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BRIEF ON CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Education Reform Issues in the Chicago Public Schools

Chicago School Reform

The Chicago School Reform Act, passed by the Illinois state legislature in December 1988, shifted policy-making and administrative powers from the Board of Education to local school communities. The act called for each school to establish a Local School Council (LSC) consisting of six parents, two community members, two teachers, and the principal. Each LSC was given responsibility for hiring a principal to serve a four-year contract, evaluating his or her performance, and determining whether he or she should be retained. Each LSC was also charged with approving the three-year school improvement plan and the annual budget.

While the School Reform Act abolished lifetime tenure for principals, it gave them the authority to recruit, hire, and fire teachers and other educational personnel, and called for them to provide leadership in developing and implementing the school improvement plan and budget. Also, the act insured that teachers would have a role in advising the principal and the LSC on curriculum, instruction, staff development, and personnel by requiring each school to establish a Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (PPAC). At each school, faculty members are elected to serve on the PPAC by teachers and other certified personnel.

Governance Reform

In June 1995, Governor Jim Edgar signed a Republican-drafted bill that completely overhauled the Chicago school system and gave control of the district to Mayor Richard Daley. The bill dissolved the former 15-member school board and the general superintendent's position, transferring authority to the five-member Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. The trustees appointed a management team including chief operating, fiscal, purchase, and educational officers. The law also eliminated subdistricts and the subdistrict superintendents.

The new reform law streamlines state funding for the district by creating two block grants, one for general education and one for educational services. The district's School Finance Authority has been suspended for four years, giving the trustees and Mr. Daley the job of managing the district's financial affairs.

America Reads Challenge: Read*Write*Now!

As a pilot site for the America Reads Challenge, Chicago will offer a summer reading program to elementary students and preschoolers who are at risk of academic failure. The district is offering tutoring at 42 schools that were chosen because they are open to the community after school

hours and have early childhood education programs. An estimated 20,000 children will be tutored by trained community volunteers at least once a week.

Capital Improvement Program

In response to its growing school population and deteriorating schools, CPS launched the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in 1996. It plans on spending \$500 million in 1999 to repair and upgrade its school facilities, which would bring total expenditures since its inception to just under \$2 billion. However, CPS has identified \$3 billion worth of work that is necessary to meet the program's objectives. The \$1 billion dollar funding gap could be reduced with an anticipated \$416 million from President Clinton's "Rebuild America's Schools" initiative. The 1999-2003 CIP intends to renovate 112 schools, build 6 schools, make significant additions to 2 schools, link all schools to the Internet, add new science labs and lockers to high schools, and build the Chicago Academy of Math and Science.

Special Education Suit

Chicago Public Schools will spend \$24 million over the next eight years to train teachers in providing effective instruction to 5,000 students with disabilities. The commitment is part of the settlement resulting from a 1992 class action suit filed by the Northwestern University Legal Clinic on behalf of Chicago's disabled students. CPS did not admit liability in the settlement, but did agree to require all schools to develop plans for reviewing relevant services and professional development, as well as increase opportunities for disabled students to participate in activities with non-disabled students. In February 1998, one month after the settlement, U.S. District Court Judge Robert W. Gettleman found the Illinois State Department of Education liable for segregation of disabled students in the Chicago district and required that it develop a remedy.

Bilingual Education

In the spring of 1998, the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees unanimously voted to implement a new bilingual education policy that will affect the district's 71,000 limited English proficiency (LEP) students. LEP students will now be expected to transition into a mainstream English classroom within three years of enrolling in the district. However, the new policy does make it possible for LEP students to receive a fourth year of instruction in their primary language. The policy also provides support for LEP students when they enter the mainstream classroom and makes pre-schoolers eligible for dual-language programs (classes where speakers of two different languages sit side by side). In conjunction with the policy change, the Board has proposed increasing bilingual education funds by \$3 million to a total of \$40 million, which will be used to improve professional development and develop a Resource Demonstration Center that

will provide on-going workshops. The approved policy was supported by 39 groups representing a variety of language-minority residents.

Accountability

Since 1991, the state of Illinois has required that 50 percent or more of the students at each school meet the standards assessed by the Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP). Schools failing to meet state standards are placed on an academic watch list and given state and district resources to increase student achievement. There is no predetermined amount of time a school must remain on the list; they are removed when student achievement increases at an acceptable rate. A lack of improvement over time can have school governance and staffing implications. In 1996-1997, the number of Chicago schools on the state academic watch list decreased from 149 to 108. During the 1997-1998 school year, 93 schools were on the academic warning list with "Does Not Meet Standard" status.

The 1995 School Reform Act required that CPS increase student achievement and establish its own mechanism for monitoring individual school progress. The Office of Accountability was created in 1995 to fulfill this requirement and is divided into six outcome areas: intervention; quality review; research and evaluation; teacher accountability; curriculum and instruction; and assessment. In addition to supporting schools on the state academic watch list, the office established its own school probation program based on the results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). If more than 85 percent of students at a school score below the national norm, the school is placed on district probation. Although there is some overlap between CPS schools on probation and those on the state's academic watch list, CPS probation is considered the more serious of the two.

The 115 schools on probation during the 1997-98 school year each developed a mandated corrective action plan with the assistance of a probation manager. Business managers assigned to each school are handling many administrative responsibilities to give the principals the freedom to focus on increasing student achievement. Probation managers visit schools often and lead the development and implementation of the corrective action plan to meet the needs of the students. Faculty members from local colleges and universities have become "partners in success" by working with the schools' staffs to develop more effective teaching strategies. In May of 1998, ITBS score results indicate that 25 of the 115 schools are eligible to be taken off of probation, while 2 will be added. Ninety-two of the probation schools reported gains in test scores. Officials said the success is a result of CPS support programs, such as Lighthouse, After-School and Summer Bridge.

