



Student Exclusions in Massachusetts Public Schools: 1998-99

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Massachusetts Department of Education
address 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148
telephone 781-338-3000 **internet** www.doe.mass.edu



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This document was prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Education
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STUDENT EXCLUSIONS: 1998-99

Background

The 1998-99 school year was the sixth year in which the Department of Education required schools to submit student level data on student exclusions. The following analysis is based on data reported by schools on students excluded, as defined above, between July 1, 1998, and June 30, 1999. Data were returned to school districts for verification, and data were edited in cases for which corrections were submitted.

A student exclusion is defined as the removal of a student from participation in regular school activities for disciplinary purposes for more than ten consecutive school days, permanently, or indefinitely.

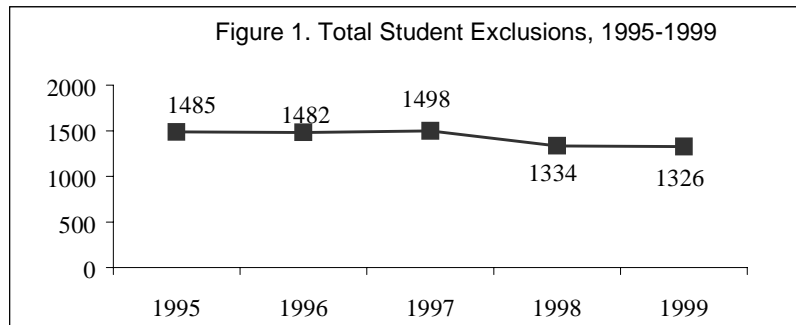
Results

There were 1,326 student exclusions in the 1998-99 school year from 155 school districts and charter schools. A total of 1,299 students were excluded, of whom 26 were excluded two or more times during the year. The greatest number of exclusions for an individual student was three.

Table 1. Student Exclusions Over Time

	1998-99	1997-98	1996-97
Number of Student Exclusions	1,326	1,334	1,498
Number of Individual Students Excluded	1,299	1,276	1,446
Number of Students Excluded More Than Once	26	29	49
Percent of Students Receiving Alternative Education	65%	67%	63%

As shown in Figure 1, the number of student exclusions during the 1998-99 school year was the lowest in five years, decreasing by less than one percent from the previous school year and 11 percent from two years prior. The number of students excluded more than once during the 1998-99 school year decreased by 10 percent from the previous year and by 47 percent from 1996-97.



Nearly two-thirds of the students excluded from school were provided with alternative education, a decrease of two percentage points from the prior year.

Exclusions by Student Characteristics

As shown in Table 2, over 80 percent of excluded students were male. The proportion of male exclusions in 1998-99 increased slightly from the previous year. As in past years, male students were excluded at higher rates than female students. Approximately one in every 500 male students was excluded compared to one in every 2,000 female students.

Table 2. Characteristics of Excluded Students

	1998-99		1997-98		1996-97	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Gender						
Male	1,097	83	1,064	80	1,212	81
Female	229	17	269	20	286	19
Not Reported	0		1	0	0	
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian	1	0	5	0	4	0
Asian	37	3	57	4	41	3
Black	257	19	247	19	350	23
Hispanic	429	32	464	35	506	34
White	602	45	552	41	595	40
Not Reported	0		9	1	2	0
Age						
10 years old or under	16	1	34	3	47	3
11-13 years old	325	25	264	20	314	21
14-16 years old	739	56	739	55	831	55
17-19 years old	241	18	285	21	289	19
20 and older	5	0	4	0	2	0
Not Reported	0		8	1	15	1
Program Status						
Regular Education	994	75	1,035	78	1,107	74
Special Education	332	25	282	21	364	24
Referred for Special Ed	0		12	1	9	1
Not Reported	0		5	0	18	1

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

In comparison to the total student enrollment for 1998-99, a disproportionate number of students excluded from school were students of color. This pattern has been consistent over time. As shown in Figures 2a and 2b, students of racial and ethnic minority groups comprised 23 percent of the total student enrollment but accounted for 55 percent of student exclusions. Specifically, Hispanic students, almost one-tenth of the total student enrollment, accounted for approximately one-third of student exclusions. African-American students, nine percent of the total student enrollment, accounted for 19 percent of student exclusions. Although white students comprised 77 percent of the total student enrollment, they accounted for 45 percent of student exclusions.

