in the city of Everett. It is based on publicly available data from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MADESE) that have been analyzed for the community by the Gastón Institute. Using the ethno-racial categories assigned by MADESE, the report focuses on demographic trends and the most recent educational outcomes of Latino students relative to other ethno-racial groups in the school district and to students statewide. The report has three sections:

The first section illustrates the demographic shift occurring in the Everett Public Schools. Enrollment has been shrinking among White students while the number of Latino students has almost tripled and the number of African-American/Black students has doubled, resulting in a dramatic demographic shift in the district.

The second section compares the performance of Latino students in Everett on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests with the performance of all students statewide and other ethno-racial groups in Everett. Despite persistent disparities in outcomes, Latino students in Everett have made improvements on the Grade 10 English Language Arts, Math, and Science/Technology/Engineering tests, narrowing the achievement gap with White students in the district.

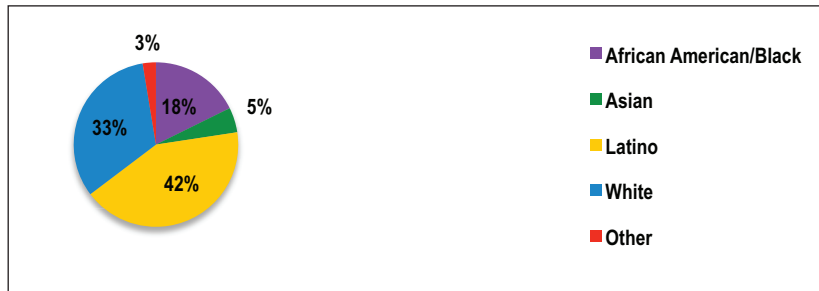
The third section shows Latino graduation, dropout, and college enrollment rates, relative to other students in the district and to all students statewide. Here too, while the data show marked discrepancies between Latino students and other ethno-racial groups in Everett, there have been improvements over the past ten years, especially in college enrollment rates.

Notes

¹ While analyzing and presenting the data using MADESE's ethno-racial categories, we use the term "Latino" rather than "Hispanic."

Demographics

Figure 1. Ethno-Racial Composition of Everett Public Schools, SY2015



Source: MADESE (n.d.). *Enrollment Data*.

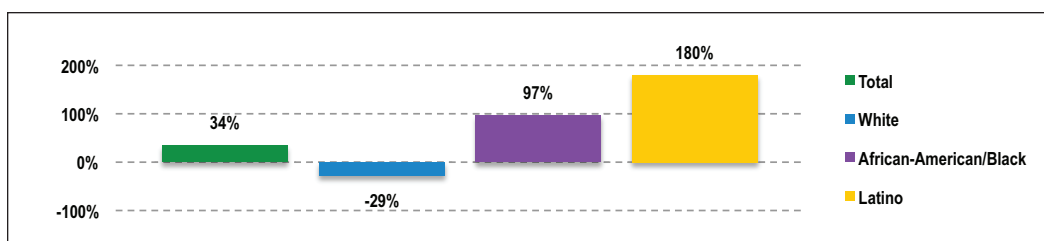
Everett is the nineteenth largest public school district in the state with 7,071 students in SY2015.² A great majority (80%) of its students are classified as low-income, the seventh highest percentage among all school districts in the state.³ More than half (55%) of students in Everett spoke a language other than English as their first language and 15% are classified as English Language Learners (ELLs), the third and seventeenth highest proportions among all districts in the state. As seen in Figure 1, Latino students are the largest student group: the 2,977 Latino students constitute 42% of the total enrollment in Everett, the tenth highest proportion in the state. White students make up 33% of the district, African-American/Black students 18%, Asian students 5%, and all other ethno-racial groups together 3%. Slightly less than one-fifth (19%) of Latino students in Everett are classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). While specific information about the ancestry of the Latino students in Everett is not available, the US Census' American Community Survey estimates that 50% of Latinos in Everett are of Salvadoran heritage, 11% of Puerto Rican heritage, 8% of Dominican heritage, 6% of Colombian heritage, 5% Peruvian, 5% Guatemalan, and 16% from various other heritages (ACS, 2014).

