

Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services

Frederick A. Laskey, Commissioner Joseph J. Chessey, Jr., Deputy Commissioner



Harvard Public Schools Review

Executive Order 393

Education Management Accountability Board Report
August 2000

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Dieter H. Wahl, Director, Education Audit Bureau

Project Team

Chesley R. Taylor, Jr., Auditor-In Charge

Amy Januskiewicz, Auditor

Michael Karagosian, Auditor

Anthony Rassias, Auditor

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I. Introduction

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act (MERA) of 1993 has three major goals: to increase student achievement; to achieve adequate funding for all local and regional school districts over a seven-year period; and to bring equity to local taxation efforts based on a community's ability to pay. In February 1997, the Governor issued Executive Order 393 to evaluate the education reform program that was nearing the end of its fourth year. In FY99, Massachusetts General Laws (M.G.L.) Ch. 70 state aid for education reached \$2.6 billion. With an investment of this magnitude in the Commonwealth's schools, it is critical to "review, investigate and report on the expenditures of funds by school districts, including regional school districts, consistent with the goals of improving student achievement." To that end, Executive Order 393 established the Education Management Accountability Board (EMAB).

The Secretary of Administration and Finance, serving as chief of staff to the EMAB, selected a team of auditors from the Department of Revenue's (DOR) Division of Local Services (DLS) to conduct the school district reviews. DOR's Director of Accounts is the chief investigator with authority to examine municipal and school department accounts and transactions pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 44, §§45 and 46A. The reviews are conducted in consultation with the State Auditor and the Commissioner of Education (COE).

The Harvard Public Schools (HPS) is the 25th school district reviewed under Executive Order 393. The audit team began the review of HPS in March 2000, and completed it in April 2000. As part of this review, the audit team conducted a confidential survey of employees of the school district and included the results in this report. School officials cooperated fully with the audit team.

The Executive Summary includes some of the more significant observations and findings of the review of HPS' operations. When possible, the audit team has identified and presented best practices, which may be adopted by other school districts. The report discusses all results, best practices, deficiencies and recommendations in greater detail in the "General Conditions and

II. Executive Summary

HPS has made limited progress in achieving some key education reform goals but has succeeded in achieving very good to excellent test scores including the state's highest MCAS scores in 1998 and 1999. Demographic characteristics place the town into the top quartile of the state's 200 largest communities. A significant turnover in teaching staff due in part to retirements and to not rehiring non professional status teachers combined with a practice of hiring experienced teachers into a small school system appear to have created a solid teaching staff. The curriculum is geared to teaching the basics with a strong emphasis on writing, reading, analysis and self-assessment. Community support is clearly present as evidenced by several Proposition 2½ override votes to fund school projects.

The current Superintendent is the third since the beginning of education reform in 1993. The district adopted a Superintendent/principal model combining both functions in one position in school year 1997 and hired the high school principal to fill the position. The Superintendent has high expectations for his staff and appears very firm in some areas he considers non-negotiable. For the 99/00 school year he instituted an eight person, K-12 working team that makes all school

decisions including departmental budgets. He has added department leaders and is in the process of appointing curriculum coordinators. Due to the small central office and school based management staff the Superintendent, the elementary school principal, the assistant to the high school principal and the finance director all have more than one role in the working team model.

Test scores have been very good to excellent. Harvard has been the state's top MCAS school district performer for the past two years with the highest combined score for all grades and subject areas. However, the district has no formal MCAS remediation plan for 10th graders who have failed certain subject areas and 14 percent did fail the 1999 mathematics test. SAT scores are significantly above the state average. There was a significant increase in levels 3 and 4, the high achievement levels, when comparing 1996 eighth grade MEAP scores to 1992 fourth grade MEAP scores, the same class of students. MEAP reading scores show a significant improvement from 1992 to 1996, an increase of 80 points. The district Iowa test results show that at least 89 percent of HPS students were in the proficient or advanced performance categories for FY99.

In FY99, HPS had a student population of 1,169 students and had \$9.3 million in total district expenditures. Since FY94, HPS has exceeded total foundation budget in each year, but no key area spending target was met in any year except for books and equipment in FY99. The district has exceeded net school spending in each year except for FY96 when it underspent the requirement by \$16,176. Supported by several Proposition 2½ override votes, HPS' actual local contribution to net school spending increased by \$1.4 million between FY94 and FY99, about \$1.1 million more than the increase in the state's contribution. From FY94 to FY99, per pupil spending for day programs increased by only 5.2 percent as enrollment increased by 14.6 percent, or one-and-one-half times the state average. During this time, HPS per pupil spending for day programs fell from 121 percent of the state average to 97 percent.

However, less progress has been made in four areas. School improvement plans do not address certain components as required by law. The district's professional development plan is not revised and updated annually. In addition it does not include professional development offerings linked to school improvement plans. Although teacher evaluations are deemed a best practice, there is no evidence of formal written evaluations for the Superintendent/principal's administration. HPS does not properly support forms submitted to DOE with documentation.

OVERVIEW [Section 1]

- Harvard's 1999 population was 5,337, down 57 percent from 1990 attributable to the closing of the U.S. Army base at Fort Devens in 1995 which was located in part on Harvard land. Affordable-housing units are reportedly planned for the site and Harvard selectmen are preparing for a possible significant increase in municipal and educational service expenditures.
- Town voters have supported school-related Proposition 2½ overrides and/or exclusions in six of the last 10 fiscal years. Successful non-school related votes have also been held during this time.
- According to DOE, based on FY99 foundation enrollment data, HPS is the 12th smallest K - 12 district in the state.
- To raise additional revenue for the school budget, HPS adopted school choice in the 1992/93 school year.

ENROLLMENT [Section 2]

- HPS headcount increased from 864 in FY92 to 1,175 in FY99, or 36.0 percent. This increase was almost three times the state average increase of 13.6 percent during this time.
- HPS foundation enrollment as calculated by DOE increased 24.2 percent from FY93 to FY99 categorizing it as above average in growth. The town of Harvard is located in the area noted by DOE as having a concentration of above average and high foundation enrollment growth.
- In verifying the accuracy of enrollment numbers, the audit team noted that the district failed to include certain students in DOE report forms that resulted in an estimated cumulative state aid loss of \$35,250 since FY95.
- The district does not maintain sufficient detailed documentation to support enrollment data on DOE Individual School and Foundation Enrollment report forms.

SCHOOL BUDGET PROCESS [Section 3]

- Concurrent with the school committee's budget review process, three major town committees meet in joint session, sometimes twice weekly, from the beginning of the calendar year to annual town meeting in March to review the entire town budget proposal.

TOTAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EXPENDITURES [Section 4]

- Total school district expenditures for FY99 are \$9.3 million, or 17.7 percent higher than in FY93.
- HPS per pupil spending, as a percentage of the state average, has been generally declining since FY94. In FY99, out of 328 districts reported by DOE, HPS' per pupil spending for total day programs was 179th statewide.
- In verifying expenditure reporting accuracy, the audit team noted certain reporting errors detailed in the section.

COMPLIANCE WITH SPENDING REQUIREMENTS [Section 5]

- HPS exceeded the foundation budget from FY94 to FY99. Budgeted FY00 net school spending is 125 percent of the FY00 foundation budget.
- Expenditures did not reach foundation budget for any of the key areas in any of the fiscal years except for books and equipment in FY99.
- HPS exceeded the net school-spending requirement in every fiscal year from FY94 to FY99, except for FY96. The FY96 underspent amount was carried forward and added to the FY97 requirement, which HPS met.
- HPS is concerned that new federal census data will affect future state aid to the town. Because Harvard's population used in state aid distribution formulas will adjust due to the closing of Fort Devens, the population reduction by over 50 percent is expected to negatively affect state aid.

STAFFING – FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) TRENDS [Section 6]

- The audit team was unable to verify data on School System Summary Reports for any fiscal year as HPS fails to maintain supporting information.
- The audit team noted that the School System Summary Report contained several errors in FY94 and FY98.

TEACHER COMPENSATION [Section 7]

- Between FY93 and FY99, expenditures for salaries rose \$800,000 or 20.9 percent. Total teaching salaries rose \$500,000 or 19.8 percent.
- The district FY98 average teacher salary reported to DOE of \$43,790 was \$261 or 0.6 percent lower than the state average of \$44,051. The district average does not include school choice revenues.
- Union contract annual increases plus step increases for teachers have increased by 47.9 percent from 1993 to 1999.

SPECIAL EDUCATION [Section 8]

- In FY99, special education students represent 11.0 percent of the total school enrollment.
- In FY99, special education expenditures account for approximately \$1.4 million.

TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICE EXPENDITURES [Section 9]

- The school committee's policy manual indicates that administrative personnel are required to take a physical count of all books and equipment items at least once a year and that the inventory be kept on file in the Superintendent's office. This inventory practice does not occur.

ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING [Section 10]

- The audit team was satisfied that the expenditure reports were generally an accurate representation of HPS expenditures. The audit team was satisfied that adequate safeguards exist for proper internal controls.

REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES [Section 11]

- FY97 and FY98 Harvard town audits by the town's CPA firm indicated violations of Chapter 30B in their findings. In its review of FY00 invoices, the audit team noted one bidding document that may be in violation of Chapter 30B.
- The audit team noted that the school committee has not been approving bills or payrolls before or after checks are issued. DLS has ruled that even after the passage of education reform, the school committee remains the head of the school department for approving bills and payrolls under M.G.L. Ch. 41 §§41 and 56.

MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL PRACTICES [Section 12]

- In school year 1997/98 the district instituted a Superintendent/principal model and appointed the high school principal as the first interim. This position became permanent in school year 1998/99 and he is in his third year at that position. Two areas of expressed concerns are that there is a lack of balance between the elementary school and the high school where the Superintendent is also principal and that the model is difficult to apply.
- Because the model is personality dependent, the school committee should give consideration to possible alternative organizational structures in the event of a change in the current leadership.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT [Section 13]

- The district's most recent professional development plan reviewed was dated 1996. The plan does not include professional development offerings linked to the building based needs.
- HPS did not meet minimum spending requirements for FY98 and FY99.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS [Section 14]

- School improvement plans vary widely in scope, content, quality and structure. Plans for FY00 do address more of the components as required by M.G.L. Ch. 71 §59C but do not address professional development for staff and an allocation of funds.

STUDENT LEARNING TIME [Section 15]

- HPS met DOE's time requirements at the high school and the elementary school for school year 1997/98 with a schedule of 1002 hours at the high school and 904.5 hours at the elementary level.

COURSE LOAD AND CLASS SIZE [Section 16]

- HPS indicated that all core subject teachers are certified in the subject area they are teaching.

TECHNOLOGY [Section 17]

- DOE approved HPS' six-year technology plan in February of 1997. The plan projected to spend a total of \$809,507 by the end of year six (01/02). The district could not provide expenditure detail for FY97. In FY98 and FY99, a total of \$532,106 was expended.
- Currently there are 255 computers in the district. As of FY99, HPS has 5.8 students per computer, lower than the state average of 6.3. Also, 29 percent of classroom computers are on the internet, lower than the state average of 65.9 percent.

MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT [Section 18]

- The audit team made site visits to the elementary school and to the old and new high schools. The elementary school was found to be clean, the high school was found to be clean but with issues and the old high school was not meeting "an obligation to provide students with a hazard-free educational environment."
- In May of 2000, the town's board of health ordered HPS to complete 8 corrective actions related to chemical storage in the high school in 30 days or incur additional board action which could include closure of the science wing. The town's fire chief was equally concerned due to critical reports by the board of health and by the state Department of Public Health.
- The town has approved a \$12.3 million renovation plan for the high school, which will provide an additional 45,000 square feet of space to include a middle school wing. Currently, only \$700,000 has been approved for architects' and septic design fees. A debt exclusion for these fees was approved by voters during the course of the audit. The town qualifies for 61 percent reimbursement from the School Building Assistance Bureau.

HIGH SCHOOL ACCREDITATION [Section 19]

- The high school is accredited. In 1996, the high school was placed on probation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEAS&C) and was removed from probation in 1997.

TEST SCORES [Section 20]

- Harvard has been the state's top MCAS school district performer for FY98 and FY99 based on total combined-scaled scores. However, there is no formal MCAS remediation plan.
- SAT scores are significantly above the state average.
- The district Iowa test results show that at least 89 percent were in the proficient or advanced performance categories.
- MEAP reading scores show a significant improvement from 1992 to 1996, an increase of 80 points.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT [Section 21]

- HPS curriculum is not completely aligned to the state curriculum frameworks. During interviews, administrators stated that HPS has a strong, basic core curriculum that doesn't adapt totally to the state frameworks. The curriculum stresses writing, reading, analysis, and self-assessment.

GRADE THREE TRANSIENCY [Section 22]

- Harvard has a somewhat stable student population in the lower grades as measured by the 1999 3rd grade Iowa reading test in comparison to 14 communities of similar population to Harvard. HPS's transiency percentage of 18.1 is below the state average of 20.4 percent. HPS has a stable population percent of 81.9 percent, above the state average of 79.6 percent.

DROPOUT AND TRUANCY [Section 23]

- HPS does not have a formal dropout program. The dropout rate for FY97 was 0 percent, significantly lower than the state average of 3.4 percent. HPS officials stated that they believe that the low dropout rate is due to a good educational environment within the district's schools.

SURVEY RESULTS

- Approximately 169 questionnaires were delivered to school staff and 68 responses were received and tabulated, a response rate of 40 percent.

BEST PRACTICES

- Teachers with professional status are formally evaluated every other year (Cycle I). In the year in which they are not formally evaluated they choose one or more alternate year professional growth activities (Cycle II). A performance based seniority list is utilized. If a teacher has been evaluated as "Less than Satisfactory" for a second, or probationary year, the teacher is notified by May 1 of placement on this seniority list. This lack of improvement moves the teacher to the bottom of the list and allows a teacher with less time in the discipline to move up the seniority list.

- The Harvard schools trust, a non-profit, educational and charitable organization, raises funds to supplement the curriculum and activities of both town schools. Trust literature indicates that since 1989, the trust has provided about \$185,000 in grants to “supplemental curriculum support, equipment, extra-curricular experiences, and staff development.” The trust “also strives to broaden and insure community awareness, involvement and confidence in our students and our schools.” The trust is independent of town and school boards and teacher organizations.

Audit Recommendations

- 1 The district should implement procedures to ensure that instructions for the Individual School Report and the Foundation Enrollment form are adhered to annually. The district may contact DOE if additional clarification is needed regarding the inclusion of pre-K special education students on the foundation enrollment form. [page 14]
- 2 The district should implement procedures to ensure that detailed supporting documentation on the completion of the Individual School Report and the Foundation Enrollment forms submitted to DOE is maintained. [page 15]
- 3 The district should implement procedures to verify that amounts shown on the end-of-year reports properly reflect town expenditure reports and that instructions for this report are adhered to. [page 19]
- 4 HPS should file a report with the Commissioner of Education’s office as required by law stating its reasons for not meeting the foundation budget target levels in any of the key areas. [page 21]
- 5 The district should implement procedures to ensure that detailed supporting documentation on the completion of the School System Summary Reports reported to DOE is maintained. [page 25]
- 6 The district should implement procedures to ensure that instructions for the School System Summary Reports are adhered to annually. [page 25]
- 7 The school department should design and implement practices to inventory books and equipment as per the school committee’s written policy. [page 30]
- 8 The town’s CPA firm should review the bidding document, which the team determined may be in violation of Chapter 30B. [page 31]
- 9 HPS, the town of Harvard and its CPA firm should review the process of approving bills and payrolls pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 41 §§41 and 56. [page 32]
- 10 The district should implement procedures to address DOE requirements in preparing professional development plans. [page 35]
- 11 Sufficient funds should be budgeted and spent on professional development to meet DOE minimum spending requirements. [page 36]
- 12 The district should develop procedures to guide school councils in developing school improvement plans in accordance with M.G.L. Ch. 71 §59C. [page 37]

Auditee's Response

The audit team held an exit conference with the Superintendent and his administrative staff on June 30, 2000. The team invited HPS to suggest specific technical corrections and make a formal written response. Some oral comments were incorporated in the draft.

Review Scope

In preparation for the school district reviews, the audit team held meetings with officials from DOE, the State Auditor's Office and other statewide organizations and read published reports on educational and financial issues.

The audit team met with the private audit firm that conducts financial audits of the municipality. DOE provided data including the end-of-year reports, foundation budgets and statewide comparative data. The DOR's Division of Local Services (DLS) Municipal Data Bank provided demographic information, community profiles and overall state aid data. While on site, the audit team interviewed officials including, but not limited to the superintendent/high school principal, assistant to the superintendent, assistant to the high school principal, elementary school principal/student services director, school committee chairperson, department leaders, director of community education, finance director/business manager and the business coordinator. Documents reviewed included vendor and personnel contracts, invoices, payroll data, and statistics on students and teachers as well as test results and reports submitted to DOE.