Like the academic watch list, schools do not remain on probation for a predetermined time. If no improvement occurs, the district has the option of evaluating the administration, staff, and LSC to determine if specific personnel changes should be made. Since 1995, school administrators

have been removed for poor school performance. During the 1997-1998 school year, 23 principals were removed and replaced.

Restructuring and Reconstituting High Schools

In 1995, the Office of High School Services and Support was created to help the 74 Chicago high schools increase achievement, reduce the dropout rate, and prepare students for a productive life after graduation. Seven task forces, consisting of educators, parents, community leaders, and members of the business sector, drafted strategic plans for a presentation to the public in December 1996 on seven topics: restructuring existing high schools; creating secondary options; curriculum and instruction; student development; schools and communication; college bridge; and vocational and technical education.

As a result of the task forces' recommendations, seven Chicago high were reconstituted during the 1997-98 school year. Reconstitution requires that all staff must either reapply for their positions within their schools or seek positions elsewhere in the district. It also gives CPS the power to remove the schools' principals with input from the Local School Council. Five of the seven principals in the seven reconstituted schools were replaced, along with approximately 180 teachers.

For the 1999 school year, the Accountability Committee has recommended that 15 schools be reconstituted. However, the CPS Chief Executive Officer has recommended that no schools be reconstituted next year, preferring to wait until an evaluation of the original seven schools is conducted and contract negotiations with the Chicago Teacher's Union are finalized. The Board of Trustees is currently deliberating its options.

Quality Review

The quality review department of the Office of Accountability is working with all CPS schools to prevent them from landing on either the state academic watch list or CPS probation. A team of educators conducts external reviews of schools on a four year cycle with one quarter of CPS schools being evaluated each year. The team visits each school for a week and, in addition to identifying existing areas of concern, makes suggestions addressing possible future problems. During the three years between external reviews, schools conduct internal evaluations and receive district support as needed to improve student achievement. External reviews are conducted annually for schools with chronic problems. Chicago will conduct the third round of external reviews in the 1998-1999 school year.

Junior Academies

Junior Academies, introduced in the fall of 1996, are designed to assist freshmen with their transition to high school. Schools wrote proposals for the academies, and each program is unique to each school's population. Schools-within-a-school and extended elementary schools are two models for the new academies. A core curriculum is required, but schools may implement their own reform efforts to make the program successful. In 1999, an expected \$11 million will aid all 77 high schools in instituting Junior Academies to serve all CPS ninth graders. Additionally, these funds will support Junior Academies at 4 elementary schools that are taking steps towards becoming K-12 schools over the next three years.

Increased Math and Science Requirements

In June 1998, the Chicago Public Schools completed the second year of a four year plan to increase the math and science requirements for graduation. In the past, students in the city's public high schools were required to pass one year of science and two years of mathematics, the minimum required for graduation by the state of Illinois. Beginning with the graduating class of 2000, students will be required to pass at least three years each of science and math to graduate. The policy further states that two of the science courses must have a laboratory component and that the math sequence must begin with algebra.

The requirements support the goals of the Chicago Systemic Initiative, a \$15 million effort financed by the National Science Foundation to upgrade math and science teaching in the city. The initiative also aims to have all students complete a full year of algebra by the time they finish eighth grade. Because of Chicago's successes in implementing reform initiatives, the National Science Foundation awarded CPS an additional \$11 million in September 1997. Five million dollars of that figure will be used in conjunction with Northwestern University to create a research center for math and science education.

Offering the additional coursework is expected to cost the school system between \$12 million and \$20 million a year to hire an additional 240 math and science teachers, to create 1,200 more classes, and to equip more science laboratories. In Fall 1996, CPS did not receive the additional funding necessary to continue the phase-in process through 1999; however, district officials say they have experienced success in training teachers from other disciplines to teach math and science courses.

Student Promotion Policies

In August 1996, the Chicago School Reform Board adopted a rigorous student promotion policy that requires underachieving students in grades three, six, eight, and nine to complete a summer school program before being promoted to the next grade. The policy sets performance standards

based on ITBS scores for third-, sixth-, and eighth-graders, and on TAP scores for ninth-graders. Students who score more than one year below their grade level (one-and-a-half years for sixth-graders) on the standardized tests, or who fail reading or math, must successfully complete a six- or seven-week summer remediation program. (The duration of the summer program varies by grade level). All ninth-graders who miss more than 20 days of school or fail to earn the required 4.5 core credits are also required to attend the summer-school programs. Students who fail the summer programs are held back.

Student Achievement

Illinois Goal Assessment Program. Test scores for CPS students on the 1997 Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP) rose in all grades in math and science, but showed no improvement in reading. In math and science, Chicago students more than doubled the gains made statewide. For grades 3, 6, and 8, between 39 to 45 percent of Chicago students scored at or above the state math average. Twenty-two percent of CPS tenth graders scored at or above the math average. In reading, Chicago's third grade students made no significant changes, while students in grades 6, 8, and 10 performed significantly lower than the previous year. For each of the tested grades, between 15 to 22 percent of Chicago students scored at or above the state reading average. IGAP scores for the 1997-1998 school year will be available in September.

Test of Achievement and Proficiency. Students' scores on the 1998 Test of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), which tests ninth and eleventh graders, showed significant gains in both math and reading. In math, 31 percent of CPS ninth and eleventh graders performed at or above national norms, a slight increase from 1997 and 9 percent increase from 1996. However, eleventh grade math scores dropped slightly as ninth grade scores increased. In reading, 27 percent of the ninth and eleventh graders were at or above national norms, which is a 4 percent increase from 1997 and 8 percent increase from the 1996 test.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Finally, test scores on the 1998 Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), which tests students in grades 3-8, showed progress. On the math section, 40 percent of third through eighth graders performed at or above the national norm, which is almost 4 percent more than last year and 9 percent more than 1996. The most significant progress was found in grades 3 and 4, where 43 percent of students scored as well or better than their national counterparts. Eighth graders in Chicago dropped 2 percent since last year in comparison to U.S. eighth graders. In reading, the ITBS demonstrates that 35 percent of third through eighth graders in Chicago score at or above the national norm, which is an increase of 4 percent since 1997 and 6 percent more than in 1996. The gains are consistent throughout all the tested grades.

