

Youth Transitions Task Force Milestones

Fifth Anniversary
October 2009

- October 2004** **p** Mayor Thomas M. Menino convenes the Youth Transitions Task Force (YTTF), and charges the group with making Boston a national leader in addressing the dropout crisis and bringing struggling students and out of school youth to the center of education reform and other youth service initiatives
- November 2004** **p** The Commonwealth Corporation (CommCorp), with the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), launches Pathways to Success by 21, a statewide initiative to coordinate services for out-of-school youth and struggling students
- p** The Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services and the WIA Youth Council make out-of-school young adults, ages 18-24, a highly underserved group, a priority population
- December 2004** **\$** The Youth Transitions Funders Group awards the Boston YTTF funds to conduct research and organizing to raise the profile of the issue
- July 2005** **#** Boston Parent Organizing Network publishes the YT parent focus group report
- August 2005** **#** Commonwealth Corporation, with the UMass Emerging Leaders, the Boston Youth Service Network (BYSN) and the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) publishes the YT youth focus group report
- #** Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies (CLMS) publishes *Measuring High School Graduation and Dropout Rates in the Boston Public Schools*
- September 2005** **p** City Council holds a hearing on the dropout rate, with the Boston Public Schools' (BPS) Chris Coxon and the PIC's Neil Sullivan presenting Youth Transitions data; 100 YT partners attend
- #m** Dr. Andrew Sum of the CLMS presents the report to BPS Headmasters
- m** The YTTF becomes Boston's *P21* committee in the statewide Pathways to Success by 21 initiative
- June 2005** **m** Boston YT team attends national Youth Transitions conferences and drafts early recommendations
- October 2005** **#** The Emerging Leaders of UMass Boston present the youth focus group results to Mayor Menino
- #** The CLMS publishes *Young High School Dropouts in Boston*
- # !** The Boston Globe publishes *High school dropout rate reaches highest in 14 years*
- p** Commissioner David Driscoll declares the dropout issue a priority in response to record state rate

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p = policy

m = mobilization

Δ = practice innovation

= data, research

! = media

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- December 2005** # BYSN publishes an initial analysis of the students served in community-based alternative education, career education and youth development programs
- m p Boston After School and Beyond launch the Teen Initiative to support, strengthen and expand OST services for teens
- May 2006** #! The YTTF publishes *Too Big To Be Seen*, with a distribution of over 4,000 copies and presentations to over 2,000; the publication summarizes the CLMS research, focus groups, and interviews with stakeholders and the YTTF's recommendations
- June 2006** \$ The Mayor's Office of Jobs and Community Services and Youth Opportunity Boston (YO) secure local and state funds to sustain education and employment services for adjudicated youth after YO's federal start-up grant ends
- July 2006** Δ The PIC hires Marvin Moore and Emmanuel Allen to pilot outreach to dropouts, in partnership with the BPS, bringing 81 students back to school the first summer
- September 2006** m Councilor Chuck Turner, the Freedom House, Oiste and the Young Cape Verdean Club form the Multicultural Dropout Outreach Collaborative, a community-based advocacy effort to lower the dropout rate
- m p Δ The MBTA's StopWatch Initiative begins Truancy Watches in which law-enforcement partners, the BPS and community members begin supportive conversations with students found on the MBTA during school hours
- October 2006** m Youth Council Chair Michael O'Neill leads a presentation of *Too Big* findings to the Boston Education Funders, marking private local foundations' growing interest in the dropout issue
- January 2007** # CLMS publishes *Assessment of the Labor Market, Income, Health, Social, Civic and Fiscal Consequences of Dropping Out of High School*; these studies gain enormous traction for the dropout issue
- p Senator Edward Augustus files S.290, *An Act Relating to Dropout Prevention and Recovery*, in response to Youth Transitions research and recommendations
- m The Rennie Center presents a forum on the dropout crisis, featuring the CLMS, the ESE and the PIC, with 200 attending
- March 2007** # CLMS publishes *State and Local Fiscal Consequences of High School Dropout Problems in Massachusetts*
- p ESE and CommCorp organize a statewide conference on the dropout crisis for 700 stakeholders at the Worcester Centrum, with Governor Deval Patrick and CLMS' Dr. Andrew Sum opening the event
- ! The Globe publishes *Dropping back in*, an editorial endorsing outreach to dropouts

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- April 2007** **ρ** **\$** The Boston Foundation launches the Youth Policy Initiative, to support youth-focused networks' policy work
- April 2007** **m** Dr. Sum presents the social and fiscal consequence findings to 200 headmasters and principals at the English High School
- April 2007** **ρ** Jobs for the Future (JFF) works with Senator Bingaman to introduce the federal Graduation Promise Act, to authorize \$3 billion to lower the dropout rate
- April 2007** **m** Boston Beyond launches grants through the Teen Initiative to support CBO networks to increase Boston's capacity to serve at-risk teens
- April 2007** **ρ** A State House hearing on S.290 and other dropout bills draws a crowd of 300, With 4 hours of testimony
- June 2007** **#** Achieve, JFF, BPS and Johns Hopkins University publish *Falling off the Path to Graduation: Middle Grades Indicators in Boston, the first Boston early indicators study*
- June 2007** **ρ** The YTTF presents recommendations for the BPS to Superintendent Michael Contompasis
- July 2007** **Δ** ABCD, BYSN members and the BPS pilot on-line credit recovery for alternative education students, with 28 out of 30 seniors graduating
- July 2007** **Δ** The BPS Office of Student Support adds social service staff to the Project Reconnect dropout outreach team through the Safe Schools Healthy Students initiative, allowing the team to increase the number of students reconnecting with school by more than double (208)
- September 2007** **#** The BPS, the Parthenon Group and Jobs for the Future publish *Strategic Planning for Off-track Youth*, the ground breaking segmentation study of students likely to drop out
- September 2007** **#** The Boston Plan for Excellence pilots the Composite Learning Index a research-based early warning system, with several BPS high schools
- September 2007** **ρ** Dr. Carol R. Johnson, the new BPS Superintendent, embraces the dropout issue as a priority and launches a series of community forums on the issue
- October 2007** **#** The Center for Collaborative Education publishes *School Quality Reviews*, a report on alternative education that raises the questions of how to support and measure quality for programs that serve off-track students
- October 2007** **ρ** The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) publishes the first cohort graduation rates, calculated using the National Governors' Association's methodology, for the state and districts
- November 2007** **ρ** The YTTF and MDOC join TBF's Youth Policy Initiative and four other networks, to coordinate the dropout policy work with other youth advocacy initiatives