In keeping with the goals set out by the EMAB, the school district review was designed to determine whether or not basic financial goals related to education reform have been met. The audit team gathered data related to performance such as test scores, student to teacher ratios and class sizes to show results and operational trends. However, this report does not intend to present a definitive opinion regarding the quality of education in HPS, or its successes or failures in meeting particular education reform goals. Rather, it is intended to present a relevant summary of data to the EMAB for evaluation and comparison purposes.

The focus of this review was on operational issues. It did not encompass all of the tests that are normally part of a year-end financial audit such as: review of internal controls; cash reconciliation of accounts; testing compliance with purchasing and expenditure laws and regulations; and generally accepted accounting principles. The audit team tested financial transactions on a limited basis only. The audit team also excluded federal grants, state grants except for Equal Education Opportunity (EEO) and Per Pupil Education Aid, revolving accounts and student activity accounts. The audit team did not test statistical data relating to enrollment, test scores and other measures of achievement. This report is intended for the information and use of EMAB and HPS. However, this report is a matter of public record and its distribution is not limited.

III. General Conditions and Findings

1. Overview

The town of Harvard is classified as a growth community. Its 1999 population was 5,337, down 57 percent from 1990 and down 56 percent from 1980. This population reduction is attributable to the closing of the U.S. Army base at Fort Devens in 1995 which was located in part on Harvard land. The town is located approximately 31 miles northwest of Boston and approximately 22 miles northeast of Worcester. It is governed by an open town meeting and is administered by a five-member board of selectmen with a town administrator. Carlson Orchards, Harvard's largest private employer, employs 50 people. The taxable value of the town's largest taxpayer, Harvard Green Development, was valued in FY99 at \$3.4 million or 0.6 percent of the town's total taxable value.

In 1997, HPS consolidated the positions of superintendent and high school principal. The current superintendent has served in this capacity since its inception and has served as high school principal since 1994. Section 12 of this audit will discuss this superintendency model and the turnover in administrative personnel in more detail. The town and HPS consolidated the positions of town finance director and school business manager. The finance director, who has served in this position since 1998, reports to both the town administrator and to the Superintendent.

The district has one high school (grades 7 - 12), an old high school, and one elementary school (grades K - 6) within close proximity of each other. The old high school, built in the 1870's, houses two foreign language labs, the art classroom and a photography lab to alleviate overcrowding at the high school. According to DOE, based on FY99 foundation enrollment data, HPS is the 12th smallest K to 12 district in the state. Harvard is a member of the Montachusett regional vocational technical school district (grades 9 - 12).

Charts 1-1 and 1-2 show some key economic and demographic statistics for Harvard and HPS.

Chart 1-1

Town of Harvard Economic Data

1999 Population	5,337	FY99 Tax Levy	\$7,887,040
1989 Per Capita Income	\$17,937	FY99 Levy Limit	\$7,923,658
FY99 Residential Tax Rate	\$13.29	FY99 Levy Ceiling	\$14,836,420
FY99 Average Single Family Tax	\$4,104	FY99 State Aid	\$3,657,329
FY99 Avg. Assessed Value	-	FY99 State Aid as a	-
Per Single Family	\$308.833	Percent of Revenue	28.3%
1996 Average Unemployment Rate	1.7%	7/1/98 Free Cash	\$224,992

Note: Data provided by DLS

Chart 1-2

**Harvard Public Schools
Demographic Data 1998/99**

	HPS	State		HPS	State
1999			1998		
Race / Ethnicity:			% Attending Private School	6.4%	10.0%
White	94.8%	77.1%	High School Drop-Out Rate	0.3%	3.4%
Minority	5.2%	22.9%	Attendance Rate	95.0%	93.9%
Limited English Proficiency	0.0%	4.7%	Plan of Graduates:		
Special Education	11.0%	16.6%	4 Year College	82.8%	53.2%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Priced Lunch	0.5%	25.8%	2 Year College	5.7%	18.6%
			Work	6.9%	16.2%

Note: Data provided by DOE. Special Education data as of October 1998.

Like many Massachusetts school districts, Harvard faced budgetary pressures in the early 1990's as a result of an economic recession, the associated decline in municipal state aid for education and in financial contributions to schools. Since FY92, town voters have supported school-related Proposition 2½ overrides and/or exclusions in six of the last 10 fiscal years. Successful non-school related votes have also been held during this time. *Chart 1-3* illustrates this history.

Chart 1-3

**Town of Harvard
Override/Exclusion Vote History**

Fiscal Year	Overrides Approved	Overrides Disapproved	Capital Exclusions Approved	Capital Exclusions Disapproved	Debt Exclusions Approved
1990		\$81,100			
1991		\$221,000			
1992	* \$173,200	\$51,800			
1993	* \$436,445				
1994					
1995			\$237,000		
1996				\$186,000	
1997			\$187,000		
1998			* \$227,200		
1999	* \$230,000		\$265,000		\$885,000
2000					* \$1,120,000
2001	* \$372,750				* \$3,372,300

Note: Data from town Official Statement and Harvard Post - * indicates school related vote included

To raise additional revenue for the school budget, HPS adopted school choice in the 1992/93 school year. Space availability has decreased the number of school choice openings from a school year 1994/95 high of 168 to a school year 1999/2000 low of 112. New school choice openings are currently frozen except those for siblings of existing choice students who are given priority if an opening is declared in a grade. No such opening was declared in school year 1999/00. Section 3 of this audit provides more information on school choice.

The closing of Fort Devens did not directly affect the town of Harvard or HPS, although part of the Fort was located on Harvard land. School-aged children living on Harvard land were considered Ayer students by contract with the town of Ayer. In the redevelopment of this site, according to Harvard's 1999 annual report, 242 affordable-housing units are planned and Harvard selectmen are preparing the town for what may be a significant increase in municipal and educational service expenditures.

2. Enrollment

Several measures may be used to report actual student enrollment. This audit uses actual and projected student headcount and also foundation enrollment, both as of October 1. Projected enrollment is reviewed by the audit team to determine reasonableness in methodology and use in school construction or in academic decision making. HPS' projected student enrollments are calculated by a Harvard citizen on a voluntary basis.

Headcount: Actual and Projected

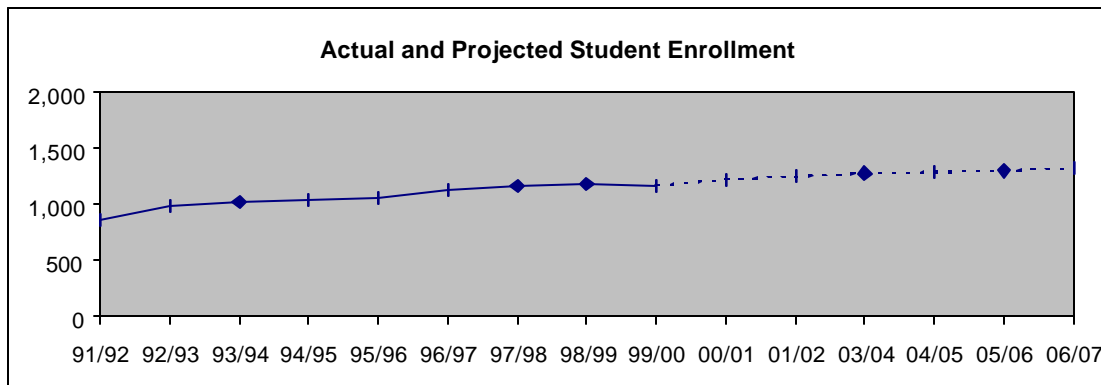
Headcount is based upon students enrolled at each school as annually reported to DOE on the Individual School Reports.

Chart 2-1 illustrates HPS' actual and projected student enrollment trend from October 1, 1991 to October 1, 2006. HPS considers the projections used in the chart as its "most aggressive" and relies upon them in conjunction with school building plans.

Chart 2-1

Harvard Public Schools

Actual and Projected Student Enrollment School Years 1991/92 to 2006/07



Note: Enrollment for school year as of October 1st. Data obtained from HPS.

A solid line represents actual enrollment; a dotted line represents projected enrollment

Chart 2-2 illustrates HPS' actual and projected student enrollment as well as percentage distribution by grade level for selected school years from October 1, 1991 to October 1, 2006. The chart indicates:

- HPS' total enrollment percentage increase between FY92 and FY99 exceeded the state average by almost three times. Not including school choice students, the same percentage increase would have exceeded the state average by about one-and-one-half times.
- HPS projects a nine percent overall increase from FY99 to FY04. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) projects that the Massachusetts K-12 enrollment will increase by three percent during this time, and then peak and remain fairly stable. DOE's K-12 enrollment projections agree with NCES's pattern.
- HPS projects high school enrollment to increase through FY2007. DOE's high school enrollment projections agree with this pattern.

Chart 2-2

**Harvard Public Schools
Actual/Projected Student Enrollment and Percentage Distribution**

Selected School Year	Elementary School				High School		Total Enrollment	
	K	%	1 - 6	%	7 - 12	%	K - 12	%
1991-92	75	8.7%	434	50.2%	355	41.1%	864	100%
1992-93	80	8.1%	503	50.7%	409	41.2%	992	100%
1993-94	74	7.2%	509	49.7%	442	43.1%	1,025	100%
1998-99	84	7.1%	561	47.7%	530	45.1%	1,175	100%
1999-00	70	6.0%	555	47.5%	544	46.5%	1,169	100%
2000-01	76	6.2%	593	48.5%	554	45.3%	1,223	100%
2003-04	79	6.2%	586	45.7%	616	48.1%	1,281	100%
2006-07	80	6.0%	602	45.4%	646	48.7%	1,328	100%
HPS 1992-99 % Change	12.0%	-	29.3%	-	49.3%	-	36.0%	-
State 1992-99 % Change	-2.2%	-	15.0%	-	14.9%	-	13.6%	-
HPS 2000-07 % Change	14.3%	-	8.5%	-	18.8%	-	13.6%	-

Note: Data obtained from HPS. Actual and projected enrollments separated by double-line.

Foundation Enrollment

Foundation enrollment is based upon students for whom the district is financially responsible. It is used in the calculation of each district's required spending on its own students and amount of chapter 70 state aid each district receives to assist with the cost.

According to DOE, statewide foundation enrollment increased by 14 percent between FY93 and FY99. DOE determined that above average and high foundation enrollment growth communities are concentrated along route I-495, west and north of the Boston metropolitan area, yet also appear in a few communities on Cape Cod and in western Massachusetts.

By apportioning regional, choice and charter school students back to their member communities, DOE categorized foundation enrollment growth levels as shown in *Chart 2-3*. On this basis, HPS' foundation enrollment increase from 842 in FY93 to 1,046 in FY99, or by 24.2 percent categorizes it as above average in growth. The town of Harvard is located off route I-495 in the area noted by DOE as having a concentration of above average and high foundation enrollment growth.

Chart 2-3

Massachusetts Foundation Enrollment

Growth Level Category	Cities/Towns	Percent
Decreasing	44	13%
Low (0% to 10%)	101	29%
Average (10% to 20%)	102	29%
Above Average (20% to 30%)	64	18%
High (Over 30%)	40	11%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

Finding

In verifying enrollment accuracy, the district failed to include pre-K special education students and special education students tuitioned out-of-district on DOE's Foundation Enrollment Form. The district also failed to include pre-K special education students on DOE's Individual School Reports. In dollar terms, these omissions resulted in an estimated cumulative state aid loss of \$35,250 since FY95. These errors carry forward because Harvard is a minimum aid community and minimum aid, which is based on foundation enrollment, becomes a factor in the following fiscal year's base aid.

Recommendation 1

The district should implement procedures to ensure that instructions for the Individual School Report and the Foundation Enrollment form are adhered to annually. The district may contact DOE if additional clarification is needed regarding the inclusion of pre-K special education students on the foundation enrollment form.

Finding

The district does not maintain sufficient detailed documentation to support enrollment data on DOE's Individual School and Foundation Enrollment Report forms.

Recommendation 2

The district should implement procedures to ensure that detailed supporting documentation on the completion of the Individual School Report and the Foundation Enrollment forms submitted to DOE is maintained.

3. School Budget Process

This section examines the school budget development process and the school committee's budget review process to determine how financial and educational decisions are made, and how some of the goals and objectives of education reform are considered.

School Budget Development

School district administrators, cost center managers and the town's finance director met in the summer of 1999 to develop a 3-year school budget projection for FY01 – FY03. HPS plans a meeting of this sort to be held annually. That fall, cost center managers solicited final budget input from teaching and non-teaching staff and from school councils. Cost center managers are responsible for budget development and expense control within their cost center. The final budget is organized by the finance director, reviewed by the Superintendent and his administrative staff and presented to the school committee for review and approval by early to mid February.

The FY01 budget details six cost centers: High school, Elementary school, Superintendent/Central office, School Maintenance, Student Services, and Technology. Cost centers detail employee names and salaries. The budget also details other available revenues such as school choice, school lunch, gifts and grants. School choice revenues, budgeted for teachers' salaries, have declined from an FY95 high of just over \$727,000 (10 percent of the total school budget) to a projected FY00 low of \$440,000 (5 percent of the total school budget). HPS noted that any shortfall in budgeted school choice dollars has been supported by additional town funds, not by reductions to other school budget items.

School Budget Review

Concurrent with the school committee's budget review process, three major town committees (school, finance and selectmen) meet in joint session, sometimes twice weekly, from the beginning of the calendar year to annual town meeting in March to review

the entire town budget proposal. At these meetings, budget reductions, capital projects and the necessity of override/debt exclusion votes are reportedly discussed. Joint sessions for this purpose have been held for the last couple of years.

A final budget proposal is presented to the taxpayers at a public forum prior to town meeting. Each rural patron and boxholder receives a packet containing warrant articles, a report and recommendations of the finance committee, and a report of the capital plan committee in time for the annual town meeting.

Certain Goals and Objectives

HPS budgets an amount greater than foundation and net school spending. Key area foundation budget categories are not considered in the budget process. The audit team has found that not providing for foundation in the key areas is not uncommon in districts throughout the state. Foundation budgeting and net school spending will be discussed in section 5 of this audit. It was indicated to the audit team that HPS budgets at least the minimum amount required for professional development. Although this may be true, *Chart 13-1* of this audit indicates that actual professional development spending is less than the minimum requirement in two of the last five fiscal years.

4. Total School District Expenditures

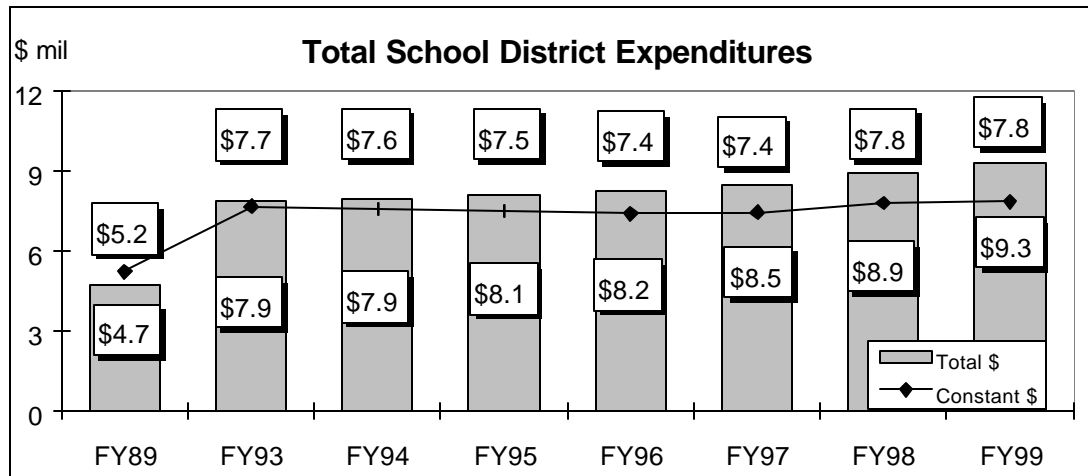
Total school district expenditures include expenditures by the school committee and by the municipality for school purposes as reported in the DOE end-of-year report. This section reviews spending in total, by function, by program and by per pupil. Spending includes FY93 per pupil aid and school choice revenues in total. One measure of per pupil spending calculated and reported by DOE is presented for comparison purposes. The audit team reviewed spending factors but not student FTEs or methodologies used in DOE's calculations.

Total Spending

Chart 4-1 illustrates HPS' total school district expenditure trend in both actual and constant dollars for FY89 and for FY93 to FY99. In constant dollars, where FY92 is set at 100, the chart illustrates how expenditures fared with respect to inflation over time.