On the 1998 ITBS, 93 of the 115 schools on district probation reported gains in reading scores, and 92 reported gains in math. Five of the 7 reconstituted schools reported gains in the percentage of students scoring at or above the national norm in math, and 3 reported gains in the percentage on the reading section.

The improvements in test scores are consistent with increases in attendance and graduation rates, which are at the highest levels since 1986. Also, chronic truancy and mobility rates have dropped over the past three years.

Annenberg Grant

Philanthropist Walter Annenberg awarded Chicago \$50 million to support the development of school reform networks. Under the terms of the grant, Chicago is expected to match the grant with \$100 million in public and private donations. In the 1996-97 school year, there are 220 schools involved in 55 networks throughout the district. The networks have three goals: to foster a closer adult/student relationship in schools; to restructure schools to allow teachers the time and resources necessary to develop professionally; and to break down the barrier of isolation that often exists among schools and educators. Although the networks have only been in place for a short time, there have been promising steps made in developing relationships among educators from different schools, including peer mentoring and enhanced professional development.

Professional Development

The Teachers' Academy for Mathematics and Science. The impetus for establishing the Academy came in 1989 from a team that included representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy, the National Science Foundation, the offices of the Mayor of Chicago and the Governor of Illinois, and a broad coalition of the city's education activists. Located on the campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology, the Academy provides intensive programs in math and science to public school teachers in Chicago.

The Academy's core program spans at least 18 months plus summer sessions and is designed to be integrated within a three-year cycle that includes strategic planning. Participating teachers explore the content of instruction in math and science, learn and practice new knowledge and skills, review and analyze their curricula and standards, examine different forms of student assessment, and experiment with new educational technology. The Academy has also created a school improvement unit that helps the schools implement organizational changes to better support teaching and learning.

By the end of the 1994-95 school year, the Academy had served more than 2,400 teachers in 70 schools presented workshops on innovations in math and science education to 9,000 additional teachers, and created electronic networks that link more than 100 public schools in Chicago. Although the focus has remained consistent, funding for the program has decreased and the number of schools involved has dropped to 54 in the 1996-97 school year.

The Quest Center. In February 1992, CTU received a \$1.1 million grant from the MacArthur Foundation to create the Quest Center (QC) to promote reform in Chicago Public Schools. For the first three years, QC selected 46 Quest schools, each of which received \$3,000 and three years of assistance from QC staff. Many of these schools developed interdisciplinary or thematic curricula, created teams of teachers, integrated academic and vocational work, used portfolios and performance assessments, and incorporated projects and real-life experiences to make learning more meaningful to students.

In 1996, the center worked with district trustees to develop new academic standards. The Board approved the standards in Spring 1997, and all schools implemented them in the 1997-98 school year.

Currently, the Quest Center provides services to the original 46 Quest schools, as well as other CPS schools as requested. During the 1997-1998 school year, QC chose 10 schools for in-depth work. Facilitators visit the 10 schools at least once per week to assist staff in school improvement and restructuring plans. Additionally, all CPS teachers are eligible to participate in the QC Summer Institute to develop their knowledge and skills. The Quest Center is now entering into its second year of working with "Partnerships for Professional Practice", which is a teacher induction program administered in collaboration with the University of Illinois and CPS.

Teacher Recruitment. In 1998, CPS embarked on an aggressive campaign to recruit teachers from the top education schools in the country. Representatives from CPS, including principals and the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees President, will visit 44 schools throughout the nation.

Limits on Collective Bargaining

The 1995 Chicago School Reform Act targeted the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) by limiting the items subject to collective bargaining and placing a moratorium on strikes for 18 months. It barred managerial employees from union membership and allowed the new board to adopt a contract that runs four years, one year longer than was allowed prior to its passage. Its restrictions prevent teachers from bargaining over many issues that were previously negotiable, including class size, staffing and assignments, academic calendars, hours and places of instruction, and pupil-assessment policies. Also, the union has no input on decisions about charter schools and experimental educational programs. The CTU filed a lawsuit challenging these restrictions and the loss of job protection for paraprofessionals but voluntarily dropped the suit later in 1995.

The CTU and CPS have entered into early negotiations this summer for a contract that will take effect in 1999. A central focus of the negotiation is the terms under which the district will reconstitute schools. The CPS Chief Executive Officer, Paul Vallas, has recommended that no

new schools be reconstituted until an agreement is reached between CPS and the CTU and reconstitution outcomes are evaluated.

**Selected Public Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics
for Illinois and the Chicago Public Schools**

	U.S. 1995-96	Illinois 1995-96	Chicago 1995-96
Enrollment	44,840,481	1,943,623	412,921
White	65%	64%	11%
Black	17%	21%	89% minority
Hispanic	14%	12%	
Asian	4%	3%	
American Indian	1%	0%	
Number of public schools	87,125	4,142	606
Revenues for elementary/secondary education	\$273.1 billion ¹	\$12.0 billion ¹	\$2.5 billion ²
Federal	7%	6%	12%
State	47%	28%	32%
Local	44%	63%	55%
Private	3%	2%	
Per pupil expenditures	\$5,988 ¹	\$6,136 ¹	\$5,613 ²
Pupil/teaching staff ratio	17.3	17.1	18.0

NOTE:

1. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1994-95 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.
2. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1993-94 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.

All percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 1997 Digest of Education Statistics.