As seen in Figure 2 below, from SY2006 to SY2015, the overall number of students in the district increased by 34%, driven by a dramatic increase in the number of Latino and African-American/Black students in the district. The number of Latino students almost tripled (180% increase) and the number of African-American students almost doubled (97% increase), more than offsetting the 29% decrease in the number of White students.

² SY refers to the ending year of the school year. For example, SY2014 is the school year that began in September of 2013 and ended in June of 2014.

³ As compared to all non-charter school districts in Massachusetts.

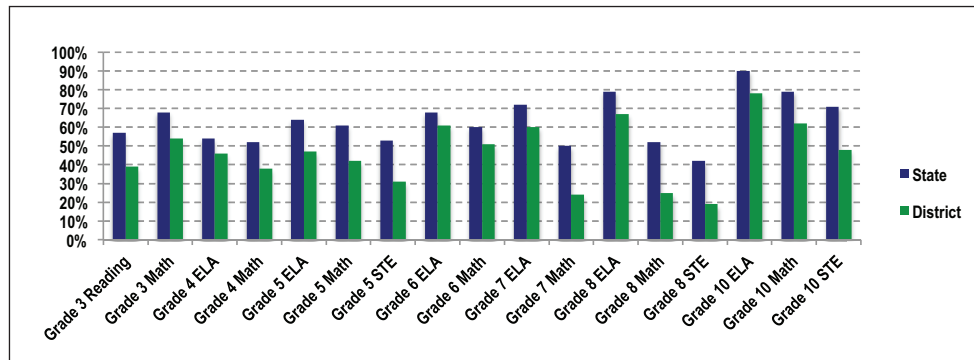
Figure 2: Change in Student Enrollment, Everett Public Schools, SY2006 to SY2015



Source: Author's calculations based on MADESE (n.d.). *Enrollment Data*.

II. MCAS Performance

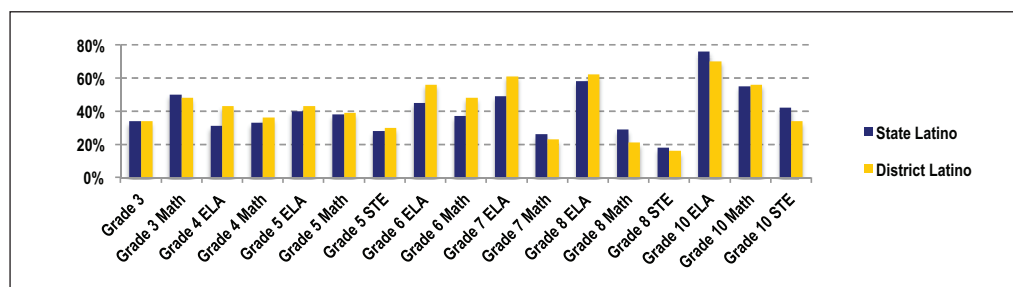
Figure 3: Percentage of All Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on MCAS Tests by Grade and Subject, SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *MCAS Tests of Spring 2014, Percent of Students at Each Achievement Level for Everett.*

As evidenced by Figure 3 above, Everett as a district performs below statewide averages on the standardized tests in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). Figure 3 shows the percentage of all students in Everett and all students statewide who scored “Proficient” or higher on the 2014 MCAS tests in English Language Arts (ELA), Math, and Science/Technology/Engineering (STE). As seen in the figure above, the proficiency rates in Everett are below the statewide rates across all grades. Figure 4 below, however, compares the proficiency rates for Latino students in Everett and for Latino students statewide, revealing that across all tests and grades, Latino students in Everett either outperform or rank slightly below the state Latino average.