Chart 4-1

Harvard Public Schools
Total School District Expenditures in Actual and Constant Dollars
FY89 and FY93-FY99



Note: Data obtained from HPS. Numbers in bars represent actual \$ and above bars constant \$

Spending By Function

Chart 4-2 illustrates in summary total school district expenditures by function and by percentage distribution for selected fiscal years. Appendix A-1 provides the detail for this chart. The chart indicates a reduction in municipal service expenditures between FY93 and FY99. A review of the appendix indicates that this was primarily due to a reduction in debt service for school projects. Other major reductions shown in Appendix A-1 were due to a reclassification of expenditures.

Chart 4-2

Harvard Public Schools
Total School District Expenditures By Function
(in thousands of dollars) and By Percentage Distribution

	% of				% of		FY93 - FY99	
	FY93	Total	FY95	FY97	FY99	Total	\$ Diff.	% Diff.
Instructional Services	\$3,781	48.1%	\$3,769	\$4,032	\$4,713	50.6%	\$932	24.6%
Other Services	\$1,260	16.0%	\$1,296	\$1,534	\$1,876	20.1%	\$616	48.9%
Municipal Services	\$2,264	28.8%	\$2,293	\$2,224	\$2,150	23.1%	-\$113	-5.0%
FY93 Per Pupil Aid	\$86	1.1%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%	-\$86	-100.0%
School Choice	\$462	5.9%	\$727	\$712	\$576	6.2%	\$113	24.5%
Total School District:	\$7,853	100%	\$8,085	\$8,503	\$9,315	100%	\$1,462	18.6%

Note: Data provided by HPS and DOE. Percentages may not add due to rounding.

Spending By Program

Chart 4-3 illustrates in summary total school district expenditures by program and percentage distribution for selected fiscal years. *Appendix A-2* provides the detail for this chart. The chart indicates that the largest dollar and percent increases between FY93 and FY99 were in special education. DOE end-of-year reports show that approximately 56 percent of the special education increase was in payments to non-public schools and to collaboratives. Undistributed expenditures are those not reported by program.

Chart 4-3

Harvard Public Schools

Total School District Expenditures By Program (in thousands of dollars) and By Percentage Distribution

	\$ FY93	% FY93	\$ FY95	\$ FY97	\$ FY99	% FY99	FY93 - FY99 \$ Diff % Diff.	
School and Municipal:								
Regular Day	\$3,240	41.3%	\$3,158	\$3,367	\$3,752	40.3%	\$512	15.8%
Special Education	\$832	10.6%	\$927	\$1,104	\$1,400	15.0%	\$567	68.1%
Undistributed	\$3,232	41.2%	\$3,273	\$3,319	\$3,587	38.5%	\$355	11.0%
Total:	\$7,305	93.0%	\$7,358	\$7,791	\$8,739	93.8%	\$1,435	19.6%
FY93 Per Pupil Aid	\$86	1.1%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0%	-\$86	-100.0
School Choice	\$462	5.9%	\$727	\$712	\$576	6.2%	\$113	24.5
Total School District:	\$7,853	100.0%	\$8,085	\$8,503	\$9,315	100.0%	\$1,462	18.6

Note: Data provided by HPS and DOE. Percentages may not add due to rounding.

Per Pupil Spending

DOE annually calculates per pupil spending based upon programmatic costs and total average membership in FTEs reported on the end-of-year reports. Certain expenditures and school choice tuitions are excluded. Regular day programs are those where students receive a general course of instruction. Special education programs are for students whose educational needs cannot be satisfied in a regular day program. Total day costs are the sum of all programmatic costs.

Chart 4-4 shows DOE's calculation of per pupil spending for regular, special education and total day programs. Note that HPS per pupil spending, as a percentage of the state average, has been generally declining since FY94. In FY99, out of 328 districts reported by DOE, HPS' total day program per pupil spending was 179th statewide. As total school district expenditures increased from FY94 to FY99, so too has total enrollment, by one-and-one-half times the state average. This combination of factors and calculation methodologies has resulted in HPS' per pupil spending on total day programs to decline from 112 percent to 92 percent of the state average.

Chart 4-4

**Harvard Public Schools
Per Pupil Spending - Day Program**

Fiscal Year	Regular Day			Special Education			Total Day		
	HPS	State Avg.	HPS % of State Avg.	HPS	State Avg.	HPS % of State Avg.	HPS	State Avg.	HPS % of State Avg.
FY94	\$5,274	\$4,369	121%	\$9,359	\$7,666	122%	\$5,842	\$5,235	112%
FY95	\$5,374	\$4,528	119%	\$10,803	\$8,241	131%	\$6,065	\$5,468	111%
FY96	\$5,196	\$4,737	110%	\$11,861	\$8,873	134%	\$6,006	\$5,750	104%
FY97	\$5,363	\$4,933	109%	\$11,950	\$9,391	127%	\$6,122	\$6,015	102%
FY98	\$5,369	\$5,221	103%	\$10,485	\$9,873	106%	\$6,007	\$6,361	94%
FY99	\$5,331	\$5,481	97%	\$12,455	\$10,502	119%	\$6,143	\$6,684	92%

Note: Data provided by DOE and HPS

Finding

Overall, the audit team was satisfied that the expenditure reports were generally an accurate representation of HPS expenditures. However, in verifying expenditure reporting accuracy, the audit team noted several reporting errors:

- \$1,469,135 in town debt service for school purposes was not included in the 1994-95 end-of-year report submitted to DOE. The town finance director indicated to the audit team that a correcting memo would be sent to DOE. The charts in this audit will include this amount.
- \$462,087 expended for teaching salaries from school choice revenues was incorrectly included as a general fund expenditure in FY93. The charts in this audit will deduct this amount from the general fund and show school choice revenues separately.
- two additional errors of immaterial amounts were reported to the finance director.

Recommendation 3

The district should implement procedures to verify that amounts shown on the end-of-year reports properly reflect town expenditure reports and that instructions for this report are adhered to.

5. Compliance with Spending Requirements

Pursuant to education reform, DOE determines a required school spending target, or foundation budget, and an annual school spending requirement, or net school spending, for each school district. In addition, the law requires action on the part of a district when certain spending amounts are not met. This section determines compliance with these requirements. One measure of per pupil spending reported by DOE is presented for comparison purposes.

Foundation Budget

The foundation budget is a target level of spending designed to ensure a quality level of education in each school district. DOE determines a foundation budget by using several factors and by including an annual adjustment for inflation. All school districts are expected to meet their total foundation budget by FY00.

Chart 5-1 illustrates that HPS exceeded the foundation budget from FY94 to FY99. Although not presented in this chart, HPS budgeted to exceed its FY00 total foundation budget by 25 percent.

Chart 5-1

Harvard Public Schools

Meeting Total Foundation Budget Target (in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
Foundation Budget Target	\$4.4	\$4.5	\$4.8	\$5.3	\$5.7	\$6.0
Required NSS as % of Foundation	118.8%	120.2%	120.2%	114.3%	108.0%	111.6%
Actual NSS as % of Foundation	121.4%	123.4%	119.9%	114.4%	113.7%	118.7%

Note: Data obtained from DOE and HPS. Percentages may not calculate due to rounding.
FY99 actual NSS is budgeted.

The foundation budget also establishes spending targets by grade and program. These targets are intended as guidelines only and are not binding on school districts. To encourage an appropriate level of spending, M.G.L. Ch.70, §9 requires a school district to report to the COE when it has failed to meet the spending target in any one of four key functional areas: professional development, books and instructional equipment, expanded programs and extraordinary maintenance.

Finding

According to *Chart 5-2*, expenditures did not reach foundation budget for any of the categories in any fiscal year except for books and equipment in FY99. HPS did not file a report with the Commissioner's office as required by law for these fiscal years stating its reasons for not meeting these levels nor did DOE direct HPS to submit such report. *Appendix C* provides the detail for this chart.

Chart 5-2

Harvard Public Schools

Meeting Foundation Budget Target for Key Areas (by percentage)

	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
Professional Development	59.3%	51.0%	68.6%	60.5%	92.9%
Books and Equipment	55.2%	78.2%	95.4%	69.1%	102.9%
Expanded Program	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Extraordinary Maintenance	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.6%

Note: Data obtained from DOE and HPS.

Recommendation 4

In the future HPS should file a report with the Commissioner of Education's office as required by law stating its reasons for not meeting the foundation budget target levels in any of the key areas noted in the chart above.

Net School Spending

Net school spending is the amount a school district must spend for the support of public education including certain expenditures made by the municipality on behalf of the local school district. It does not include expenditures for certain classes of long-term debt service, school lunches, community services, fixed assets and student transportation. It also does not include tuition revenue.

Chart 5-3 illustrates that HPS exceeded the actual net school-spending requirement in every fiscal year from FY94 to FY99, except for FY96. Although net school spending was reportedly budgeted in FY96, it was underspent by \$16,176, or by 0.3 percent. This amount was carried forward and added to the FY97 requirement, which HPS met.

Chart 5-3

Harvard Public Schools

Meeting Net School Spending (in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
Required Net School Spending	\$5.2	\$5.4	\$5.7	\$6.0	\$6.2	\$6.6
Actual Net School Spending	\$5.3	\$5.6	\$5.7	\$6.0	\$6.5	\$7.1
Actual as Percentage of Required	102.2%	102.6%	99.7%	100.1%	105.2%	106.4%

Note: Percentages may not calculate due to rounding

A district's net school spending requirement is the sum of the school district's minimum local contribution and chapter 70 state aid. Local and regional school districts must provide at least 95 percent of the net school-spending requirement. As illustrated in Chart 5-4, Harvard's local contribution to actual net school spending increased by \$1.4 million from FY94 to FY99 while state aid increased by only \$300,000. Despite the dollar difference, during the same time period,

the local share decreased to 86.8 percent of actual net school spending while state aid increased to 13.2 percent.

Chart 5-4

Harvard Public Schools

Local and State Contributions to Actual Net School Spending

(in millions of dollars)

	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
Actual Net School Spending	\$5.3	\$5.6	\$5.7	\$6.0	\$6.5	\$7.1
Actual Local Contribution \$	\$4.7	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.3	\$5.7	\$6.1
State Contribution \$	\$0.6	\$0.6	\$0.7	\$0.8	\$0.8	\$0.9
Actual Local Contribution %	88.8%	88.9%	88.0%	87.4%	87.2%	86.8%
State Contribution %	11.2%	11.1%	12.0%	12.6%	12.8%	13.2%

Note: Data obtained from DOE and HPS. Percentages may not calculate due to rounding.

HPS is concerned that new federal census data will affect future state aid to the town. Because Harvard's population used in state aid distribution formulas will adjust due to the closing of Fort Devens, the population reduction by over 50 percent is expected to negatively affect state aid.

Per Pupil Actual Net School Spending

Chart 5-5 illustrates HPS' and the state's actual net school spending in actual and constant (1992) dollars on a per student basis. Actual net school spending is calculated by DOE.

Chart 5-5

Harvard Public Schools

Actual Net School Spending Per Student

Actual and Constant (1992=100) Dollars

		FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99	FY94 to FY99 Change
HPS	in Actual \$	\$6,324	\$6,610	\$6,538	\$6,383	\$6,529	\$7,064	11.7%
	in 1992 \$	\$6,034	\$6,109	\$5,853	\$5,584	\$5,677	\$5,936	-1.6%
State	in Actual \$	\$5,533	\$5,832	\$6,076	\$6,359	\$6,667	\$6,995	26.4%
	in 1992 \$	\$5,280	\$5,390	\$5,440	\$5,563	\$5,797	\$5,878	11.3%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

6. Staffing – Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Trends

This section reviews staffing trends at the district and classroom levels. Data is from October 1 School System Summary Reports submitted annually to DOE. This report includes district employees on the payroll as of October 1. Teachers are categorized according to their assignments regardless of certification.

Chart 6-1 illustrates HPS staffing in FTEs for three selected fiscal years. According to the chart, HPS increased teacher FTEs from FY94 to FY99 by 10.0 or 13.3 percent. Student enrollment during the same time period increased by about 15 percent. Administrative FTEs have decreased primarily due to combining of positions detailed in section 12 of this audit. HPS indicated to the audit team that the increase in instructional assistants was an effort to reduce special education costs by adding teaching assistants in the classroom. Other increases in FTE instructional assistants included the areas of computer technology and library.

Chart 6-1

Harvard Public Schools Staffing Trends in Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

	Total FTEs	Teachers	Teachers as % of Total FTEs	Instruct. Assists.	Administrators	All Others
FY91	118.5	63.6	53.7%	17.9	18.0	19.0
FY94	134.1	75.1	56.0%	16.8	17.0	25.3
FY99	150.3	85.0	56.6%	35.9	12.5	16.9
FY94-99	16.2	10.0		19.2	-4.6	-8.4
Incr. / Decr.	12.0%	13.3%		114.3%	-26.8%	-33.2%

Note: Data obtained from HPS. FTEs may not add due to rounding.

Chart 6-2 provides information on teacher FTEs and percentage distribution by discipline for three selected fiscal years. *Appendix B* provides the detail for this chart.

Chart 6-2

**Harvard Public Schools
FTE Teachers and Percentage Distributions By Discipline**

Discipline	% FY91		% FY94		% FY99		FY94 - FY99	
	FY91	FY91	FY94	FY94	FY99	FY99	Diff.	% Diff
Certain Core Subjects	18.8	29.6%	21.6	28.8%	25.4	29.9%	3.8	17.6%
Art and Music	4.5	7.1%	4.8	6.4%	6.3	7.4%	1.5	31.3%
Health / Phys. Ed.	4.0	6.3%	5.0	6.7%	4.3	5.1%	(0.7)	-14.0%
SPED	5.8	9.1%	7.3	9.7%	9.2	10.8%	1.9	26.0%
Elementary	21.4	33.6%	26.0	34.6%	29.0	34.1%	3.0	11.5%
Reading	1.0	1.6%	0.6	0.8%	1.5	1.8%	0.9	150.0%
Foreign Language	4.6	7.2%	5.6	7.5%	5.0	5.9%	(0.6)	-10.7%
Other	3.5	5.5%	4.2	5.6%	4.3	5.1%	0.1	2.4%
Total	63.6	100.0%	75.1	100.0%	85.0	100.0%	9.9	13.2%

Note: Data obtained from HPS. Core subjects included here are English, math, the sciences and social studies. Foreign language includes french, spanish and latin. Percent change may not calculate due to rounding.

Chart 6-3 provides information on students per FTE teacher for HPS and statewide. This chart does not represent class size. Course load and class size is detailed in section 16.

Chart 6-3

**Harvard Public Schools
Students Per FTE Teacher**

	FY91	FY94	FY99
All Students / All FTE Teachers	13.2	13.7	13.8
All Students / All FTE Teachers - State Average	14.5	15.0	N/A
All Students / All Non-SPED FTE Teachers	14.5	15.1	15.5
All Students / All Non-SPED FTE Teachers - State Avg.	18.4	19.1	N/A
All Students / All Non-SPED FTE Teachers			
Elementary (K- 6)	22.8	22.4	22.2
High School (7 -12)	9.7	10.6	11.3

Note: Data obtained from HPS and DOE

Finding

The audit team was unable to verify the data on School System Summary Reports for any year as HPS fails to maintain supporting documentation as of October 1.

Recommendation 5

The district should implement procedures to ensure that detailed supporting documentation on the completion of the School System Summary Reports reported to DOE is maintained.

Finding

The audit team noted that the School System Summary Report was completed incorrectly in part for FY94 and FY98. For FY94, as detailed in *Appendix B*, HPS incorrectly reported Spanish and earth science teacher FTEs by combining other disciplines into these two. In FY98, HPS did not report teacher FTEs in special education.

Recommendation 6

The district should implement procedures to ensure that instructions for the School System Summary Reports are adhered to annually.

7. Teacher Compensation

Expenditures for salaries are reviewed to determine how the school district has increased expenditures for teachers and how teaching salaries have increased as a result of union contract agreements.

Chart 7-1 indicates how school salaries have increased in comparison to total school district expenditures. HPS increased its expenditures for salaries by \$800,000 between FY93 and FY99, an increase of 20.9 percent. This is 2.3 percentage points higher than the increase in total school district expenditures during the same time period. Total salaries made up 50 percent of these expenditures in FY93 and increased to 51 percent in FY99. Total school district expenditures include fringe benefits.

Of the \$1.5 million total school district expenditure increase from FY93 to FY99, \$800,000 is attributable to salaries. Of this \$800,000 increase, \$500,000 or 67 percent, applied to teaching salaries and \$300,000 or 33 percent, applied to non-teaching salaries. The latter group includes administrators, para-professionals, clerical staff, custodial staff, etc.