**Selected Public Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics
for Illinois and the Chicago Public Schools**

	U.S. 1994-95	Illinois 1994-95	Chicago 1993-94
Enrollment	44,108,775	1,916,172	409,499
White	66%	64%	11%
Black	17%	21%	89% minority
Hispanic	13%	12%	
Asian	4%	3%	
American Indian	1%	0%	
Number of public schools	86,221	4,195	609
Revenues for elementary/secondary education	\$260.1 billion ¹	\$11.3 billion ¹	\$2.4 billion ²
Federal	7%	7%	15%
State	45%	28%	34%
Local	45%	63%	51%
Private	3%	2%	
Per pupil expenditures	\$5,767 ¹	\$5,893 ¹	\$5,551 ²
Pupil/teaching staff ratio	17.3	17.3	18.9

NOTES:

1. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1993-94 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.
 2. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1992-93 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.
- All percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 1996 Digest of Education Statistics.

Chicago is ensuring that promotion to the next grade reflects students' learning the content to enable them to succeed. In August 1996, the Chicago School Reform Board adopted a rigorous student promotion policy that requires underachieving students in grades three, six, eight, and nine to complete a summer school program before being promoted to the next grade. The policy sets performance standards based on test scores for third-, sixth-, eighth-graders, and for ninth-graders. Students who score more than one year below their grade level (one-and-a-half years for sixth-graders) on the standardized tests, or who fail reading or math, must successfully complete a six- or seven-week Summer Bridge program. All ninth-graders who miss more than 20 days of school or fail to earn the required 4.5 core credits are also required to attend the summer-school programs. Students who fail the summer programs are held back. Results show that over 80 percent of Chicago students were able to meet the promotion criteria; many would not have done so without the intensive summer instruction provided through the Bridge program.

INITIATIVE STATUS REPORT™

Small Schools



The Chicago Panel

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The Goal of Initiative Status Reports

Initiative Status Reports™ (ISRs), a project by the Chicago Panel on School Policy, take a fresh look at ongoing efforts to improve Chicago schools. Recognizing the need for accurate information — by teachers, parents, decision-makers, and the general public — ISRs offer timely and objective analysis of a particular initiative, program or policy within the Chicago public schools. ISRs answer the question: What is happening today?

Perhaps most important, the status of each initiative is assessed relative to the goals established by its founders. With a depth of analysis and quick turn-around time, ISRs help fill the information gap between journalistic reporting and long-term research. This prompt feedback can be used: by program participants to explore mid-course corrections, to continue improvement and enhance program effectiveness; by program supporters, both public and private, to assess how well their time, money and energy have been spent; and by the general public to be kept apprised of ongoing progress in Chicago schools.

Each ISR is clear, concise and adheres to a consistent format. A brief *Introduction*, *Background* and *Description of Methods* provide an overall context for the initiative being examined. Specific questions to be answered are laid out clearly. Each criterion for analysis, or *Status Point*, is addressed individually, while a separate category for *General Status Points* allows the Panel to include information outside the original scope, but which may be useful to the reader. Important questions discovered during the course of the report which may be useful to program participants, supporters and others are contained in a final section, *For the Future*. These questions may be answered by program participants and supporters, future ISRs or longitudinal research.

Panel findings are shared with all parties working to improve public education in Chicago. At the conclusion of each ISR, the Panel will host a forum where individuals join in dialogue to identify obstacles and generate new strategies for improving Chicago schools. Forum participants may include: initiative representatives, parents, educators, advocates, employers, researchers and others.

Introduction

The national trend toward smaller schools continues to be discussed widely as a potential remedy for lagging school improvement efforts. This discussion has been active in Chicago for a number of years.

Recently, small schools have been explored as one of many strategies to restructure Chicago high schools. Advocates state that smaller schools establish personal, more family-like ties between teachers and students, providing a better learning environment for students. The smallness is thought to facilitate stronger ties between schools and communities. This Initiative Status Report (ISR) evaluates the current status of the small schools funded by the Chicago Reform Board of Trustees through the Small Schools Initiative (See Background). This ISR is not designed to assess whether small schools are working. It is intended to provide a timely and objective analysis of the current status of small schools' implementation efforts. Specifically, the following question is examined: Are the 24 schools which received funds currently functioning as small schools with respect to the five essential features?

Essential Features of Small Schools

According to a joint report on the progress of small schools in Chicago after one year — released by the Small Schools Coalition, Leadership for Quality Education, and Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (August 1996) — the five essential features of a small school are the following:

1. **SIZE:** a small student body of no more than 350 students at the elementary level and 500 students in secondary schools;
2. **COHESION:** a cohesive faculty supported by parents;
3. **AUTONOMY:** substantial autonomy in regard to curriculum, budget, personnel, and other organizational matters;
4. **CURRICULAR FOCUS:** a curricular focus that provides a continuous curriculum across a range of grades; and
5. **ADMISSIONS POLICY:** an inclusive admissions policy that does not discriminate, but gives weight to student and parental commitments to the school's mission.

Background

In August of 1995, the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees adopted the Small Schools Resolution. The Resolution put Chicago Public Schools (CPS) on record in support of small schools, committing to "the goal of assisting the formation and strengthening of small schools in Chicago." In September, the Board issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to teachers, principals, LSC members, parents and others, inviting the formation of small schools in Chicago. It is important to note that many small schools existed in the Chicago public school system prior to CPS' Small Schools Initiative, though this report examines only those involved in the RFP process.

The RFP process consisted of two stages. First, a "fast-track" RFP sought proposals from schools willing to open at Cregier Multiplex by February 1996. Second, the General RFP sought proposals for schools to open or restructure by September 1996. From a total of 84 submissions, 24 schools were selected to receive a \$10,000 planning grant to help get the school up and running. Of these, 23 are currently in operation.¹ Panel interviewers gathered both qualitative and quantitative information to provide the current status of these 23 small schools.

¹ The other school, Education in Action, was unable to get off the ground due to organizational complications.

Status Points

Following is the current status of the five essential features of small schools:

- 1 SIZE:** a small student body of no more than 350 students at the elementary level and 500 students in secondary schools.

At present, all schools meet the size requirement in terms of total enrollment.