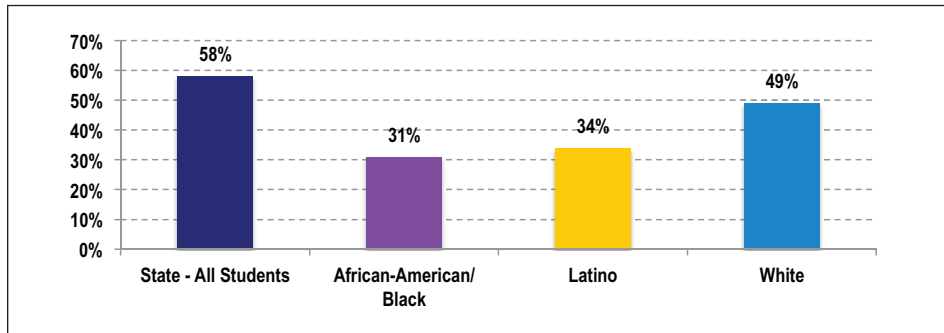
Figure 4: Percentage of All Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on MCAS Tests by Grade and Subject, SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *MCAS Tests of Spring 2014, Percent of Students at Each Achievement Level for Everett.*

The following section highlights the performance by Latino students in Everett on the Grade 3 Reading and Grade 10 ELA, Math, and STE tests, all important performance measures. Grade 3 Reading is considered an important measurement for academic preparation, because the end of third grade marks the time when students go from “learning how to read” to “learning from reading.” The Grade 10 MCAS tests are also important, as a metric of preparation for participation in post-secondary education. Furthermore, all students in Massachusetts are required to pass the Grade 10 ELA, Math, and STE MCAS tests in order to qualify for a high school diploma. Test results for Latinos in Everett are compared to the test results for White and African-American/Black students in Everett and for all students statewide.

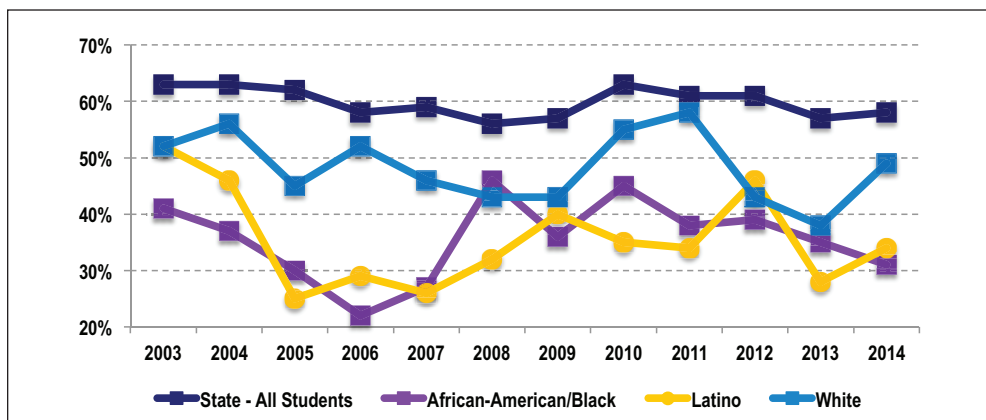
Figure 5: Percentage of Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on Grade 3 Reading MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject*.