Chart 7-1

**Harvard Public Schools
Salary Expenditures Compared to Total School District Expenditures
(in millions of dollars)**

	FY89	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY99	FY93 - FY99	
						\$ Incr./Decr.	% Incr./Decr.
Total School District Expenditures	\$4.7	\$7.9	\$8.1	\$8.5	\$9.3	\$1.5	18.6%
Total Salaries	\$3.5	\$3.9	\$3.8	\$4.4	\$4.8	\$0.8	20.9%
as % of Total Expenditures	73.4%	50.0%	47.4%	51.8%	51.0%	56.2%	
Teaching Salaries	\$2.5	\$2.8	\$2.8	\$2.9	\$3.3	\$0.5	19.8%
as % of Total Salaries	72.3%	70.5%	72.8%	65.4%	69.9%	67.0%	
Non-Teaching Salaries	\$1.0	\$1.2	\$1.0	\$1.5	\$1.4	\$0.3	23.4%
as % of Total Salaries	27.7%	29.5%	27.2%	34.6%	30.1%	33.0%	

Note: Data obtained from HPS. Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Chart 7-2 shows that the average teacher's salary increased from \$39,690 to \$40,976 between FY93 and FY99. The FY98 average teacher's salary of \$43,790 is below the state average salary of \$44,051 reported by DOE. This calculation does not include school choice revenue used by HPS to supplement teaching salaries. Had this revenue been included in the FY99 calculation, the HPS average salary per FTE would have been approximately \$48,000.

Chart 7-2

**Harvard Public Schools
Average Salary Comparison**

	FY89	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY98	FY99
Average Salary per FTE	\$31,368	\$39,690	\$38,783	\$43,883	\$43,790	\$40,976
State Average	N/A	\$38,681	\$40,718	\$42,874	\$44,051	N/A

Note: Data obtained from DOE and HPS

An additional \$600,000 was spent on teaching salaries from FY93 through FY99 as shown in *Chart 7-2a*. The data indicates that actual salary expenses were less than expected assuming a 3 percent inflation rate. Cost savings in staffing may have been realized by hiring replacement teachers at less than the average salary of those retiring and/or resigning.

Chart 7-2a

Harvard Public Schools

Salary Expenditures

Cost of New Positions and Salary Increases

(in millions of dollars)

	FY93	FY99	% of Cum. Incr.
Total Teaching Salary Exp.	\$2.8	\$3.3	
Cumulative Increase from FY93		\$0.6	100%
Cost of 3% Inflationary Increase		\$0.5	94%
FY93-99 Cost of New Positions		\$0.5	81%
Subtotal		\$1.0	176%
Amount above 3% Annual Increase		(\$0.4)	-76%

Note: Analysis based on data obtained from HPS

Chart 7-2b indicates that increases due to annual contracts and steps ranged between 6.7 percent and 7.7 percent from 1993 to 1999. In school year 2000, 34.5 percent of the teaching staff are at maximum step and do not receive step increases.

Chart 7-2b

Harvard Public Schools

Teachers Salaries - Step and Contract Percent Increases

Period	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Total
Annual Contract Increase	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	4.0%	3.0%	3.0%	22.0%
Step Increase	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	25.9%
Total	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%	7.7%	6.7%	6.7%	47.9%

Note: Data obtained from HPS

Chart 7-3 shows how salary schedules might apply to a particular teacher for the period of FY93 to FY99 depending on the step and academic degree. Various examples outline different situations. The chart illustrates so-called lane changes due to credits and degree earned such as BA to MA and MA to MA+30.

As shown in *Chart 7-3*, a review of salary changes over the FY93 to FY99 period indicates that the step 13 salary level increased by 17.1 percent without including step increases or lane changes. This represents the minimum increase a full time teacher would receive exclusive of raises due to step changes or obtaining an advanced academic degree. In contrast, the state and local government implicit price deflator indicates about a 16.1 percent inflationary trend for the FY93 to FY99 period.

Chart 7-3

Harvard Public Schools

Teaching Staff

Step/Degree Summary - Selected Years

	FY93 Base Pay		FY99 Base Pay			FY93-99 % Change	
	Step	Base Pay	Step	Base Pay			
		BA		BA	MA	BA	MA
Teacher A	13	\$36,183	13	\$42,369	\$48,352	17.1%	33.6%
Teacher B	7	\$30,406	13	\$42,369	\$48,352	39.3%	59.0%
Teacher C	0	\$23,645	6	\$34,480	\$38,095	45.8%	61.1%
	MA		MA		MA + 30	MA	MA + 30
	Step	Base Pay	Step	Base Pay			
		BA		BA	MA	BA	MA
Teacher A	13	\$41,291	13	\$48,352	\$55,075	17.1%	33.4%
Teacher B	7	\$33,784	13	\$48,352	\$55,075	43.1%	63.0%
Teacher C	0	\$25,224	6	\$38,095	\$41,670	51.0%	65.2%

Note: BA - Bachelor of Arts degree, MA - Master of Arts degree. Data obtained from HPS.

Chart 7-4

Harvard Public Schools

Teaching Salary Schedules

Comparison of FY93 through FY99 Salary Schedules - Steps 0 and 13

Salary		Initial Entry Level - Step 0					
Lane	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
BA	\$23,645	\$24,355	\$24,355	\$25,086	\$26,099	\$26,882	\$27,688
BA+15	\$24,433	\$25,166	\$25,166	\$25,921	\$26,968	\$27,777	\$28,610
MA	\$25,224	\$25,981	\$25,981	\$26,760	\$27,841	\$28,676	\$29,537
MA+15	\$26,017	\$26,797	\$26,797	\$27,601	\$28,716	\$29,577	\$30,465
MA+30	\$26,797	\$27,600	\$27,600	\$28,428	\$29,576	\$30,463	\$31,377
MA+45	\$27,578	\$28,406	\$28,406	\$29,258	\$30,440	\$31,353	\$32,294
Salary		Highest Level - Step 13					
Lane	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97	FY98	FY99
BA	\$36,183	\$37,268	\$37,268	\$38,386	\$39,937	\$41,135	\$42,369
BA+15	\$38,726	\$39,888	\$39,888	\$41,085	\$42,745	\$44,027	\$45,348
MA	\$41,291	\$42,530	\$42,530	\$43,806	\$45,576	\$46,943	\$48,352
MA+15	\$44,558	\$45,895	\$45,895	\$47,272	\$49,182	\$50,657	\$52,177
MA+30	\$47,033	\$48,444	\$48,444	\$49,897	\$51,913	\$53,470	\$55,075
MA+45	\$49,502	\$50,987	\$50,987	\$52,517	\$54,639	\$56,278	\$57,987

Note: HPS has 6 salary lanes and 14 steps. Data obtained from HPS.

8. Special Education (SPED)

HPS had a SPED participation rate of 11.0 percent in school year 1998 below the state average of 16.6 percent reported by DOE. Total SPED enrollment from school year 1992 to 1998 averaged 11.4 percent. The percentage of SPED students considered substantially separate has fluctuated from a high of 11.4 percent for school year 1992 to a low of 5.5 percent in school year 1994.

Chart 8-1

**Harvard Public Schools
SPED Enrollment**

School Year Ending	Total Enrollment	Total SPED	SPED as % of Total	Substantially Separate	Substantially Separate as % of SPED
1992	864	114	13.2%	13	11.4%
1994	1,025	128	12.5%	7	5.5%
1996	1,062	113	10.6%	9	8.0%
1998	1,159	128	11.0%	10	7.8%

Note: Data obtained from HPS October 1 reports

The increase in SPED costs from FY93 to FY99 was \$567,280 or 68.1 percent while the increase in total district expenditures for the same time period was \$1.46 million or 18.6 percent. The majority of the SPED increase was due to the increase in SPED tuitions. HPS is a member of the Concord Area Special Education (CASE) collaborative. SPED expenditures for FY93 increased from 10.6 percent of total school district expenditures to 15 percent in FY99.

Chart 8-2

**Harvard Public Schools
Total SPED Expenditures
(in thousands of dollars)**

	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY99	FY93-FY99	
					\$ Incr. / Decr.	% Incr. / Decr.
SPED Program	\$715	\$819	\$952	\$1,252	\$537	75.0%
SPED Transportation	\$117	\$108	\$152	\$148	\$31	26.1%
Total SPED	\$832	\$927	\$1,104	\$1,400	\$567	68.1%

Note: Data obtained from DOE

9. Textbooks and Other Instructional Service Expenditures

This section reviews instructional service expenditures by grade level for selected fiscal years. These expenditures include textbooks, supplies and other activities involving the teaching of students and exclude salaries.

Chart 9-1 details other instructional service expenditures by grade level for selected years, the portion of textbook expenditures and annual per student expenditures.

Chart 9-1

Harvard Public Schools
Textbooks and Other Instructional Service Expenditures
(in thousands of dollars)

	FY93	FY95	FY97	FY99	FY93 - FY99	
					\$ Incr.	% Incr.
High School	\$113	\$43	\$40	\$46	(\$67)	-59.3%
Middle School	\$0	\$27	\$22	\$27	\$27	N/A
Elementary	\$117	\$63	\$54	\$50	(\$67)	-57.4%
SPED	\$4	\$3	\$64	\$26	\$26	651.2%
Total	\$234	\$136	\$179	\$149	(\$81)	-34.6%
Textbooks Only	\$45	\$25	\$37	\$27	(\$18)	-39.6%
Other Expenditures	\$189	\$112	\$142	\$122	(\$67)	-35.5%
Textbooks / Student	\$45	\$23	\$32	\$23	(\$22)	-49.0%
Other Exp. / Student	\$191	\$107	\$125	\$104	(\$87)	-45.6%

Note: Data obtained from DOE. Elementary includes Pre-K and K. Pupil count as of October 1.

HPS has a written textbook selection policy, which indicates that the responsibility of review and selection of textbooks rests with the principal. It was indicated to the audit team that department leaders direct the effort to pilot textbooks and that final approval rests with the principal. This policy encourages the principal to establish a review committee to include teachers, other staff members, students and parents. Students and parents are not usually part of the selection process.

HPS officials indicated to the audit team that low textbook expenditures is reflective of a district practice to use other instructional material and to emphasize teacher creativity over traditional textbook reliance.

Finding

The school committee's policy manual indicates that administrative personnel are required to take a physical count of all books and equipment items at least once a year and that the inventory be kept on file in the Superintendent's office. This inventory practice does not occur.

Recommendation 7

The school department should design and implement practices to inventory books and equipment as per the school committee's written policy.

10. Accounting and Reporting

The audit team traced a sample of expenditures reported to DOE to HPS accounting and budget records of the business manager. Overall, the audit team was satisfied that the expenditure reports were generally an accurate representation of HPS expenditures. The audit team was satisfied that adequate safeguards exist for proper internal controls.

In a recent town audit, the town's certified public accounting (CPA) firm recommended that "management prepare a centralized control log of all computers and peripheral equipment" due to a significant increase in and to the portability of new computer equipment in town and school operations. HPS provided the audit team with separate listings of computers and peripherals by building.

11. Review of Expenditures

The audit team completed a review of all HPS paid invoices from the beginning of FY99 through April of FY00. Interviews were conducted with HPS business coordinator, town accountant, and town finance director/school business manager.

HPS does not have a formal purchase order system that can be used by all cost center managers. Cost center managers have purchasing authority as long as Chapter 30B requirements are adhered to. Although Harvard has an authorized vendor list, the cost center managers have the ability to purchase from any vendor then have that vendor approved after the fact. HPS produces a bi-monthly report to all cost center managers showing the fiscal year budget, year-to-date expenditures and available funds. An encumbrance system is not used.

HPS does not have a uniform receiving policy. An overwhelming number of invoices did not have any indication of the quantity received, date received, and/or who received shipment.

Finding

FY97 and FY98 Harvard town audits by the town's CPA firm indicated violations of Chapter 30B in their findings. The FY99 audit has not been released as of the date of this audit. In its review of FY00 invoices, the audit team noted one bidding document that may be in violation of Chapter 30B. The audit team discussed its findings with the town's CPA firm.

Recommendation 8

The town's CPA firm should review the bidding document which the team determined may be in violation of Chapter 30B.

Finding

The audit team noted that the school committee has not been approving bills or payrolls before or after checks are issued. DLS has ruled that even after the passage of education reform, the school committee remains the head of the school department for approving bills and payrolls under M.G.L. Ch. 41 §§41 and 56. The audit team found sufficient offsetting controls to mitigate the potential of inappropriate expenditure of funds including reviews by the cost-centers managers, school business coordinator, town accountant and town finance director.

Recommendation 9

HPS, the town of Harvard and its CPA firm should review the process of approving bills and payrolls pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 41 §§41 and 56.

12. Management and Personnel Practices

The purpose of this section is to review the Superintendent's management style and practices, as well as the hiring and evaluation processes for administrators and teachers.

Management Style and Practices

When state curriculum frameworks were released, HPS began a year of curriculum review and design. The Superintendent disbanded department leaders and hired curriculum coordinators to revise the curriculum. The Superintendent's evaluation in 1996 stated that his performance was acceptable but needed to improve going forward. He resigned in 1997 over differences between his and the school committee's management styles.

The current Superintendent/principal began his tenure as the high school principal in school year 1994/95. In that year he hired a consultant to review elementary reading scores. In school year 1997/98 the district instituted a Superintendent/principal model and appointed him as their first interim. This position became permanent in school year 1998/99 where he is in his third year at that position. The Superintendent stated to the audit team that a collegial relationship must exist between the school committee and him for this model to be successful. He also stated that he views the school committee as frequently used consultants. Interviews concur that this model is working but is personality dependent. An area of concern expressed is that there is a lack of balance between the elementary school and the Bromfield school where the Superintendent is also principal. Another concern is that the model is difficult to apply when unexpected issues arise for the Superintendent that takes away from the principal duties. Language in his contract states that should the model not meet the expectations of either the school committee or the Superintendent/principal, the contract may be dissolved by mutual agreement and that he will be reinstated as principal of the high school unless he has been dismissed as a principal.

Because the model is personality dependent, the school committee should give consideration to possible alternative organizational structures in the event of a change in the current leadership.

The Superintendent's strong stand on discipline has resulted in eleven expulsions in the last six years. Student decisions are made by him through him with appeals made to the school committee chairperson. This appeal process has occurred twice in the last three years.

The Superintendent has a collaborative management style with high expectations for his entire staff that contain certain non negotiables. He reinstituted department leaders and is in the process of appointing curriculum coordinators at the elementary school. For school year 1999/00 he instituted an eight person, K-12, working team model that makes all school decisions including departmental budgets. The Superintendent, the elementary principal, the assistant to the high school principal and the finance director have more than one role in the working team model. Community focus groups meet once a month with the school committee to discuss education.

The Superintendent/principal was favorably evaluated in January using a process called a 360 model. Three school committee members developed this model. He is evaluated by the two school councils, department leaders, town leaders, students and randomly selected teachers. The school committee then summarizes the results into a final document. The evaluation occurs every other year because it is too cumbersome to be done annually. The superintendent's most

recent evaluation recommended that he spend more time at the elementary school, and put more effort into evaluations and teacher professional development.

Hiring Process

HPS uses a contractual process to fill projected teaching vacancies. When there is a vacancy, the Superintendent/principal and the department leader decide on general characteristics they are looking for in a candidate. The administrative assistant to the superintendent and department leaders make initial determinations and select candidates for interviews. The department leader conducts the first interview and all teachers in the department are invited to attend. The department leader submits three candidates to the Superintendent/principal whom, in the role of principal, conducts an interview and sends a letter to the chosen candidate. The Superintendent/principal stated that he rarely hires a candidate without a master's degree.

A search committee process is used to fill principal vacancies. Five elementary principals have been hired since 1990. The current elementary school principal, who became permanent in June of 2000, also serves as the student services director.

The audit team examined managerial staff contracts for the administrators and the interim elementary principal. The administrative contracts vary in length, salary and contain termination language.

Evaluation Process

Principals and Administrators

The elementary principal began serving as director of student services in July of 1997. His contract has an evaluation section for director of student services but not for principal. Each administrative contract has a termination section. Administrators and department leaders are evaluated informally.

The school committee and the Superintendent/principal believe that there is a need to develop a formal administrators evaluation system and that these evaluations are currently lacking.

Principals received professional development training in teacher evaluation.

Teachers

The HPS teacher evaluation process is a two-year professional growth program that was negotiated as part of the union contract. Teachers with professional status are formally evaluated every other year (Cycle I). In the year in which they are not formally evaluated they choose one or more alternate year professional growth activities (Cycle II).

The first phase of Cycle I consists of a goal setting conference between the teacher and primary and supplementary evaluators. The general time frame for observations is also discussed. The goals are agreed upon by all three parties but may be initially determined by the teacher and primary evaluator as long as the supplementary evaluator has had an opportunity to review them and suggest changes before they are final. This phase is to be completed by October 14.