One case is unique. This pre-existing school was broken down into several smaller schools. Student enrollment in each conforms with the size requirement for small schools. Due to a low number of students, however, Board policy requires that teachers be shared with other small schools in the same building. Although students are self-contained in distinct groups, teachers work with students in more than one small school. This appears to contradict the goal of small schools to increase personal contact and the intimacy of teacher-student relationships.

The 23 RFP small schools in Chicago employ one of the following three organizational structures to meet size requirements (See Table A):

- **School-Within-A-School (SWAS):** the small school is a separate entity which functions within a parent or host school. These schools typically do not have their own budget unit codes.
- **Multiplex:** two or more independent small schools are housed under the same roof and share a principal and sometimes facilities, but are not otherwise affiliated with one another.
- **Scatterplex:** two or more small schools are housed in different buildings, but share a principal who travels from site to site.

T A B L E A : Small School Organizational Structure

School-Within-A-School (15)	Multiplex (5)	Scatterplex (3)
FACETS (at Harper)	<i>Cregier</i>	Ariel Community Academy
Mae Jemison (at Esmond)	Best Practices High School	Telpochcalli
Media Broadcasting School (at DuSable)	Foundations Elementary School	Woodlawn Community School
Mozart Middle (at Mozart Elementary)	Nia Middle School	
Pathways to a New Millennium (at Healy)	<i>Futures Multiplex</i>	
Peace School (at Spry)	Freshman Academy	
Production Technology (at Morgan Park)	School of Teaching and Education	
SCOPE (at Eli Whitney)		
Student Builders (at Westinghouse Vocational)		
Transitions (at Nash)		
VocAdemics (5 at Manley):		
• Built Environment		
• Graphic Communication and Journalism		
• Hotel/Restaurant Management		
• Information Processing		
• Medical Arts/Allied Health		

2 COHESION: a cohesive faculty supported by parents.

A small school staff is cohesive when it develops, maintains and actively pursues a common goal for student learning; when it communicates openly about strengths and weaknesses of school strategies to meet this goal; and when it establishes a strong sense of professional community.

The school mission matters and teachers use it.

The mission provides a focus for small school activities.

- 91% "know the school mission."
- 72% "refer to the mission when making decisions."
- 96% report that their school "actively recruits faculty who support the mission."

As teachers described their activities during interviews, they shared anecdotes which demonstrated how staff were implementing and meeting the school mission.

Faculty are regularly consulted on school decisions.

- 87% agree that "faculty has input into decisions made at [their] school."
- 85% report that "all faculty is consulted when making decisions about curriculum."
- 87% believe "faculty [has] input into decisions about where money should be spent [within] the school."

Teachers who are involved in the decision-making process have more positive feelings about staff cohesion. Many teachers participated in drafting their small school proposal and have had significant input since that time.

Small school staff report high levels of professional collaboration.

- 94% report "discussing student learning with their co-workers."
- 87% say "teachers of different subjects or grade levels discuss issues about curriculum with one another."
- 90% agree that staff "[feel] equally responsible for children in all grades of [the] school."

Small school staff can build cohesion with or without strong parent involvement and support.

- 74% feel “teachers and parents work well together.”
- 64% say “parents can be counted on to see that homework gets done” often or more.
- 61% report that “parent involvement groups (such as the PTA)...discuss issues with the school mission in mind.”
- 65% believe “parents support the school mission.”

The percentages associated with these responses are below those for other indicators of staff cohesion. Most schools acknowledge the importance of parent involvement and recognize the need for improvement in this area. However, a lack of parental support does not appear to have a negative impact on a school’s ability to establish a cohesive faculty.²

3 AUTONOMY: substantial autonomy in regard to curriculum, budget, personnel, and other organizational matters.

A small school is autonomous when its faculty are self-governing with respect to decisions over curriculum, budget, personnel and other organizational matters, and its activities are carried on without control from outside entities.

Schools consistently report high levels of autonomy on curricular issues.

Data reveal that curriculum stands out as an area over which small school faculty feel they have considerable autonomy. Some teachers report that this perception of autonomy is influenced by the fact that many had an opportunity to help draft the small school proposal during the RFP process.

- 85% say “faculty are consulted when making decisions about curriculum.”
- 75% are “satisfied with [the] school’s freedom to make curriculum choices which prepare students for success.”

² This means that the overall perception of parent involvement in small schools — which may be higher than in other public schools — can aid, but does not hinder, efforts to develop staff cohesion. Instead, it suggests that cohesion can be established with or without high faculty perceptions of parental support.

Small school staff have moderate autonomy over personnel decisions.

Half of those teachers surveyed report having autonomy over personnel decisions.

- 49% agree that the schools is "free to hire new staff members."
- 45% say the faculty "helps interview and hire new teachers."
- Of those schools where staff changes have been made since the school opened, 51% say they "needed permission to make these changes."

Respondents' perceptions of autonomy over faculty recruitment depend on the relationship with the principal. Many teachers say they feel their principal respects their views and involves them in the hiring process. This involvement of faculty in decisions is school-specific and cannot be taken to characterize all small schools.

Few small schools have substantial budgetary autonomy.

Questionnaire responses are inconsistent with interviews.

- 87% believe "faculty [has] input into decisions about where money should be spent [within] the school."
- 66% say that "[no] external entities help make budget decisions."

In contrast to these written responses, interviews suggest that decisions over budget issues are the greatest source of frustration among small school staffs. As with personnel decisions, perceptions of budgetary autonomy vary with principal relationships. For instance, a faculty may have only moderate autonomy, but report higher perceived levels of autonomy because the principal is effective at involving staff in the school's budgetary decisions.

Faculty in small schools with a separate budget unit code report higher overall perceptions of autonomy, particularly with respect to budgetary decisions. Currently, only 8 of 23 RFP small schools have a separate code (See Table B).