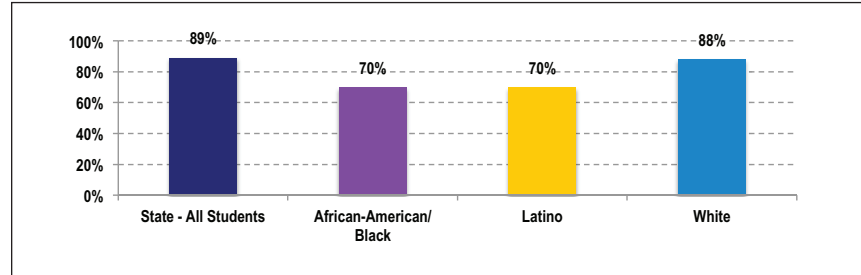
As seen in Figure 5 above, 34% of Latino students in Everett performed at “Proficient” or higher on the Grade 3 Reading MCAS in SY2014. This proficiency rate was 3 percentage points higher than the rate for African-American/Black students in Everett but 15 points below the rate for White students in Everett and 24 points below the rate for all students statewide. Figure 6 below illustrates that the proficiency rate for Latino students has fluctuated over the past twelve years, but overall has dropped markedly from a rate of 52% in SY2003 to the 34% rate for SY2014. Over this period, African-American/Black students decreased the gap with Latino students by 73%, while the White-Latino gap increased from 0 points to 15 points and the gap between Latino students in Everett and all students statewide increased by 13 points.

Figure 6: Percentage of Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on Grade 3 Reading MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2003-SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject*.

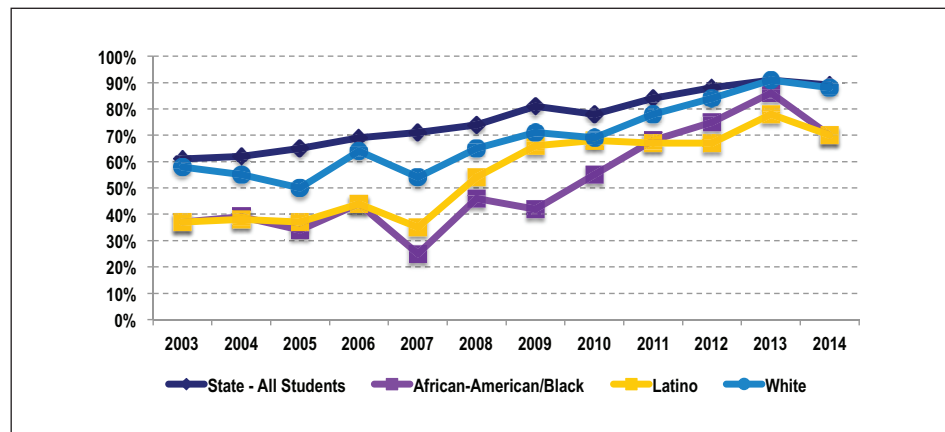
Figure 7: Percentage of Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on Grade 10 ELA MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject*

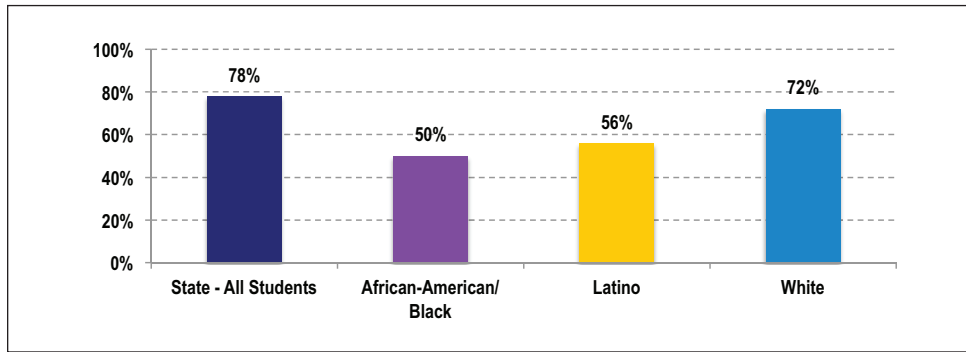
In SY2014, 70% of Latino students in Everett scored “Proficient” or higher on the Grade 10 ELA MCAS test. This pass rate was the same as the rate for African-American/Black students in Everett, but 18 points lower than the rate for White students in Everett and 19 points below the pass rate statewide. As seen in Figure 8 below, however, this 70% was a significant improvement from the rate of 37% in SY2003. Over this period, Latino and African-American/Black students made identical improvement, starting and ending with the same pass rates, while the gap between Latino and White students in Everett narrowed by 14% and the gap with all students statewide decreased by 21%.