A minimum of three formal classroom observations occur during the school year. However, one observation by the primary evaluator may be waived if all three parties agree and the teacher evaluated is in satisfactory standing. The primary evaluator completes two observations with one documented in writing. One observation by the secondary evaluator must also be documented in writing. Either the evaluator or the teacher may request a pre-observation conference. A formal post-observation conference is held within five days after the observation. Within ten days after the post-observation a copy of the written record of the classroom observation is given to the person observed. The person observed then has the opportunity to read the document before signing and attach comments within five days. This record of observation and the teacher's response is attached to the final evaluation. The primary evaluator drafts the final evaluation after consultation with the supplementary evaluator. The final evaluation includes an overall summary rating of the teacher as "Satisfactory" or "Less than Satisfactory." A final evaluation conference is held between the primary evaluator and the teacher, the supplementary evaluator may attend.

If a teacher has been evaluated as "Less than Satisfactory", an improvement plan is developed at the start of the following school year. If a teacher has been evaluated as "Less than Satisfactory" for a second, or probationary year, the teacher is notified by May 1 of placement on a seniority list. This lack of improvement moves that teacher to the bottom of this list and allows a teacher with less time in the discipline to move up the seniority list.

In Cycle II the teacher selects any professional growth activity mutually agreed by the primary evaluator and staff member. A conference is completed by October 15 and a form is signed by both parties indicating their agreement. A mid-year assessment conference is held if requested by either party and the goals are revised at this time. The teacher completes a Self-Assessment Form by May 1.

Teachers without professional status are formally evaluated annually and may be observed up to four times during the school year. Up to two observations may be waived for a teacher for whom additional observation is considered unnecessary. A teacher in his/her first year of professional status will be assigned to Cycle II.

Under education reform, HPS has used this process to remove 7 teachers without professional status and 0 teachers with professional status.

HPS could not provide the audit team with the number of teachers evaluated for school year 1998/99.

13. Professional Development Program

DOE requires school systems to prepare a professional development plan, to update and revise it annually and to meet minimum spending requirements for professional development.

Finding

The district's most recent professional development plan reviewed was dated 1996. The plan does not include professional development offerings linked to the building based needs.

Recommendation 10

The district should implement procedures to address DOE requirements in preparing professional development plans.

During FY95 and FY96, DOE required school districts to spend \$25 per pupil for professional development. This requirement increased to \$50 per pupil for FY97, \$75 for FY98 and \$100 for FY99. *Chart 13-1* illustrates HPS spending for professional development.

Chart 13-1

Harvard Public Schools Expenditures for Professional Development (in whole dollars)

	Professional Development	Minimum Spending Requirement	Total Spent as % of Requirement
FY95	\$42,604	21,150	201.4%
FY96	\$38,419	21,875	175.6%
FY97	\$57,192	47,100	121.4%
FY98	\$54,778	74,625	73.4%
FY99	\$87,606	100,100	87.5%

Note: Data obtained from HPS

Finding

HPS did not meet minimum spending requirements for FY98 and FY99.

Recommendation 11

Sufficient funds should be budgeted and spent on professional development to meet DOE minimum spending requirements.

Although HPS provides twenty early release days for professional development the district could not provide the audit team with a sample of courses offered, the number of professional development points (PDP's) earned for each course and the number of attendees. HPS indicated to the team that it did not receive professional development requests to meet the spending requirement. Teacher surveys indicate that there are deficiencies in the professional development program.

14. School Improvement Plans

M.G.L. Chapter 71, §59C mandates a school council at each school that must develop a school improvement plan and update it annually. The audit team reviewed two years of school improvement plans for each school: FY95 and FY00 for the elementary school and FY96 and FY00 for the high school.

Finding

The prior HPS school improvement plans do not address certain components of M.G.L. Ch. 71 §59C such as class size, funding for professional development, tolerance and extracurricular activities. As a result, plans vary widely in scope, content, quality and structure. Plans for FY00 do address more of the components as required by M.G.L. Ch. 71 §59C but do not address professional development for staff and an allocation of funds. Measurable objectives and timetables are used sporadically or not at all. None of the plans included provisions for assignment of task completion or how progress would be monitored or evaluated during the year.

Recommendation 12

The district should develop procedures to guide school councils in developing school improvement plans in accordance with M.G.L. Ch. 71 §59C.

15. Student Learning Time

Time and learning standards refer to the amount of time students are expected to spend in school. It is measured by the number of minutes or hours in a school day and the number of days in the school year. As of September 1997, the DOE requires schools to schedule all enrolled students to receive a minimum of 900 hours for elementary and 990 hours for secondary of structured learning time in a minimum of 180 student school days. The school committee must designate each school as either elementary or secondary. All Kindergarten students must receive a minimum of 425 hours of structured learning time.

In HPS there were 180 teaching days in the 99/00 school year. The DOE requirement is 180 teaching days.

As shown in *Chart 15-1*, HPS student learning time exceeded the DOE requirements in 1998/99 by 12 hours at the high school and by 4.5 hours at the elementary school. HPS could not provide the hours at the high school for the 1995/96 school year.

Chart 15-1

Harvard Public Schools Student Learning Time

	1995/96 HPS Standard Hours Per Year	1997/98 DOE Req. Hours Per Year	1997/98 HPS Standard Hours Per Year
High School		990	1002
Elementary School	880	900	904.5
Kindergarten (half-day)	540	425	535

Note: Data obtained from HPS

16. Course Load and Class Size

Course load reflects the number of students that each teacher is responsible for teaching during a school year. This number is significant because it not only represents the number of students a teacher works with on a daily basis, but also the number of assignments, tests, and/or papers the teacher is responsible for grading. Class size is important because research shows the value of lowering class size on student learning. DOE notes that students attending smaller classes in the early grades make more rapid educational progress than students in larger classes.

Chart 16-1 shows the teacher course load and average enrollment per section of The Bromfield School teachers for the four core subjects during the 1999/00 school year. The Bromfield School, which houses grades 7-12, has 10 sections out of 126 with more than 24 students.

Chart 16-1

**Harvard Public Schools
Bromfield School Teacher Course Load
1999/00 School Year**

Core Subs.	Students	Teachers	Students/ Teacher	Sections/ Teacher	Enrollment/ Section	Secs. With >24 students	
English	699	9	77.7	43	4.8	16.3	4
Math	642	7	91.7	34	4.9	18.9	2
Science	477	7	68.1	27	3.9	17.7	1
Soc. Studies	423	6	70.5	22	3.7	19.2	3

Note: Data obtained from HPS

HPS indicated that all core subject teachers are certified in the subject area they are teaching.

Class size is addressed in the HPS teachers' contract indicating, in part, that "every effort shall be made to keep class sizes at an acceptable number". HPS has the following class size policy:

Kindergarten 15-18 students,
Grade one 18-20 students,
Grade two 18-22 students,
Grades three-twelve 20-24 students.

Chart 16-2 shows the average class size at the elementary school. Two of the 31 classes at the elementary school have 23 students while all others are at or below 22 students. HPS has a pilot program in its second year which combines grades two and three. See section 21 for more details on this program.

Chart 16-2

**Harvard Public Schools
Elementary Class Size
School Year 1999/00**

Grade	Classes	Students	Average Class Size	Classes 24+	Grade	Classes	Students	Average Class Size	Classes 24+
K	4	71	17.8	0	Grade 2/3	3	66	22.0	0
Grade 1	5	95	19.0	0	Grade 4	5	102	20.4	0
Grade 2	2	43	21.5	0	Grade 5	5	106	21.2	0
Grade 3	3	61	20.3	0	Grade 6	4	89	22.3	0

Note: Data obtained from HPS

17. Technology

DOE approved HPS' six-year technology plan in February of 1997. The plan was prepared by a 16 member broad-based technology team which included the Superintendent, the high school principal, high school and elementary teachers, a school committee member, the director of media and library services, the high school technology coordinator, students, parents and community members. The plan projected to spend a total of \$809,507 by the end of year six (01/02). In FY98 and FY99, a total of \$532,106 was expended. For FY97 the district could not provide expenditure detail.

Currently there are approximately 255 computers in the district. Both schools have computer labs. At the elementary school every classroom has at least one computer and internet access. However, kindergarten and grade 1 have chosen to not activate the internet. There are also older computers located in the hallways. The high school has internet access but does not have computers in every classroom. The old high school has computers but does not have internet access. The internet is provided to HPS through ShoreNet of Lynn, MA but HPS will be transferring to Merrimack Education Center in the summer of 2001. According to DOE's district profile, as of FY99 HPS has 5.8 students per computer, lower than the state average of 6.3. This report also states that 29 percent of classroom computers are on the internet, lower than the state average of 65.9 percent.

The elementary school and the high school are connected to a wide area network (WAN), and each school has its own local area network (LAN). HPS has separate listings of computers and peripherals by building.

The elementary school and the high school have an acceptable use policy governing the use of the internet. Students and their parents are required to sign a form which states that they are aware and understand the appropriate use of computers at school. Parents also may prefer that their child not use the internet while at school. If a student violates the acceptable use policy their internet privileges will be revoked. The principal will deem necessary any other disciplinary action. In September of 2000 the elementary school will be using the filtering software Cyber Patrol.

18. Maintenance and Capital Improvement

The purpose of this section is to review how HPS maintains its facilities to ensure a safe, healthy educational environment and how the district plans for future facility needs. In this review, the audit team visited the elementary school, the high school and the old high school.

Maintenance and Site Visits

The district has its own maintenance staff plus contracts with a janitorial firm to clean both the new high school and the elementary school in the evenings.

The elementary school was found to be clean and newly renovated as a result of a water main break which flooded much of the school's library.

The high school was found to be clean but with issues that need to be addressed. The auditorium at one end of the building was physically sinking. At times, ground water has been found in front of the stage. The building's septic system has also been a problem. A solution to the septic problem is being discussed in terms of an overall septic solution to the Harvard center area. HPS hopes to address these problems in its building renovation plan.

The 1992 NEAS&C accreditation report stated that the old high school, built in the 1870's, was in "need of extensive cleaning, renovation and maintenance" and that it was not meeting "an obligation to provide students with a hazard-free educational environment." Except for regular custodial support, the audit team found conditions there to be much the same as written in the 1992 report. HPS plans to use the building until the addition to the high school is completed.

In 1999, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) issued an air quality assessment report on each one of the district's three school buildings. In each case, numerous problems were identified and recommendations were made. In response to the recommendations, HPS presented action plans to the school committee including estimated repair costs. HPS has not resolved all of the problems.

In April 2000, the town's board of health conducted an inspection of the high school's chemical storage supply closet and prep room in follow-up to MDPH's report. The board "observed that there were no significant improvements in the school's storage and disposal practices." Certain chemical safety problems in the lab have been of concern to the board since 1994. On May 2, 2000, the board of health ordered HPS to complete 8 corrective actions related to chemical storage in 30 days or incur additional board action which could include closure of the science wing. After a hearing with HPS, the board granted extensions of two weeks to two months to complete all corrective actions. At the hearing, HPS officials reported on progress to date and obstacles encountered in correcting the problems. Hearing minutes indicated that the town's fire chief would consider not sending in the fire department into the science wing if there was a fire until after hazardous waste personnel from the state were present.

Capital Improvements

Harvard's seven-member capital plan committee is composed of two selectmen, one member from both the school committee and finance committee, the town's finance director/school business manager, the town administrator, and the Superintendent of schools. The committee is

charged with presenting a 5-year town building plan to town meeting. The plan is divided into planned (next two years) and proposed (following three years) segments and is updated annually. The school committee's plan is considered as part of the town's plan.

The town has approved a \$12.3 million renovation plan for the high school which will provide an additional 45,000 square feet of space to include a middle school wing. The 6th grade, now housed in the elementary school, will be transferred to this new addition. Currently, only \$700,000 has been approved for architects' and septic design fees. A debt exclusion for these fees was approved by voters during the course of the audit. It is expected that the town will be presented with a debt exclusion vote to fund the entire project in the near future. Renovations are planned to be completed by school year 2002/03. The town qualifies for 61 percent reimbursement from School Building Assistance program.

Chapter 194 §241 of the acts of 1998 established school building maintenance spending requirements. Each school district's compliance with the requirement is based on the district's actual spending as reported on the end-of-year report. Any district not meeting the requirement has an opportunity to request a waiver based on unanticipated or extraordinary changes in maintenance spending. The waiver must be approved by the COE and by the Deputy Commissioner of DLS. Districts which do not meet the requirement and which do not qualify for a waiver must work with DOE and DOR to develop a remediation plan. If appropriate action is not taken, school building assistance funds will be jeopardized. According to DOE, HPS met the spending requirement in FY99.

19. High School Accreditation

The high school is accredited.

The accreditation visit by NEAS&C took place in November of 1992. The report, critical in the areas of faculty/administration relations and curriculum, was also particularly critical of the school's media center indicating that it "has not kept pace with the times in terms of the currency of both print and non-print collections and available technology due to inadequate budget allocations."

In 1996, the school was placed on probation "for failure to adhere to the Commission's standard for accreditation on library technology and media services." In 1997, after increasing the library/media budget, posting a position for a full-time library/media specialist and installing additional PC terminals in the library, the school was removed from probation.

Chart 19-1 identifies the status of NEAS&C's accreditation recommendations from HPS' 5-year progress report.

Chart 19-1

**Harvard Public Schools
Status of Accreditation Recommendations**

Area	NEAS&C Rec's	Completed	Ongoing	In Progress	Rejected	Other
Philosophy	4	2	1			1
Curriculum and Instruction	29	15	1	3	9	1
Student Services	5	4			1	
Educational Media Services	4	4				
Administration, Faculty and Staff	8	4	1		3	
School Facilities	22	19		1		2
Community Support and Involvement	5	2			3	
School Climate	3				3	
Assessment of Educational Progress	6	4	1	1		
Total	86	54	4	5	19	4

Note: Data obtained from HPS

20. Test Scores

HPS has been the state's top MCAS performer for FY98 and FY99 based on total combined scaled scores. However, HPS has no formal MCAS remediation plan.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

MCAS is the statewide assessment program administered annually to grades 4, 8 and 10. It measures performance of students, schools and districts on learning standards contained in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and fulfills the requirements of education reform. This assessment program serves two purposes:

- measures performance of students and schools against established state standards; and
- improves effective classroom instruction by providing feedback about instruction and modeling assessment approaches for classroom use.

MCAS tests are reported according to performance levels that describe student performance in relation to established state standards. Students earn a separate performance level of advanced, proficient, needs improvement or failing based on their total scaled score for each test completed. There is no overall classification of student performance across content areas. School, district and state levels are reported by performance levels.

Chart 20-1 reflects performance level percentages for all HPS students in tested grades.

Chart 20-1

**Harvard Public Schools
1998 and 1999 MCAS Test Scores
Percentage of Students at Each Performance Level**

Grade	Subject	Year	Average Scaled Score	Advanced	Proficient	Needs Improve- ment	Failing (Tested)	Failing (Absent)
Grade 4	English Lang.	1999	238	1	37	59	3	0
	Arts	1998	239	0	49	47	4	0
	Mathematics	1999	248	33	32	33	3	0
		1998	251	39	30	31	0	0
	Science and Technology	1999	253	31	62	7	0	0
		1998	249	19	64	17	0	0
Grade 8	English Lang.	1999	248	8	75	18	0	0
	Arts	1998	248	13	73	14	0	0
	Mathematics	1999	246	27	43	22	8	0
		1998	248	23	55	19	4	0
	Science and Technology	1999	243	21	48	18	13	0
		1998	244	7	68	19	6	0
	History	1999	238	4	42	41	12	0
		1998	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 10	English Lang.	1999	242	13	47	37	3	0
	Arts	1998	247	16	64	17	3	0
	Mathematics	1999	245	36	28	22	14	0
		1998	242	20	37	28	15	0
	Science and Technology	1999	241	7	53	34	6	0
		1998	240	1	57	35	7	0

Note: Data provided by DOE

Chart 20-2 provides additional detail for students who have attended schools in the district for at least three years.

Chart 20-2

**Harvard Public Schools
Comparison of 1998 and 1999 MCAS Average Scaled Scores**

All Students	1998 District	1998 State	Point Diff.	1999 District	1999 State	Point Diff.	1998 - 1999 District	Inc./Decr. State
Grade 4:								
English Language Arts	239	230	9	238	231	7	-1	1
Mathematics	251	234	17	248	235	13	-3	1
Science & Technology	249	238	11	253	240	13	4	2
Grade 8:								
English Language Arts	248	237	11	248	238	10	0	1
Mathematics	248	227	21	246	228	18	-2	1
Science & Technology	244	225	19	243	224	19	-1	-1
History	N/A	N/A	N/A	238	221	17	N/A	N/A
Grade 10:								
English Language Arts	247	230	17	242	229	13	-5	-1
Mathematics	242	222	20	245	222	23	3	0
Science & Technology	240	225	15	241	225	16	1	0
Total Score (excluding History)	2208	2068	140	2204	2072	132	-4	4

Note: Data provided by DOE

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

SAT scores are significantly above the state average.