T A B L E B : Small Schools With Separate Budget Unit Codes

Schools With a Separate Code (8)	Schools Without a Separate Code (15)
Ariel Community Academy	FACETS (at Harper)
Telpochcalli	Mae Jemison (at Esmond)
Woodlawn Community School	Media Broadcasting School (at DuSable)
	Mozart Middle (at Mozart Elementary)
Cregier	Pathways to a New Millennium (at Healy)
Best Practices High School	Peace School (at Spry)
Foundations Elementary School	Production Technology (at Morgan Park)
Nia Middle School	SCOPE (at Eli Whitney)
	Student Builders (at Westinghouse Vocational)
Futures Multiplex	Transitions (at Nash)
Freshman Academy	VocAdemics (5 at Manley):
School of Teaching and Education	• Built Environment • Graphic Communications and Journalism • Hotel/Restaurant Management • Information Processing • Medical Arts/Allied Health

Small school staff report specific elements of autonomy, but seldom report overall autonomy.

- 73% are not "frustrated by red tape when making school improvements."
- 53% say they do not need "outside approval" to make changes.
- 23% "feel the school functions as a self-governing organization."

Small schools generally report a sense of autonomy with respect to individual aspects of autonomy. It is interesting to note that most faculty do not report being frustrated by red tape. Yet, they do not agree that their school is self-governing. All small schools demonstrate some degree of autonomy, but there is no consensus on a common definition of what this means.

Teacher-principal relationships, not school structure, most influence staff perceptions of autonomy.

Organizationally, small schools are quite similar. Each is recognized as a separate entity by the Chicago Reform Board of Trustees. Each has a principal who oversees two or more schools. Each has a site-based manager (i.e., principal or lead teacher) who is responsible for facilitating and/or making decisions.

Despite these commonalities, general perceptions of autonomy vary widely. Some principals provide an environment that encourages autonomy and others do not. This variability is evident in all three organizational strategies of small schools: School-Within-A-School (SWAS), Multiplex and Scatterplex.

System-wide autonomy is different from school-wide autonomy. Questionnaire items seem to have detected teachers' perceptions of freedom within a given school, rather than the faculty's perception of school autonomy within the Chicago Public School system. This distinction underscores the importance of the teacher-principal relationship within the school.

4 CURRICULAR FOCUS: a curricular focus that provides a continuous curriculum across a range of grades.

A school curriculum is focused when it directs student learning toward a common goal, and continuous when it provides a context for learning from one year to the next.

Small schools are implementing the curricula outlined in the initial proposal.

As part of the RFP process, schools were required to declare a focused instructional strategy. All small schools are implementing the curriculum outlined in the RFP application. Data show a strong belief by teachers that their school presents a focused curriculum.

- 96% agree there is a "basic theme or curricular focus."

Schools with a clearly defined academic focus show more progress at integrating curriculum across subjects and grades than schools with an abstract or philosophical focus.

Schools which adopted a curriculum with a clear academic focus (e.g., science or technology) are able to provide more detailed examples of how their curricular theme is being integrated with traditional subjects. Schools with a broader, more theoretical curricular focus (e.g., holism or conflict resolution) demonstrate increased staff cohesion, but have more difficulty providing explicit examples of integration.

Small school staff report that their school is presenting a continuous curriculum.

Data reveal that teachers believe their school presents a continuous curriculum. A majority of small schools have adopted a uniform series of textbooks across all grade levels, particularly in math and reading.

- 82% report that their school "emphasizes a curriculum which helps students see how one grade is connected to the next."
- 79% believe "in general, their school presents a continuous curriculum."

When questioned, however, only a few teachers were able to offer concrete examples of how the school's curriculum is continuous across different grades. Many teachers acknowledge this as an area which requires more work, and some are not confident that staff are knowledgeable about overall school curriculum.

- 60% say "all faculty [are] aware of what goes on in classrooms at various grade levels."

5 ADMISSIONS POLICY: an inclusive admissions policy that does not discriminate, but gives weight to student and parental commitments to the school's mission.

All small schools have implemented an open admissions policy.

The 23 RFP small schools are using one of two strategies to recruit their students:

- **First Come, First Served:** Teachers involved in the planning process often made presentations to the neighborhood community, providing details to parents and encouraging participation. During the first year of RFP funding, a majority schools have been able to accept all interested students.
- **Lottery:** This strategy was employed most often in cases where interest in attending the small school exceeded capacity. Many schools have implemented policies to accept multiple students from the same family to promote consistency and avoid separating siblings. In at least one case, a neighborhood school randomly assigned students to the newly formed small school by lottery, removing them only by objection from parents.

General Status Points

- The link between cohesion and autonomy is unclear. Interviews present a picture of both autonomous schools with low cohesion and cohesive schools with low autonomy. Questionnaire data, on the other hand, suggest a strong correlation between items measuring autonomy and cohesion, with schools reporting high levels of autonomy also reporting high levels of staff cohesion. This inconsistency suggests that the questionnaire detected varying definitions and perceptions of autonomy.
- According to teacher reports, most staffs believe that small schools are working and that they make a difference. The type of structure for a small school (SWAS, Multiplex or Scatterplex) does not appear to influence whether small schools are able to demonstrate the five essential features.
- Schools exist along a continuum of implementation of the five essential features, with some schools showing much more progress than others. The observed schools can be loosely categorized into three groups, as follows:
 - 1) Considerable Progress (20%)** — These schools demonstrate progress on all five features, particularly with respect to staff cohesion and autonomy.
 - 2) Moderate Progress (60%)** — These schools demonstrate progress with respect to three or four essential features, but lack the school-wide coordination which is seen in schools showing considerable progress.
 - 3) Minimal Progress (20%)** — These schools demonstrate progress on fewer than three essential features. Most of these schools are working to address issues of organization, communication and staff buy-in to the small school mission.