Figure 8: Percentage of Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on Grade 10 ELA MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2003-SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject*

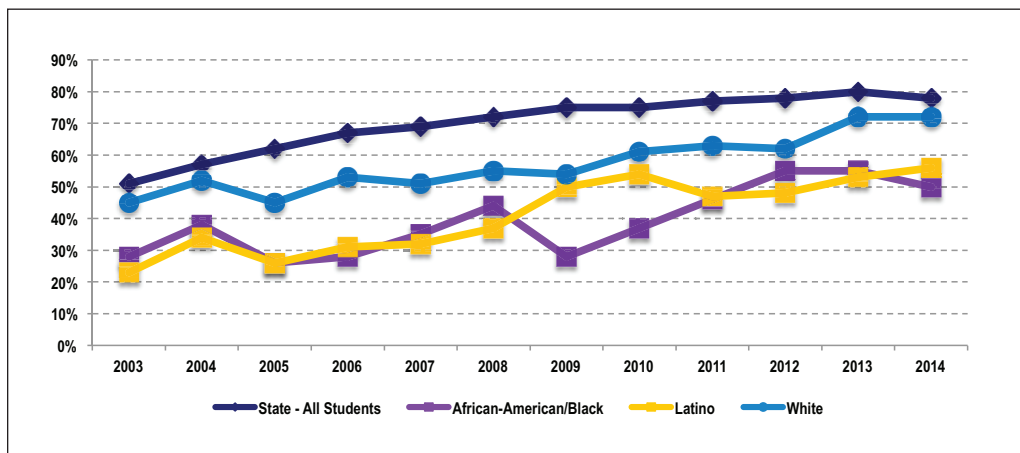
Figure 9: Percentage of Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on Grade 10 Math MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject*.

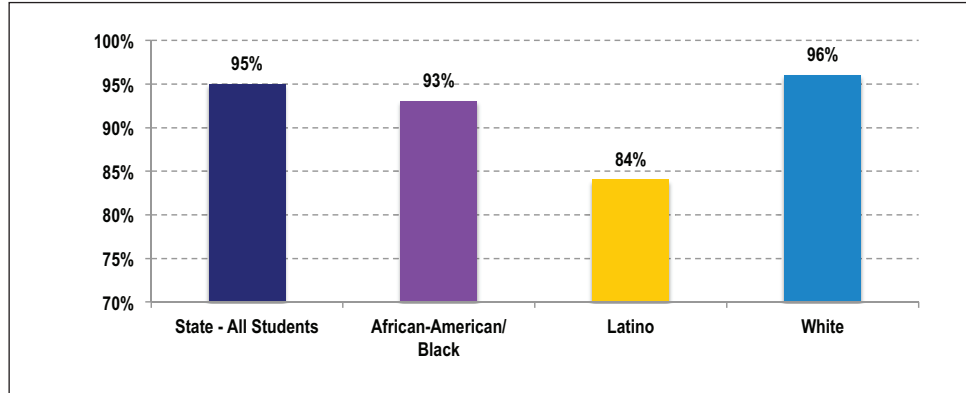
While 70% of Latino students in Everett in SY2014 passed the Grade 10 ELA test, only 56% passed the Grade 10 Math test. As seen in Figure 9 above, this pass rate was 6 points higher than the rate for African-American/Black students in Everett, but 16 percentage points below the rate for White students in Everett and 22 points below the rate for all students statewide. However, Figure 10 below demonstrates large improvements in pass rates for Latino students in Everett from 23% in SY2003 to the 56% rate for SY2014. During that period, Latino students went from a pass rate 5 points lower than the rate for African-American/Black students to a pass rate one point higher. Additionally, the gap with White students in Everett narrowed by 27%, and the gap with all students statewide narrowed by 21%.

Figure 10: Percentage of Students Scoring “Proficient” or Higher on Grade 10 Math MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2003-SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject*.