Chart 20-3

**Harvard Public Schools
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Results**

SAT Content Areas	1995		1996		1997		1998		1999	
	HPS	State Avg.	HPS	State Avg.	HPS	State Avg.	HPS	State Avg.	HPS	State Avg.
Verbal	566	430	587	507	608	508	580	502	586	504
Math	562	477	585	504	581	508	560	502	578	505
Total	1128	907	1172	1011	1189	1016	1140	1004	1164	1009
HPS - % of State Avg.	124.4%		115.9%		117.0%		113.5%		115.4%	

Note: Data obtained from HPS and DOE

Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)

MEAP was the state's educational testing program from 1988 to 1996. It reported scores in two ways: scaled scores, which range from 1000 to 1600, and proficiency levels that were reported as percentage of students in each proficiency. Level 1 was the lowest, level 2 was considered the "passing grade" level, while levels 3 and 4 constituted the more advanced levels of skills.

According to *Chart 20-4*, there is a significant increase in levels 3 and 4 when 1996 eighth grade MEAP scores are compared to 1992 fourth grade MEAP scores. This measures the same class of students.

Chart 20-4

MEAP Proficiency Scores 1992 and 1996 Fourth and Eighth Grades

Fourth Grade	1992			1996		
	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4
Reading	25%	45%	29%	21%	36%	43%
Mathematics	20%	53%	27%	20%	49%	31%
Science	22%	64%	15%	9%	53%	38%
Social Studies	22%	55%	23%	13%	58%	29%
Eighth Grade	1992			1996		
	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4	Level 1 or Below	Level 2	Levels 3 & 4
Reading	20%	29%	51%	22%	29%	50%
Mathematics	20%	35%	45%	26%	32%	43%
Science	15%	24%	62%	17%	42%	41%
Social Studies	20%	36%	43%	27%	45%	27%

Note: Data provided by HPS. Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

The MEAP scores for all grades tested are shown in *Appendix D*.

According to *Chart 20-5*, MEAP reading scores show a significant improvement from 1992 to 1996, an increase of 80 points.

Chart 20-5

**MEAP Reading Scores - 4th Grade- 1988 Scores from 1440 - 1480
Selected Districts**

District	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	Change 1992 - 1996
Pentucket RSD	1440	1440	1430	1390	1430	0
Wayland	1440	1560	1420	1460	1410	-10
Boxborough	1450	1460	1490	1440	1510	20
Wellesley	1450	1460	1490	1500	1510	20
Mendon-Upton	1450	1480	1440	1470	1490	50
Acton	1450	1500	1510	1480	1480	-30
Hamilton-Wenham	1450	1380	1450	1500	1470	20
Longmeadow	1450	1410	1430	1450	1430	0
Needham	1480	1420	1530	1490	1500	-30
Harvard	1480	1510	1390	1530	1470	80
Nashoba RSD	1480	1420	1470		1400	-70
State Average	1300	1310	1330	1300	1350	20

Note: A significant change in a score is considered to be 50 points in either direction.

Iowa Tests

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Iowa tests) for third grade was administered throughout Massachusetts in the spring of 1998. Results were categorized by students tested under routine conditions, students with disabilities tested under non-routine conditions and students with limited English proficiency.

The Iowa Test of Educational Development, also referred to as the Massachusetts Grade 10 Achievement Test, was also administered in the spring of 1997. It tested seven different areas of skills including reading, quantitative thinking and social studies. Scores were based on a national sample of students who took the test. HPS 10th graders scored at the 89th percentile compared to the national sample. HPS performance compares to scores as high as the 89th percentile and as low as the 28th percentile for other Massachusetts school districts.

According to *Chart 20-6*, district Iowa test results show that HPS student scored between 89 percent and 96 percent in the proficient or advanced reading comprehension performance categories for the years shown.

Chart 20-6

**Harvard Public Schools
Iowa Test of Basic Skills**

Reading Percentile Rank			Reading Comprehension Performance			
	HPS	State	Pre Reader	Basic Reader	Proficient Reader	Advanced Reader
1997	87%	65%	0%	4%	45%	51%
1998	86%	64%	0%	3%	38%	57%
1999	88%	69%	1%	6%	27%	62%

Data provided by DOE.

21. Curriculum Development

HPS curriculum is not completely aligned to the state curriculum frameworks. During interviews, administrators stated that HPS has a basic education that doesn't totally adapt to the state frameworks. Their curriculum stresses writing, reading, analysis and self-assessment. Curriculum mapping in the areas of language arts and social studies for grades K-6 was completed in FY99 while math and science curriculum mapping was rescheduled for the 00/01 school year. Teacher survey results indicate that 92 percent of HPS teachers believe that the curriculum is challenging and tied to preparing students for life after secondary school. Current plans call for four curriculum leaders to be added at the elementary school for the 00/01 school year. It is expected that the curriculum leaders at the elementary school will correspond with the department leaders at the high school.

The elementary school has multi-age classrooms for the second and third grades. Students from both grade levels are assigned to the same class. A third grader acts as a mentor throughout the school year to a second grader. The following year when the second graders become third graders they then serve as mentors to the new second graders. The students also receive the benefit of the same teacher for two years. This is the second year of the program and according to the Superintendent it will be continued.

HPS collaborates with 16 other schools around the country in a program called "Systems Thinking." Its purpose is to encourage students to recognize life issues as part of a larger system. The basic idea is that students will see the long and short term effects of certain choices they make. A mentor teacher helps teachers to implement tools and concepts into their classrooms. The concepts of "Systems Thinking" are woven into many of the academic areas. The program is privately funded.

22. Grade 3 Transiency

Student transiency is generally defined as the percentage of students who enter and/or leave the system after the first day of school. Transiency poses an educational problem because students may lose the benefit of a sequential and coherent school program as they move from school to school.

Harvard has a somewhat stable student population in the lower grades as measured by the 1999 3rd grade Iowa reading test in comparison to 14 communities of similar population to Harvard. Results from that test are categorized by students who have taken the test under routine conditions. Students who did not take the test or were given extra time to finish the test are excluded. According to *Chart 22-1*, of the communities shown, HPS's transiency percentage of 18.1 is below the state average of 20.4 percent. HPS has a stable population percent of 81.9 percent, above the state average of 79.6 percent.

Chart 22-1

Transiency and Stability - 3rd Grade

Selected Communities

Student Population Participating in the 1999 Iowa 3rd Grade Reading Test

Community	Stable Population	Total Population	Stable Population Percent	Transiency Percent
Wayland	192	214	89.7%	10.3%
Uxbridge	156	177	88.1%	11.9%
Palmer	123	140	87.9%	12.1%
East Bridgewater	189	216	87.5%	12.5%
Lynnfield	144	166	86.7%	13.3%
Hanover	144	166	86.7%	13.3%
Medfield	208	241	86.3%	13.7%
Belchertown	160	186	86.0%	14.0%
Carver	124	145	85.5%	14.5%
Medway	162	192	84.4%	15.6%
Harwich	117	141	83.0%	17.0%
Harvard	77	94	81.9%	18.1%
Ipswich	113	147	76.9%	23.1%
Millbury	110	151	72.8%	27.2%
Holbrook	86	127	67.7%	32.3%
Statewide	54,239	68,103	79.6%	20.4%

Note: Student population includes only students tested under "routine" conditions.

Data obtained from DOE's 1999 Iowa Grade 3 reading test summary results.

23. Dropout and Truancy

HPS does not have a formal dropout program. The dropout rate for FY97 was 0 percent, significantly lower than the state average of 3.4 percent. Students wishing to drop out are referred to other programs outside of Harvard. HPS officials believe that the low dropout rate is due to a good educational environment within the district's schools. A strong discipline code led to 11 expulsions with six negotiated re-entries since FY97.

Chart 23-1

High School Dropout Rates Selected Communities FY93 - FY97

Community	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97
Millbury	3.9%	2.3%	2.3%	2.1%	7.1%
Carver		3.4%	4.6%	4.1%	3.9%
East Bridgewater	1.8%	1.3%	2.9%	3.0%	3.2%
Ipswich	0.7%	2.6%	2.5%	2.2%	2.8%
Uxbridge	2.8%	4.5%	1.4%	1.3%	2.6%
Belchertown	1.4%	2.2%	2.3%	2.4%	2.4%
Holbrook	0.6%	2.6%	0.4%	4.8%	2.3%
Medway	0.4%	1.3%	1.0%	1.8%	2.2%
Lynnfield	0.8%	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%	1.5%
Harwich	0.9%	2.6%	0.8%	2.9%	1.5%
Palmer	1.6%	1.6%	1.9%	1.3%	1.5%
Hanover	0.4%	0.6%	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%
Wayland	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%
Medfield	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Harvard	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Average These Communities	1.1%	1.8%	1.5%	1.9%	2.1%
Median These Communities	0.8%	1.6%	1.0%	1.8%	2.2%
State Average	3.5%	3.7%	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%

Note: Data provided by DOE

IV. Employee Survey

The audit team conducted a confidential survey of all employees of HPS to provide a forum for teachers and staff to express their opinions on education in HPS. Approximately 169 questionnaires were delivered to school staff and 68 responses were received and tabulated, a response rate of 40 percent. Areas covered by the survey include:

1. education reform,
2. education goals and objectives,
3. curriculum,
4. planning,
5. communications and mission statements,
6. budget process,

7. professional development,
8. supplies,
9. facilities, and
10. computers and other education technology.

Appendix E shows the teachers' answers to the survey questions. The Superintendent also received a summary of the responses.

Seventy-nine percent of teachers think that education reform issues are considered when their own school plans are made and 76 percent think that also applies to district-wide plans. Eighty-five percent believe that the school district is taking positive steps to improve education and 79 percent state that a formalized process is in place to analyze student test scores and identify areas of academic weakness. Sixty-five percent state that there are programs in place to improve student performance in areas where academic weaknesses have been identified.

Seventy-four percent of teachers are clear about the school district's goals and objectives as well as how they relate to their own jobs. Seventy-eight percent feel that they have a role in the development of these goals and objectives and 51 percent confirm that there are indicators used to measure progress toward them.

The survey indicates that 51 percent of teachers do not think that an increase in school funding is tied directly to improvements in education. Sixty-five percent of teachers think that improvements in education at the school would have occurred without education reform.

Seventy-two percent believe that the curriculum is coherent and sequential. Seventy-five percent believe that the curriculum now in use in their school will improve student test scores while 17 percent said that it would not. Eighty percent of the teachers feel that there is a coherent, on-going effort within HPS to keep curriculum current and 88 percent feel that teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising the curriculum. Seventy-nine percent state that the curriculum in their school is aligned with the state frameworks.

Sixty-three percent are familiar with the content of their school improvement plan while sixty-nine percent state that the plans address the needs of students. Sixty-three percent state the plans are used to effect changes in the school.

Thirty-two percent state that there are a number of available computers sufficient for the number of students. Thirty-four percent state there is a policy or program for teacher training on software and computers used by students.

V. Superintendent's Statement – Education Reform

As part of this review, the Superintendent was asked to submit a brief statement expressing his point of view with respect to three areas:

1. school district progress and education reform since 1993;
2. barriers to education reform; and
3. plans over the next three to five years.

VI. Appendix

Appendix A-1	Total School District Expenditures by Function
Appendix A-2	Total School District Expenditures by Program and Percentage Distribution
Appendix B	FTE Teachers by Discipline
Appendix C	Net School Spending by Foundation Budget Categories FY95, FY97, FY99 - Table
Appendix C1 - 2	Net School Spending by Foundation Budget Categories FY95, FY97, FY99 – Graph
Appendix D	Mass. Educational Assessment Program (MEAP)
Appendix E	Employee Survey Results
Appendix F	Superintendent's Statement on Education Reform Accomplishments, Barriers and Goals
Appendix G	Auditee's Response

Harvard Public Schools

Total School District Expenditures By Function (in thousands of dollars)

	% of				% of		FY93 - FY99	
	FY93	Total	FY95	FY97	FY99	Total	\$ Diff.	% Diff.
Instructional Services:								
Supervisory	\$97	1%	\$94	\$94	\$104	1%	\$6	6.6%
Principal	\$236	3%	\$232	\$272	\$300	3%	\$64	27.0%
Principal Technology	\$0	0%	\$0	\$2	\$3	0%	\$3	N/A
Teaching	\$3,036	39%	\$3,035	\$3,111	\$3,640	39%	\$604	19.9%
Prof. Devel.	\$0	0%	\$43	\$57	\$88	1%	\$88	N/A
Textbooks	\$45	1%	\$35	\$37	\$27	0%	-\$18	-39.6%
Instructional Technology	\$0	0%	\$26	\$93	\$113	1%	\$113	N/A
Educational Media	\$89	1%	\$71	\$68	\$140	2%	\$51	57.6%
Guidance & Psychology	\$277	4%	\$231	\$299	\$299	3%	\$21	7.6%
Subtotal:	\$3,781	48%	\$3,769	\$4,032	\$4,713	51%	\$932	24.6%
Other Services:								
Athletics	\$79	1%	\$98	\$43	\$0	0%	-\$79	-100.0%
Student Body Activities	\$9	0%	\$19	\$26	\$119	1%	\$110	1267.1%
Attendance	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	N/A
Health (inc. non-public)	\$0	0%	\$0	\$53	\$64	1%	\$64	N/A
General Administration	\$182	2%	\$146	\$118	\$76	1%	-\$106	-58.0%
Administrative Support	\$0	0%	\$29	\$81	\$50	1%	\$50	N/A
Admin. Technology	\$0	0%	\$0	\$6	\$9	0%	\$9	N/A
Operations and Maint.	\$486	6%	\$371	\$407	\$572	6%	\$87	17.8%
Food Service	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$11	0%	\$11	N/A
Extraordinary Maint.	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$7	0%	\$7	N/A
Pupil Transportation	\$290	4%	\$284	\$344	\$348	4%	\$58	20.1%
Purchase of Equipment	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	N/A
Pymts. To Other Districts	\$215	3%	\$283	\$375	\$536	6%	\$321	149.7%
Employee Benefits	\$0	0%	\$67	\$80	\$85	1%	\$85	N/A
Subtotal:	\$1,260	16%	\$1,296	\$1,534	\$1,876	20%	\$616	48.9%
Total School Committee								
Expend. By Function:	\$5,041	64%	\$5,065	\$5,567	\$6,589	71%	\$1,548	30.7%

Note: Data provided by HPS and DOE. Student Body Activities includes athletics in FY99. Percentages may not add due to rounding.

Harvard Public Schools
Total School District Expenditures By Function
(in thousands of dollars)

	FY93	% of Total	FY95	FY97	FY99	% of Total	FY93 - FY99	
							\$ Diff.	% Diff.
Municipal Expenditures:								
Health Services	\$0	0%	\$69	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	N/A
Administrative Support	\$0	0%	\$94	\$75	\$0	0%	\$0	N/A
General Administration	\$27	0%	\$0	\$0	\$118	1%	\$90	329.4%
Employee Benefits Admin.	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	N/A
Oper. & Maint. of Plant	\$0	0%	\$12	\$29	\$16	0%	\$16	N/A
Extraordinary Maint.	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$10	0%	\$10	N/A
Insurance	\$43	1%	\$487	\$550	\$520	6%	\$477	1115.2%
Regional School Assess.	\$2	0%	\$0	\$12	\$0	0%	-\$2	-86.3%
Employee Benefits	\$485	6%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	-\$485	-100.0%
Retirement	\$0	0%	\$63	\$0	\$65	1%	\$65	N/A
Debt Service	\$1,593	20%	\$1,473	\$1,346	\$1,221	13%	-\$372	-23.3%
Other Fixed Charges	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	N/A
Pymts. To Other Districts	\$113	1%	\$95	\$211	\$199	2%	\$87	76.8%
Total Municipal Expend:	\$2,264	29%	\$2,293	\$2,224	\$2,150	23%	-\$113	-5.0%
FY93 Per Pupil Aid	\$86	1%	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	-\$86	-100.0%
School Choice	\$462	6%	\$727	\$712	\$576	6%	\$113	24.5%
Total School District Expend. By Function:	\$7,853	100%	\$8,085	\$8,503	\$9,315	100%	\$1,462	18.6%

Note: Data provided by HPS and DOE. Employee Benefits now reported as Insurance. Percentages may not add due to rounding.