For the Future

This Initiative Status Report on Small Schools has raised a number of interesting questions, including the following:

- How long does it take for a faculty to become cohesive and develop clear perceptions of autonomy?
- Is staff cohesion easier to establish early in the process, but more difficult to sustain from one year to the next?
- Are small schools “creaming” the best students from a given neighborhood or school population?
- Can the experiences of small schools be used to restructure Chicago high schools?
- Given the variability in perceptions of autonomy, would a working definition of autonomy be beneficial to small schools and CPS? Who should be involved in establishing this common definition, and how should they go about it?
- Is a clearly defined academic focus necessary for students to receive maximum benefit from a small school? What is the effect of an academic focus on the development of staff cohesion?
- What is the effect on groups of students of being taught by teachers who work simultaneously with multiple small schools environments?
- Are small schools having a positive effect on student learning?

Description of Methods

Qualitative information was gathered through interviews conducted in 18 of the 23 RFP small schools, as well as in follow-up discussions. Quantitative data come from a questionnaire, which was designed by the Chicago Panel on School Policy and administered to all teachers in schools where an interview was conducted. The questionnaire measured the five essential features of a small school: size, cohesive faculty, school autonomy, continuous curriculum/curricular focus, and open admissions policy.

Response rate was slightly better than 50%. Questionnaire items in different categories were well-correlated with one another. For instance, a teacher who reports a cohesive faculty will likely also report higher levels of autonomy. Two possible explanations for this correlation are: 1) the essential features tend to facilitate one another (i.e., schools with greater autonomy tend to have cohesive faculties); or 2) the questionnaire measured the general status of small schools rather than isolating each of the five essential features.

As with any survey, the order of questions and other external sources of error can affect outcomes. All interpretation of the data for this report was performed by the Chicago Panel.

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More on the Panel

The Chicago Panel on School Policy is a nonprofit organization which advocates for quality education for Chicago's public school children. The Panel was created in 1982 as a coalition of civic agencies in response to the ailing finances of the Chicago Board of Education. As the fiscal crisis eased, the Panel broadened its agenda to include issues related to improving schools in the city and across the state. Its members work to ensure that the best possible public school education is made available to children in Chicago. The Panel provides information, research and assessments, support and training to parents, educators, Local School Council (LSC) members, employers and others.

Since August 1996, the Panel has shifted its focus from its former position as primarily a research agency to being a more activist partner in the city's efforts to improve schools. Today, the organization's priorities are to identify and support successful educational practices in inner-city schools; to strengthen ties among students, parents, educators and employers; to enhance participation in the development of vibrant, democratic schools; and to aggressively share what is learned with all parties interested in improving Chicago's schools.

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Education Reform Issues in the Chicago Public Schools

Chicago School Reform

The Chicago School Reform Act, passed by the Illinois state legislature in December 1988, shifted policy-making and administrative powers from the Board of Education to local school communities. The act called for each school to establish a Local School Council (LSC) consisting of six parents, two community members, two teachers, and the principal. Each LSC was given responsibility for hiring a principal to serve a four-year contract, evaluating his or her performance, and determining whether he or she should be retained. Each LSC was also charged with approving the three-year school improvement plan and the annual budget.

While the School Reform Act abolished lifetime tenure for principals, it gave them the authority to recruit, hire, and fire teachers and other educational personnel, and called for them to provide leadership in developing and implementing the school improvement plan and budget. Also, the act insured that teachers would have a role in advising the principal and the LSC on curriculum, instruction, staff development, and personnel by requiring each school to establish a Professional Personnel Advisory Committee (PPAC). At each school, faculty members are elected to serve on the PPAC by teachers and other certified personnel.

Governance Reform

In June 1995, Governor Jim Edgar signed a Republican-drafted bill that completely overhauled the Chicago school system and gave control of the district to Mayor Richard Daley. The bill dissolved the former 15-member school board and the general superintendent's position, transferring authority to the five-member Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees. The trustees appointed a management team including chief operating, fiscal, purchase, and educational officers. The law also eliminated subdistricts and the subdistrict superintendents.

The new reform law streamlines state funding for the district by creating two block grants, one for general education and one for educational services. The district's School Finance Authority has been suspended for four years, giving the trustees and Mr. Daley the job of managing the district's financial affairs.

America Reads Challenge: Read*Write*Now!

As a pilot site for the America Reads Challenge, Chicago will offer a summer reading program to elementary students and preschoolers who are at risk of academic failure. The district is offering tutoring at 42 schools that were chosen because they are open to the community after school

hours and have early childhood education programs. An estimated 20,000 children will be tutored by trained community volunteers at least once a week.

Capital Improvement Program

In response to its growing school population and deteriorating schools, CPS launched the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in 1996. It plans on spending \$500 million in 1999 to repair and upgrade its school facilities, which would bring total expenditures since its inception to just under \$2 billion. However, CPS has identified \$3 billion worth of work that is necessary to meet the program's objectives. The \$1 billion dollar funding gap could be reduced with an anticipated \$416 million from President Clinton's "Rebuild America's Schools" initiative. The 1999-2003 CIP intends to renovate 112 schools, build 6 schools, make significant additions to 2 schools, link all schools to the Internet, add new science labs and lockers to high schools, and build the Chicago Academy of Math and Science.

Special Education Suit

Chicago Public Schools will spend \$24 million over the next eight years to train teachers in providing effective instruction to 5,000 students with disabilities. The commitment is part of the settlement resulting from a 1992 class action suit filed by the Northwestern University Legal Clinic on behalf of Chicago's disabled students. CPS did not admit liability in the settlement, but did agree to require all schools to develop plans for reviewing relevant services and professional development, as well as increase opportunities for disabled students to participate in activities with non-disabled students. In February 1998, one month after the settlement, U.S. District Court Judge Robert W. Gettleman found the Illinois State Department of Education liable for segregation of disabled students in the Chicago district and required that it develop a remedy.