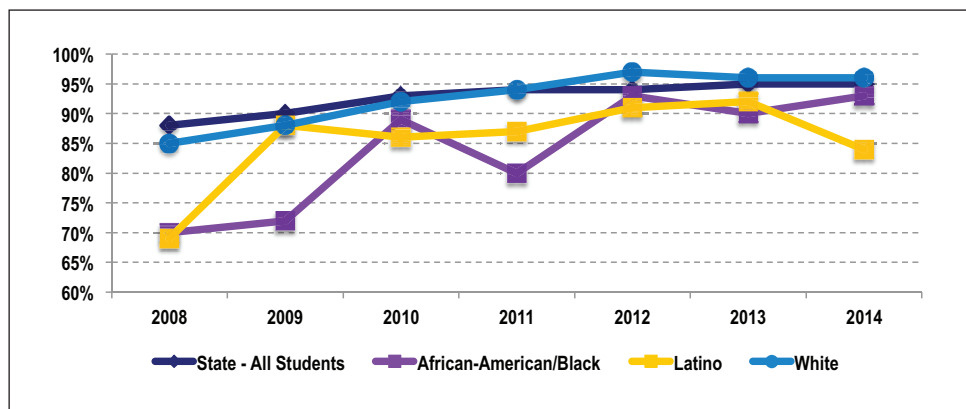
Figure 11: Percentage of Students Scoring “Needs Improvement” or Higher, Grade 10 STE MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject.*

Figure 11 illustrates that in SY2014, Latino students in Everett had a pass rate of 84% on the Grade 10 Science, Technology, and Engineering MCAS tests (for the STE tests, passing requires a score of “Needs Improvement” or higher). The Latino rate was 9 percentage points below the rate for African-American/Black students in Everett, 12 points below the rate for White students in Everett, and 11 points below the rate for all students statewide. Figure 12 below shows that despite a marked decrease in SY2014, Latino students in Everett have made substantial progress on the STE tests since their introduction in SY2008, improving by 15 percentage points in only seven years. The pass rate for African-American/Black students in Everett increased at a steeper trajectory, resulting in a larger performance gap, but the improvements by Latino students led to closing 25% of the gap with White students in Everett and 42% of the gap with all students statewide.

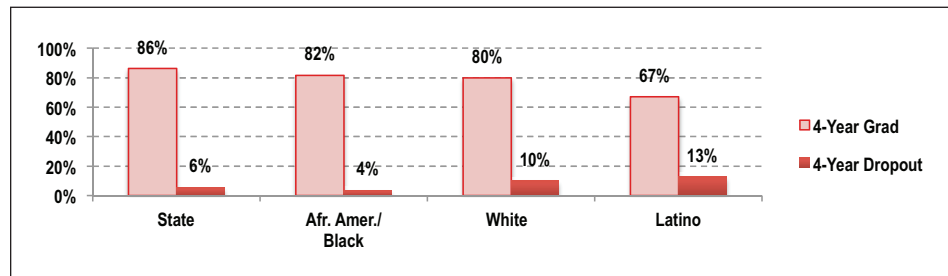
Figure 12: Percentage of Students Scoring “Needs Improvement” or Higher on Grade 10 STE MCAS by Race/Ethnicity, SY2008-SY2014



Source: MADESE (2014). *2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject.*