Harvard Public Schools

Total School District Expenditures

By Program (in thousands of dollars) and By Percentage Distribution

	\$ FY93	% FY93	\$ FY95	% FY95	\$ FY97	% FY97	\$ FY99	% FY99	FY93 - FY99 \$ Diff % Diff.	
Instructional:										
Regular Day	\$2,953	37.6%	\$2,894	35.8%	\$2,969	34.9%	\$3,355	36.0%	\$401	13.6%
Special Education	\$502	6.4%	\$528	6.5%	\$572	6.7%	\$714	7.7%	\$212	42.3%
Undistributed	\$325	4.1%	\$346	4.3%	\$491	5.8%	\$643	6.9%	\$318	97.7%
Subtotal Instructional:	\$3,781	48.1%	\$3,769	46.6%	\$4,032	47.4%	\$4,713	50.6%	\$932	24.6%
Other Services:										
Regular Day	\$174	2.2%	\$176	2.2%	\$192	2.3%	\$200	2.1%	\$26	14.9%
Special Education	\$330	4.2%	\$391	4.8%	\$528	6.2%	\$684	7.3%	\$353	107.0%
Undistributed	\$756	9.6%	\$729	9.0%	\$815	9.6%	\$993	10.7%	\$237	31.4%
Subtotal Other Services:	\$1,260	16.0%	\$1,296	16.0%	\$1,534	18.0%	\$1,876	20.1%	\$616	48.9%
Total School Expenditures:										
Regular Day	\$3,127	39.8%	\$3,070	38.0%	\$3,160	37.2%	\$3,555	38.2%	\$427	13.7%
Special Education	\$832	10.6%	\$919	11.4%	\$1,100	12.9%	\$1,398	15.0%	\$566	67.9%
Undistributed	\$1,081	13.8%	\$1,075	13.3%	\$1,306	15.4%	\$1,636	17.6%	\$555	51.4%
Total School Expenditures:	\$5,041	64.2%	\$5,065	62.6%	\$5,567	65.5%	\$6,589	70.7%	\$1,548	30.7%

Harvard Public Schools

Total School District Expenditures

By Program (in thousands of dollars) and By Percentage Distribution

	\$ FY93	% FY93	\$ FY95	% FY95	\$ FY97	% FY97	\$ FY99	% FY99	FY93 - FY99 \$ Diff % Diff.	
Municipal:										
Regular Day	\$113	1.4%	\$88	1.1%	\$207	2.4%	\$198	2.1%	\$85	75.3%
Special Education	\$0	0.0%	\$7	0.1%	\$4	0.0%	\$2	0.0%	\$2	N/A
Undistributed	\$2,151	27.4%	\$2,198	27.2%	\$2,013	23.7%	\$1,951	20.9%	-\$200	-9.3%
Total Municipal:	\$2,264	28.8%	\$2,293	28.4%	\$2,224	26.2%	\$2,150	23.1%	-\$113	-5.0%
School and Municipal Expenditures:										
Regular Day	\$3,240	41.3%	\$3,158	39.1%	\$3,367	39.6%	\$3,752	40.3%	\$512	15.8%
Special Education	\$832	10.6%	\$927	11.5%	\$1,104	13.0%	\$1,400	15.0%	\$567	68.1%
Undistributed	\$3,232	41.2%	\$3,273	40.5%	\$3,319	39.0%	\$3,587	38.5%	\$355	11.0%
Total School and Municipal:	\$7,305	93.0%	\$7,358	91.0%	\$7,791	91.6%	\$8,739	93.8%	\$1,435	19.6%
FY93 Per Pupil Aid	\$86	1.1%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	-\$86	-100.0%
School Choice	\$462	5.9%	\$727	9.0%	\$712	8.4%	\$576	6.2%	\$113	24.5%
Total School District Expenditures By Program	\$7,853	100.0%	\$8,085	100.0%	\$8,503	100.0%	\$9,315	100.0%	\$1,462	18.6%

Note: Data provided by HPS and DOE

**Harvard Public Schools
FTE Teachers By Discipline**

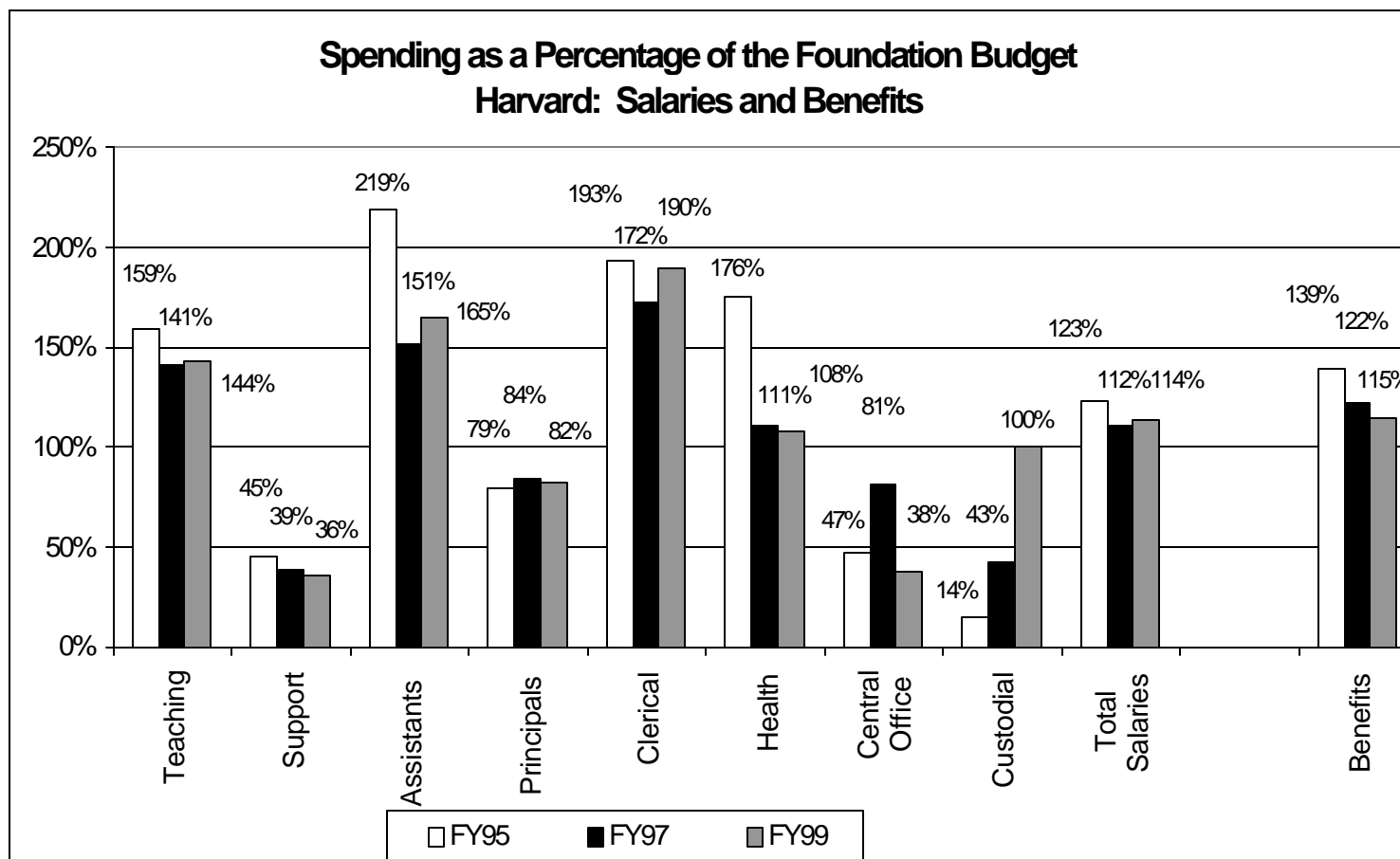
Selected Disciplines	FY91	FY94	FY99	FY91 - FY94		FY94 - FY99		FY91-FY99	
				Incr.	% Incr.	Incr.	% Incr.	Incr.	% Incr.
Elementary	21.4	26.0	29.0	4.6	21%	3.0	12%	7.6	36%
English	5.2	6.4	6.8	1.2	23%	0.4	6%	1.6	31%
French	2.0	0.0	2.3	(2.0)	-100%	2.3	N/A	0.3	15%
Spanish	2.0	5.6	2.4	3.6	180%	(3.2)	-57%	0.4	20%
Latin	0.6	0.0	0.3	(0.6)	-100%	0.3	N/A	(0.3)	-50%
Social Studies	4.6	4.6	6.0	0.0	0%	1.4	30%	1.4	30%
Biology	1.2	0.0	2.0	(1.2)	-100%	2.0	N/A	0.8	67%
Chemistry	0.8	0.0	1.3	(0.8)	-100%	1.3	N/A	0.5	63%
Earth Science	0.6	5.6	0.8	5.0	833%	(4.8)	-86%	0.2	33%
General Science	1.4	0.0	2.3	(1.4)	-100%	2.3	N/A	0.9	64%
Mathematics	5.0	5.0	6.2	0.0	0%	1.2	24%	1.2	24%
Physics	0.0	1.0	1.1	1.0	N/A	0.1	10%	1.1	N/A
Art	2.4	3.0	3.3	0.6	25%	0.3	10%	0.9	38%
Music	2.1	1.8	3.0	(0.3)	-14%	1.2	67%	0.9	43%
Reading	1.0	0.6	1.5	(0.4)	-40%	0.9	150%	0.5	50%
Speech	0.8	0.0	1.0	(0.8)	-100%	1.0	N/A	0.2	25%
Physical Education	1.2	4.0	2.3	2.8	233%	(1.7)	-43%	1.1	92%
Health & Physical Education	2.8	1.0	2.0	(1.8)	-64%	1.0	100%	(0.8)	-29%
Home Economics	0.8	0.6	0.0	(0.2)	-25%	(0.6)	-100%	(0.8)	-100%
Industrial Arts	1.3	1.0	2.0	(0.3)	-23%	1.0	100%	0.7	54%
SPED	5.8	7.3	9.2	1.5	25%	2.0	27%	3.4	59%

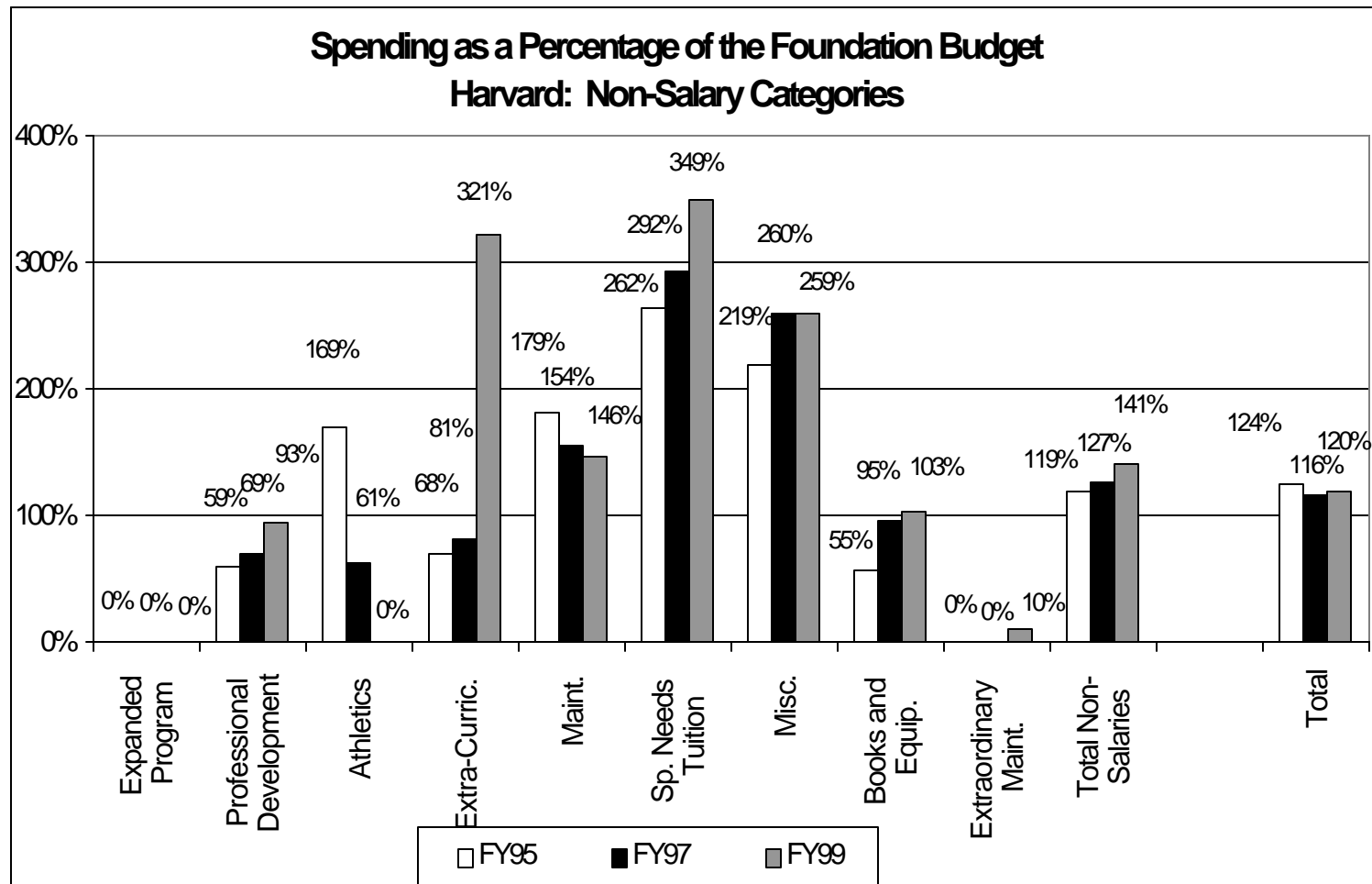
Note: Data obtained from October 1 School System Summary Reports.

Harvard Public Schools
Net School Spending According to Foundation Budget Categories
(in thousands of dollars)

	Reported Expenditures			Foundation Budget Expenditures			Over/Under Foundation		
	FY95	FY97	FY99	FY95	FY97	FY99	FY95	FY97	FY99
Teaching Salaries	\$2,887	\$2,973	\$3,423	\$1,820	\$2,107	\$2,383	\$1,067	\$866	\$1,041
Support Salaries	\$261	\$260	\$275	\$578	\$672	\$762	(\$316)	(\$412)	(\$487)
Assistants' Salaries	\$194	\$153	\$188	\$89	\$101	\$114	\$106	\$51	\$74
Principals' Salaries	\$144	\$178	\$197	\$182	\$212	\$241	(\$38)	(\$34)	(\$44)
Clerical Salaries	\$205	\$213	\$267	\$106	\$124	\$141	\$99	\$89	\$126
Health Salaries	\$69	\$51	\$55	\$39	\$45	\$51	\$30	\$5	\$4
Central Office Salaries	\$80	\$162	\$85	\$171	\$200	\$227	(\$91)	(\$37)	(\$142)
Custodial Salaries	\$22	\$78	\$206	\$158	\$183	\$207	(\$136)	(\$105)	(\$1)
Total Salaries	\$3,863	\$4,068	\$4,697	\$3,143	\$3,644	\$4,126	\$720	\$424	\$572
 Benefits	 \$607	 \$619	 \$658	 \$438	 \$507	 \$574	 \$169	 \$112	 \$84
 Expanded Program	 \$0	 \$0	 \$0	 \$8	 \$5	 \$4	 (\$8)	 (\$5)	 (\$4)
Professional Development	\$43	\$57	\$88	\$72	\$83	\$94	(\$29)	(\$26)	(\$7)
Athletics	\$98	\$43	\$0	\$58	\$70	\$80	\$40	(\$27)	(\$80)
Extra-Curricular	\$19	\$26	\$119	\$28	\$32	\$37	(\$9)	(\$6)	\$82
Maintenance	\$360	\$358	\$382	\$201	\$232	\$262	\$160	\$126	\$120
Special Needs Tuition	\$291	\$379	\$537	\$111	\$130	\$154	\$180	\$249	\$383
Miscellaneous	\$183	\$252	\$284	\$83	\$97	\$110	\$99	\$155	\$174
Books and Equipment	\$143	\$288	\$353	\$259	\$302	\$343	(\$116)	(\$14)	\$10
Extraordinary Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$17	\$134	\$155	\$175	(\$134)	(\$155)	(\$158)
Total Non-Salaries	\$1,136	\$1,403	\$1,779	\$953	\$1,106	\$1,258	\$183	\$297	\$521
 Total	 \$5,605	 \$6,090	 \$7,134	 \$4,533	 \$5,257	 \$5,958	 \$1,072	 \$833	 \$1,176
Revenues	\$16						\$16	\$0	\$0
Net School Spending	\$5,589	\$6,090	\$7,134	\$4,533	\$5,257	\$5,958	\$1,056	\$833	\$1,176

Note: Data obtained from DOE and HPS. Totals may not add due to rounding.