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△ MDOC, in partnership with the PIC, develops a mentoring program for a group of re-enrolled dropouts recovered through Project Reconnect

January 2008

ρ Superintendent Johnson announces her *Graduation for All* priority in the *Acceleration Agenda* for the BPS

ρ Mayor Menino launches *Back on Track*, engaging city departments like the Office of Human Services, Boston Centers for Youth and Families and the Boston Public Health Commission to work with the BPS in support of dropout prevention and recovery

March 2008

ρ The ESE recommends using 4- and 5- year graduation rates for federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measures (crediting schools that stick with students a 5th year)

! △ CommCorp releases *Think Again*, the ten-minute video on dropping out for youth that becomes a key tool in the PIC's dropout outreach effort

April 2008

#m The Rennie Center, the YTTF, the ESE and JFF sponsor an early indicators forum, featuring researchers from Johns Hopkins University, the Parthenon Group, The Consortium on Chicago School Research and the Boston Plan for Excellence, with 200 attending

May 2008

m The Rennie Center, the YTTF, the ESE and JFF sponsor a cross-sector partnership forum for 200, with practitioners and researchers from New York, Boston and Plymouth speaking

ρ# The BPS Office of Information and Instructional Technology implements an Early Warning data system, providing headmasters with early indicators of dropout risk for freshmen and sophomores

July 2008

△ The BPS offers summer online credit recovery for off-track seniors, partnering with four CBOs to provide case management for students, with over 100 graduating

△ The PIC's dropout outreach team works with a BPS guidance counselor to bring back 204 students over the summer

August 2008

ρ Governor Patrick signs the *Dropout Prevention and Recovery Act*, including the items from Senator Augustus' S.290, codifying the NGA graduation rate methodology and convening the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission to develop recommendations for the Commonwealth

September 2008 ρ △ The BPS begins implementing the *Pathways for Excellence* chapter of the *Acceleration agenda*, featuring dropout prevention and recovery programming

#△ The BPE takes the early indicators work to the next level with the *Acceleration Improvement through Inquiry*, in which BPE coaches support BPS high schools to use early indicator data and a continuous improvement process

△ BPS, Stopwatch and YT partners visit Pittsfield's transition center for truancy intervention and dropout prevention, looking for ideas as they begin planning for the Re-Engagement Center

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- October 2008** **m p** The ESE launches the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Work Group, comprising 17 urban district leaders, to address early indicators of dropping out
- m p Δ \$** The Hyams Foundations hosts a symposium to launches Teen Futures, a grant program to support programs serving dropouts and other out-of-school youth after community input highlighted a need for these programs
- m Δ** The Rennie Center, the YTTF, the ESE and JFF sponsor a community partnership forum for 200, featuring practitioners from Cambridge, Boston, Lowell and Taunton
- November 2008** **Δ** The BPS expands credit recovery program during the school year, with over 150 graduating
- February 2009** **!** WGBH and WBUR launch *Project Dropout*, a two-month series, featuring many YT partners, 16 radio shows, 6 television shows, student blog diaries and a culminating simulcast for radio, television and live web
- m Δ** The Rennie Center, the YTTF and the ESE sponsor a promising practices forum, featuring Rennie Center research and practitioners from Boston, Plymouth and Pittsfield
- m** The Massachusetts Coalition of School-Based Health Centers organizes a forum to frame the dropout crisis as a public health issue, drawing an audience of 200 and bringing health care practitioners to the issue
- April 2009** **p m** The Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission holds three hearings in Boston, Shrewsbury and Springfield, with over 300 total attending
- p m** The Rennie Center, the YTTF and the ESE sponsor a forum on raising the mandatory attendance age, featuring legislators, community advocates and WBUR's Monica Brady-Myerov
- m** WGBH and WBUR simulcast the final show in *Project Dropout*, featuring WGBH's Emily Rooney and Maria Hinojosa, WBUR's David Boeri, Secretary Reville, Gaston Institute's Miren Uriarte, Neil Sullivan, students and a studio audience of 200
- Δ** The BPS opens Newcomer Academy for late entrant immigrant high-schoolers, a group identified by the Parthenon report as at high risk to drop out
- August 2009** **Δ** The BPS opens its Re-engagement Center, in partnership with the PIC, to facilitate the reconnection of dropouts and truants with pathways to graduation
- September 2009** **p** The federal Department of Education accepts Massachusetts' bid to use four and five year graduation rates to determine Adequate Yearly Progress
- September 2009** **p** A senate panel reintroduces the federal Graduation Promise Act, which would authorize \$3 billion to combat the dropout crisis
- October 2009** **p m** The Commonwealth's Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission releases its report and recommendations at a Rennie-YT-ESE forum

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