III. Graduation Rate, Dropout Rate, and College Enrollment Rate

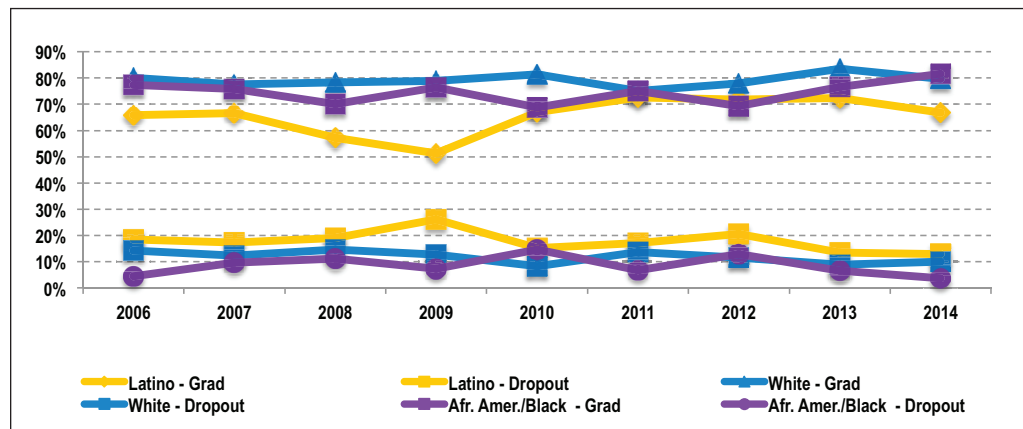
Figure 13: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate and Dropout Rate by Race/Ethnicity, SY2014



Source: MADESE (n.d.). *Cohort 2014 Graduation Rates*.

As demonstrated in Figure 13 above, Latino students in Everett had the lowest graduation rate and highest dropout rate among the all ethno-racial groups in the district. In SY2014, Latino students had a four-year cohort graduation rate of 67% and a dropout rate of 13%, as compared to 80% and 10% for White students in Everett, 82% and 4% for African-American/Black students in Everett, and 86% and 6% for all students statewide. As seen in Figure 14 below, the Latino graduation and dropout rates have fluctuated since SY2006, with the four-year graduation rate increasing slightly from 66% to 67% and the dropout rate lowering from 18% to 13%. Over this time, the gaps with White students for graduation and dropout rate remained unchanged, while the gap with African-American/Black students grew for graduation rate but decreased for dropout rate. One explanation for the low SY2014 four-year graduation rate for Latino students was the 17% of students still in school after four years. This is in part due to the low proportion of first time ninth graders who are promoted to tenth grade. In SY2014, the Latino promotion rate for first-time ninth graders at Everett High School was 84%.

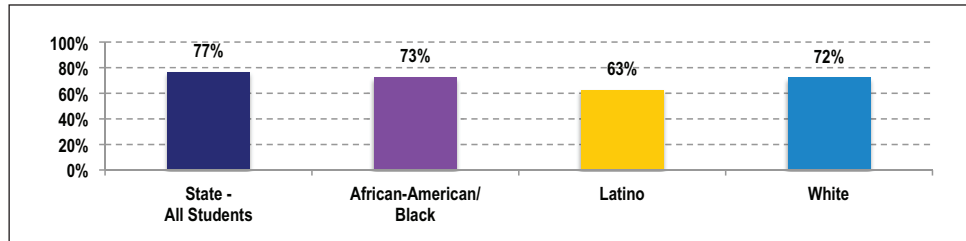
Figure 14: Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate and Dropout Rate Everett Latino Students Only, SY2006-SY2014



Source: MADESE (n.d.). *Cohort 2014 Graduation Rates*.

College Enrollment

Figure 15: Percentage of High School Graduates Attending Institutions of Higher Education within 16 Months of Completing High School, SY2013

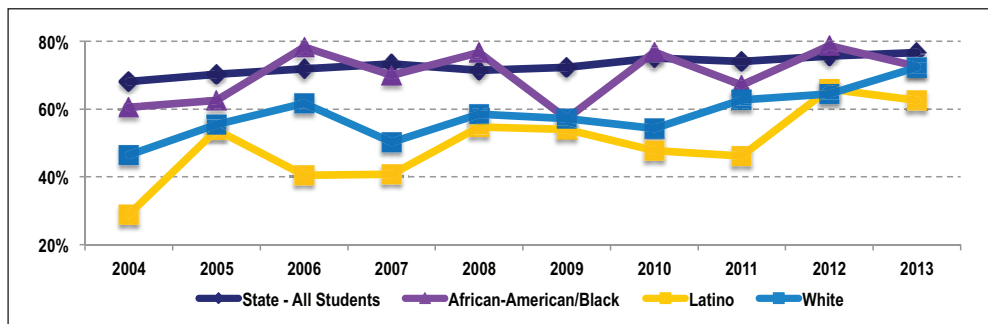


Source: MADESE (n.d.). *2012-13 Graduates Attending Institutions of Higher Education, All Colleges and Universities*.