Harvard Public Schools
Massachusetts Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) Scores

	Grade	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1988-96 Change	1996 State Average	1996 HPS Over/(Under) State Avg.
Reading									
	4	1480	1510	1390	1530	1470	-10	1350	120
	8	1400	1380	1540	1480	1510	110	1380	130
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1480	1450		1310	140
Math									
	4	1550	1480	1470	1500	1470	-80	1330	140
	8	1430	1430	1490	1420	1470	40	1330	140
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1490	1440		1310	130
Science									
	4	1510	1470	1420	1530	1510	0	1360	150
	8	1520	1380	1570	1440	1480	-40	1330	150
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1520	1470		1310	160
Social Studies									
	4	1510	1490	1450	1480	1460	-50	1340	120
	8	1480	1480	1510	1400	1400	-80	1320	80
	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	1490	1430		1300	130

Note: N/A indicates that test was not given to all grades in all years. Data obtained from DOE

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Harvard

Survey Response Rate: 40%

Teachers' Responses

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1 & 2	Good to Excellent
No	4 & 5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

1 Education Reform		1 & 2	4 & 5	3
1.a.	Are you familiar with the issues of Education Reform, the Law passed in 1993?	76%	10%	13%
1.b.	Do you feel you have a good understanding of the purpose and the goals of the law?	78%	12%	10%
1.c.	Do you feel that there is a lot of confusion about what Education Reform is all about?	49%	27%	24%
1.d.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school district plans are made?	76%	5%	19%
1.e.	Do you feel the issues of Education Reform are considered when school-based plans are made?	79%	3%	18%
1.f.	In your opinion is the school district taking positive steps to improve education?	85%	4%	10%
1.g.	Do you feel your job has changed because of Education Reform?	35%	39%	26%
1.h.	Do you think there has been an improvement in student achievement in your school due to Education Reform?	33%	21%	46%
1.i.	Do you think the improvements in education at the school would have happened without Education Reform?	65%	10%	26%
1.j.	Have you perceived an increase in school funding tied directly to improvements in education in your district?	30%	20%	51%
1.k.	Is there a formalized process in place to analyze student test scores and identify areas of academic weakness?	79%	8%	13%
1.l.	Are there specific programs in place to improve student performance in areas where academic weaknesses have been identified?	65%	19%	16%

2 Educational Goals and Objectives		1 & 2	4 & 5	3
2.a.	Are the school administration's goals and objectives generally clear and understandable?	76%	9%	15%
2.b.	Are you clear about the school district's goals and objectives as they relate to your own job?	74%	15%	12%
2.c.	Are there indicators issued to measure progress toward goals and objectives generally?	51%	13%	35%
2.d.	Are there indicators used to measure your progress toward goals and objectives?	69%	18%	13%
2.e.	Do you have a role in developing these goals and objectives?	78%	9%	13%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Harvard

Survey Response Rate: 40%

Teachers' Responses

Note: Percentages may not add to
100% due to rounding

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 & 5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

3 Curriculum		1&2		4 & 5		3
3.a.	Do you believe that your district's curriculum is coherent and sequential?	72%		15%		13%
3.b.	Do you believe that your curriculum is challenging and tied to preparing students for life after secondary school?	92%		7%		2%
3.c.	Is there a coherent, on-going effort within the district to keep curriculum current with evolving trends and best practices in pedagogy and educational research?	80%		13%		7%
3.d.	Do teachers play an important role in reviewing and revising curriculum in the district?	88%		8%		3%
3.e.	Will the curriculum now in use in your school improve student test scores?	75%		8%		17%
3.f.	Do you believe that the curriculum content does not impact test scores as much as how a subject is taught by a teacher?	72%		16%		11%
3.g.	Is the curriculum in your school aligned with the state frameworks?	79%		8%		13%

4 Planning		1&2		4 & 5		3
4.a.	Is the planning for important issues (e.g. curriculum, budgetary, etc.) within the district a top-down process?	53%		15%		32%
4.a.1.	If the answer is "Definitely yes" (1) or "Generally yes" (2), is there an important role for teachers and professional staff in the planning process?	59%		27%		14%
4.b.	If staff does not have an important role in developing plans, are decisions made by the central office/school committee explained so that you can understand the basis for the decision/policy?	58%		23%		19%
4.c.	Are you familiar with the content of your school improvement plan?	63%		20%		17%
4.d.	Does the school improvement plan address the needs of students in your school?	69%		8%		23%
4.e.	Is the plan used to effect important changes in your school?	63%		10%		27%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Harvard

Survey Response Rate: 40%

Teachers' Responses

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 & 5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

5	Communications and Mission Statement	1&2		4 & 5		3
5.a.	Is there adequate on-going communication between teachers and district administrators? In other words, do you think that you know what is going on in the district?	67%		19%		14%
5.b.	Is there adequate communication between you and your superiors?	80%		17%		3%
5.c.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school district?	78%		3%		18%
5.d.	Is there a mission statement in place for your school?	77%		2%		22%
5.e.	Does the mission statement define how the school is run, and how students are taught?	60%		10%		30%
5.f.	Are these mission statements applied in the operation of the school and the teaching of students?	66%		8%		26%

6	Budget Process	1&2		4 & 5		3
6.a.	Do you understand your school budget process?	63%		20%		17%
6.b.	Do you understand how the budget process impacts your department?	75%		14%		11%
6.c.	Is the school budgeting process fair and equitable?	50%		20%		30%
6.d.	Are budgetary needs solicited and adequately addressed in the budget process?	54%		21%		25%
6.e.	Once the budget is approved and implemented, does the allocation and use of funds match the publicly stated purposes?	65%		13%		22%
6.f.	Given the circumstances, the school department seems to be doing the best it can with in the school budget process.	80%		13%		8%
6.g.	Are there deficiencies in this process?	37%		28%		35%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Harvard

Survey Response Rate: 40%

Teachers' Responses

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	182	Good to Excellent
No	485	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

7 Professional Development		182		485		3
7.a.	Is there an adequate professional development program in your school?	46%		27%		27%
7.b.	Is the program designed to meet school needs and tied to the new frameworks and assessments?	60%		17%		22%
7.c.	Is the program designed to change the content of pedagogy in classrooms?	46%		26%		28%
7.d.	Are there deficiencies in the professional development program?	39%		28%		33%
7.e.	Did you participate in the professional development program in 1997/98?	70%		25%		5%
7.f.	Professional development is making a difference and will improve education in my school district.	52%		16%		31%
8 Supplies		182		485		3
8.a.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate supplies to do your job?	67%		21%		11%
8.b.	Have you generally received sufficient and appropriate basic educational supplies (e.g. chalk, paper, pens, pencils, etc.) to do your job?	71%		14%		14%
8.c.	Have you generally been supplied with a sufficient number of a current edition of textbooks?	55%		36%		9%
8.d.	Are students given a copy of these textbooks to keep at home during the year?	13%		80%		7%
8.e.	Have you generally been supplied with sufficient ancillary curriculum materials (e.g. current maps, lab supplies, videos, etc.)?	53%		32%		16%
8.f.	Is the process for obtaining supplies and materials effective, time sensitive and responsive to your classroom needs?	61%		25%		15%

EMPLOYEE SURVEY - Harvard

Survey Response Rate: 40%

Teachers' Responses

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

Rating Scale		
Yes/No Questions		Opinion
yes	1&2	Good to Excellent
No	4 &5	Not good, inadequate
Not sure, one way or the other	3	OK - could be better, could be worse

9	Facilities	1&2	4 &5	3
9.a.	How would you rate the overall state of school facilities (e.g. cleanliness, security, maintenance, structural integrity)?	71%	10%	10%
9.b.	How would you rate the overall state of classrooms, labs, and other teaching rooms/areas?	78%	6%	6%
9.c.	How would you rate the overall state of the common areas (e.g. hallways, stairwells, and cafeteria)?	78%	16%	6%
9.d.	How would you rate the overall state of the areas outside of the building (e.g. playgrounds, walk-ways and grounds)?	75%	7%	18%
9.e.	Would you agree with the following statement: "The school administration makes an effort to provide a clean and safe working environment."	87%	3%	10%

10	Computers and other Educational Technology	1&2	4 &5	3
10.a.	Are the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the management practices at the school?	59%	27%	14%
10.b.	Are the usage of computers and other technological tools a significant part of the instructional practices at the school?	37%	37%	27%
10.c.	In terms of student usage, are computers generally available only in a computer laboratory setting or library/media center?	70%	23%	6%
10.d.	How many computers are located in your classroom?			
10.e.	Do you have a school computer provided for and dedicated for your usage?	33%	66%	2%
10.f.	Is there a school computer provided for and shared by you and other teachers?	76%	20%	4%
10.g.	Are there computers available for and used on a regular basis by students?	69%	23%	8%
10.h.	Is the number of available computers sufficient for the number of students?	32%	58%	10%
10.i.	Are the computers in good working order?	61%	28%	11%
10.j.	Are the software packages in the computers uniform and consistent with the instructional level to be provided?	51%	27%	22%
10.k.	Is there a policy or program providing for computer training for teachers on software and computers used by students?	34%	36%	30%

Opening Remarks

On June 18, 1993, the Massachusetts Education Reform Act was signed into law. This historic piece of legislation created the framework for a heretofore-unprecedented statewide, full scope educational improvement plan. Student learning, enhanced teachers' professionalism and accountability, school management, and equity of funding, would be the cornerstones of this act.

"It's déjà vu all over again," Yogi Berra's famous saying, first came to mind when this next be all, end all school reform act was initiated.

Countless catchall phrases like "continuous school improvement," "effective schools," and whole school reform had been heard before. Like a sleeping volcano they seem to erupt noisily every decade or so, often only to recede quietly into the background.

The notion of comprehensive school reform is not new; at least the elements that make up what's called comprehensive reform.

However, education reform as we know it in Massachusetts is to be commended for undertaking this Herculean task of applying the same principles of school improvement to all school districts regardless of demographics.

By galvanizing the best practices of what has been learned so far about creating better schools the DOE has gone beyond taking the "part by part" theory of improvement and has gone for the whole nine yards.

Harvard's Progress Since 1993 or Has Ed. Reform Helped Harvard?

The Harvard School System has always been considered a "high-achieving" school system. Under Ed. Reform, however, some notable changes have occurred. In general, the Ed. Reform Act was perhaps the single most driving force that galvanized the efforts of this small, but powerful K – 12, two-school system.

System Mission Statement

It was clear—even Harvard needed a system mission statement—we now have one.

Curriculum Mapping

Thanks to the Harvard Ed. Plan and the Frameworks, all disciplines possess (or soon will) curriculum maps which provide linkage to the Frameworks, specific discipline standards, and the Harvard Ed. Plan (HEP).

School Councils

The Harvard School System boasts of two highly visible, influential school councils with student-centered School Improvement Plans. Thanks to the concerted efforts of the councils, overrides have been successfully supported at town meetings.

Technology

Our technology plan, accepted at its first submission by the DOE, crafted the blueprint for our technology plan of action. While Harvard would not be considered a "technology flagship," we have done an adequate job within the limits of our budget.

Professional Development Focus

Professional development dollars, in large part, are spent to support the development of curriculum (frameworks), the system's mission statement, and teacher improvement from both the pedagogical and content areas.

Teacher Accountability

A fully developed evaluation plan is in place. This plan places teachers on a three-year cycle wherein they are evaluated from various perspectives every year.

Mentoring

A "Harvard" designed mentoring program has been put in place throughout the system. Long before the DOE established a mentoring program, The Bromfield School established a mentoring program. Two years later, the elementary school followed suit. Last year, we applied for a DOE grant to expand our mentoring program, and, as usual, our proposal was denied. Hence, we had to develop our own local K – 12 plan of action.

A Hybrid Administrative Model

Harvard has implemented a K – 12 systems' approach to decision making. In response to the high turnover of superintendents, Harvard instituted a Superintendent/Principal Model in conjunction with a Town/School Finance Director's position. All cost center decision-makers attend a weekly work session wherein issues are brought before all the parties and decisions are made (or at least influenced) by the team. By using this systems approach, each cost center manager's level of understanding and sensitivity to the system's needs supports better results.

Barriers to Education Reform

The greatest barriers to education reform for Harvard are time and money.

Financial Support

The financial piece of Ed. Reform hasn't really benefited Harvard. Harvard, not unlike many other systems, is obligated to implement state mandates but is not providing the necessary funding to support them. Adding to our financial woes is the fact that Harvard, because of our perceived wealth, seems to consistently fall out of favor with the state for most competitive grants. While the state has put many initiatives into place to "assure" equal funding for educational reform to develop, Harvard's actual per pupil, although above foundation criteria, continues to decline for regular education. Given the fact that we are almost solely dependent on property taxes for school funding, state mandates without **real** financial support could lead to educational decline. Harvard is not unique in this situation.

Lack of Administrative Staff

Inability to 100% fund a dedicated administrative staff creates staff overload. Most school dollars continue to go into teaching staff and special needs. While the teacher shortage is real, the administrative shortage will have even greater impact in the next decade. The other demands of education reform are also adding to this crisis.

Teacher/Administrative Fatigue

We are on MCAS/accountability/reporting/meeting/collaboration overload. By attempting to equalize educational opportunities in this state, and "correct" those underperforming school systems, we are all drowning

Enough already!

Time

The school day/school year is simply not designed to adequately process and handle all the work we are being asked to do. Harvard has all the same demands as other school systems but lacks the necessary staff to fulfill all

the state demands. Thanks to the dedication of a small support staff whose dedication surpasses all expectations, the job gets done. It could be done better.

Assessment and Feedback

The albeit essential and defensible insistence to make greater use of data to drive school improvement efforts cannot be accomplished within the “normal” staffing structures found in most school systems. The state needs to provide the staffing and technical expertise as well as to accomplish this important piece of Ed. Reform. The use of assessment to improve our work is perhaps one of the single most important functions of school education. Given the sophistication and level of expertise, however, that this component requires the DOE should include this component into its overall services to school systems.

Special Education

Bottom line—escalating, out of control, special education costs hurt regular education. The original intent of Ch. 766 has been lost over the years. Any increase in funding is generally devoured by special education.

The Future of the Harvard School System

Harvard will continue to be a top quality school system. With a building expansion plan currently on the drawing board, we are envisioning a unified middle school to be contained within The Bromfield School within the next two years. Space for limited expanded enrollment, and an expansion of our fine and performing arts programs will also be added to our facility planning. By eliminating up to five classrooms, the elementary school will also benefit by this building program.

Threats To Our Overall Mission:

Uncertainty of the Devens’s population: The former Fort Devens is undergoing major transformations. This transformation includes the potential building of 200± new homes most of which would be located within Harvard boundaries. This situation of growth uncertainty is also creating challenges for other suburban communities. Funding formulas must become more sensitive to this issue.

The maintenance of an adequate budget to support our quality staff and programs. Can the Town of Harvard continue to sustain the level of funding needed to support this quality system? Serious strategic planning that may call for the elimination of some programs may come into question. Other areas of consideration for elimination or reductions will be class size numbers, extra curricular programs, evening programs, busing, etc.

What Do We Need To Do?

The Future of the Harvard School System

Given our past performance, I believe it is safe to say we will continue to be a quality school system. Having said that, however, we must face the facts that we have many ominous mounting threats to our mission: inadequate financing; attracting and keeping quality staff; less than adequate (and shrinking state dollars).

If Harvard is to continue to succeed, it cannot rest on its past performance. To use a quote from a typical stock prospectus, “Past performance cannot guarantee future performance,” The Harvard School System will pay heed to these simple, but nonetheless, important guidelines:

- Establish and review an ongoing process to examine standards and programs for students and staff that ensure high achievement.
- Administer a fair and equitable system of school finance.
- Continue to challenge the status quo of traditional ways to conduct business especially in the system’s governance structure.

- Provide opportunities for high-quality professional development as a Harvard hallmark.
- Have measurable goals and benchmarks for the school committee.
- Assure meaningful parental and community involvement.
- Work diligently to continue our team approach to problem solving.
- Use high-quality external technical support and assistance.
- Never lose sight of the most important ingredient to our success—**civility**.

Conclusions

In the final analysis, school system accountability has been brought to its highest level of public scrutiny ever under Education Reform. Harvard, as stated before has always held its students and staff to high standards. What separates Harvard from other systems is our ability to manage our affairs with a degree of seriousness of purpose while having fun doing it. Our loose/tight structure allows us to always keep the end in mind but offers staff the flexibility they need in order to flourish.

Without having formally adopted this quote by A. Einstein, I believe it aptly describes our underlying philosophy.....

"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted. "

- Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

Respectfully submitted,

Mihran Keoseian