As shown in the figure above, among Latino students in Everett who completed high school in SY2013, 63% enrolled in an institution of higher education within 16 months of completing high school. This was 10 percentage points below the rate for African-American/Black students in Everett, 9 points below the rate for White students in Everett, and 14 points behind the overall statewide rate. As seen in Figure 16 below, the 63% Latino college enrollment rate represented a drastic increase from 29% in SY2004; in those nine years, Latino students eliminated 47% of the gap with White students in Everett, 69% of the gap with African-American/Black students in Everett, and 64% of the gap with all students statewide.

Sixty percent of the Latino college attendees enrolled in a two-year college, as compared to 57% of African-American/Black students in Everett, 43% of white students in Everett, and 30% of students statewide. Community colleges offer great opportunities to students, but completion rates at two-year colleges are much lower than the completion rates at four-year colleges and universities. According to the Chronicle of Higher Education (2013), only 11% of first-time Latino students at Massachusetts two-year public colleges graduate within three years as compared to the 44% of Latino students at Massachusetts four-year public colleges who graduate within six years.

Figure 16: Percentage of High School Graduates Attending Institutions of Higher Education within 16 Months of Completing High School, SY2004-SY2013



Source: MADESE (n.d.). *2012-13 Graduates Attending Institutions of Higher Education, All Colleges and Universities*.

Sources

American Community Survey [ACS] (2014). U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey. Everett, MA.

Chronicle of Higher Education (n.d.). *College Completion – Massachusetts Public Colleges*. Retrieved from http://collegecompletion.chronicle.com/state/#state=ma§or=public_two

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The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy conducts research on and for the Latino population in New England. Our goal is to generate the information and analysis necessary to develop more inclusive public policy, and to improve Latino participation in the policy making process. As part of its effort to present vital information about Latinos to diverse audiences, the Gastón Institute has produced this series of demographic and educational profiles for selected cities and towns. Reports can be downloaded from www.gaston.umb.edu.

Latinos in Public Schools is a series of reports based on publicly available data from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (www.profiles.doe.mass.edu). The public school system in Massachusetts reflects the demographic shift in the diversity of the entire population. The total student enrollment has decreased over the past ten years, but during this period the state has witnessed a growing population of Latino students both in terms of overall enrollment and in proportion of total enrollment. Since the SY2006 school year, the number of Latino students in Massachusetts public schools has increased by 36% (from 125,436 to 171,096 students), rep-

resenting a jump from 13% to 18% in the proportion of all students). In contrast, during the same period the number of African-American/Black students has increased by 3%, while the number of White students has decreased by 14%. This growing Latino population in the state is experiencing an achievement gap as compared to White students. They face persistently lower pass rates on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), the state-required standardized tests. In addition, Latino students experience the highest dropout rate and lowest graduation rate as compared to other ethno-racial groups in the state. The growing Latino student population in many Massachusetts school districts presents these districts with a changing configuration of students and with new challenges and opportunities. We hope that this series of reports will be helpful, both to school officials and to the Latino communities of these cities and towns.

About the Author

Michael Berardino holds an M.S. in Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Boston and is currently a Research Associate at the Gastón Institute and a doctoral candidate in Public Policy at UMass Boston's McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies. His research focuses on the impacts of language instruction and high-stakes testing policies on English Language Learners, with special attention to Latino student outcomes, school discipline, and civic engagement.