Bilingual Education

In the spring of 1998, the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees unanimously voted to implement a new bilingual education policy that will affect the district's 71,000 limited English proficiency (LEP) students. LEP students will now be expected to transition into a mainstream English classroom within three years of enrolling in the district. However, the new policy does make it possible for LEP students to receive a fourth year of instruction in their primary language. The policy also provides support for LEP students when they enter the mainstream classroom and makes pre-schoolers eligible for dual-language programs (classes where speakers of two different languages sit side by side). In conjunction with the policy change, the Board has proposed increasing bilingual education funds by \$3 million to a total of \$40 million, which will be used to improve professional development and develop a Resource Demonstration Center that

will provide on-going workshops. The approved policy was supported by 39 groups representing a variety of language-minority residents.

Accountability

Since 1991, the state of Illinois has required that 50 percent or more of the students at each school meet the standards assessed by the Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP). Schools failing to meet state standards are placed on an academic watch list and given state and district resources to increase student achievement. There is no predetermined amount of time a school must remain on the list; they are removed when student achievement increases at an acceptable rate. A lack of improvement over time can have school governance and staffing implications. In 1996-1997, the number of Chicago schools on the state academic watch list decreased from 149 to 108. During the 1997-1998 school year, 93 schools were on the academic warning list with "Does Not Meet Standard" status.

The 1995 School Reform Act required that CPS increase student achievement and establish its own mechanism for monitoring individual school progress. The Office of Accountability was created in 1995 to fulfill this requirement and is divided into six outcome areas: intervention; quality review; research and evaluation; teacher accountability; curriculum and instruction; and assessment. In addition to supporting schools on the state academic watch list, the office established its own school probation program based on the results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). If more than 85 percent of students at a school score below the national norm, the school is placed on district probation. Although there is some overlap between CPS schools on probation and those on the state's academic watch list, CPS probation is considered the more serious of the two.

The 115 schools on probation during the 1997-98 school year each developed a mandated corrective action plan with the assistance of a probation manager. Business managers assigned to each school are handling many administrative responsibilities to give the principals the freedom to focus on increasing student achievement. Probation managers visit schools often and lead the development and implementation of the corrective action plan to meet the needs of the students. Faculty members from local colleges and universities have become "partners in success" by working with the schools' staffs to develop more effective teaching strategies. In May of 1998, ITBS score results indicate that 25 of the 115 schools are eligible to be taken off of probation, while 2 will be added. Ninety-two of the probation schools reported gains in test scores. Officials said the success is a result of CPS support programs, such as Lighthouse, After-School and Summer Bridge.

Like the academic watch list, schools do not remain on probation for a predetermined time. If no improvement occurs, the district has the option of evaluating the administration, staff, and LSC to determine if specific personnel changes should be made. Since 1995, school administrators

have been removed for poor school performance. During the 1997-1998 school year, 23 principals were removed and replaced.

Restructuring and Reconstituting High Schools

In 1995, the Office of High School Services and Support was created to help the 74 Chicago high schools increase achievement, reduce the dropout rate, and prepare students for a productive life after graduation. Seven task forces, consisting of educators, parents, community leaders, and members of the business sector, drafted strategic plans for a presentation to the public in December 1996 on seven topics: restructuring existing high schools; creating secondary options; curriculum and instruction; student development; schools and communication; college bridge; and vocational and technical education.

As a result of the task forces' recommendations, seven Chicago high were reconstituted during the 1997-98 school year. Reconstitution requires that all staff must either reapply for their positions within their schools or seek positions elsewhere in the district. It also gives CPS the power to remove the schools' principals with input from the Local School Council. Five of the seven principals in the seven reconstituted schools were replaced, along with approximately 180 teachers.

For the 1999 school year, the Accountability Committee has recommended that 15 schools be reconstituted. However, the CPS Chief Executive Officer has recommended that no schools be reconstituted next year, preferring to wait until an evaluation of the original seven schools is conducted and contract negotiations with the Chicago Teacher's Union are finalized. The Board of Trustees is currently deliberating its options.

Quality Review

The quality review department of the Office of Accountability is working with all CPS schools to prevent them from landing on either the state academic watch list or CPS probation. A team of educators conducts external reviews of schools on a four year cycle with one quarter of CPS schools being evaluated each year. The team visits each school for a week and, in addition to identifying existing areas of concern, makes suggestions addressing possible future problems. During the three years between external reviews, schools conduct internal evaluations and receive district support as needed to improve student achievement. External reviews are conducted annually for schools with chronic problems. Chicago will conduct the third round of external reviews in the 1998-1999 school year.

Junior Academies

Junior Academies, introduced in the fall of 1996, are designed to assist freshmen with their transition to high school. Schools wrote proposals for the academies, and each program is unique to each school's population. Schools-within-a-school and extended elementary schools are two models for the new academies. A core curriculum is required, but schools may implement their own reform efforts to make the program successful. In 1999, an expected \$11 million will aid all 77 high schools in instituting Junior Academies to serve all CPS ninth graders. Additionally, these funds will support Junior Academies at 4 elementary schools that are taking steps towards becoming K-12 schools over the next three years.

Increased Math and Science Requirements

In June 1998, the Chicago Public Schools completed the second year of a four year plan to increase the math and science requirements for graduation. In the past, students in the city's public high schools were required to pass one year of science and two years of mathematics, the minimum required for graduation by the state of Illinois. Beginning with the graduating class of 2000, students will be required to pass at least three years each of science and math to graduate. The policy further states that two of the science courses must have a laboratory component and that the math sequence must begin with algebra.

The requirements support the goals of the Chicago Systemic Initiative, a \$15 million effort financed by the National Science Foundation to upgrade math and science teaching in the city. The initiative also aims to have all students complete a full year of algebra by the time they finish eighth grade. Because of Chicago's successes in implementing reform initiatives, the National Science Foundation awarded CPS an additional \$11 million in September 1997. Five million dollars of that figure will be used in conjunction with Northwestern University to create a research center for math and science education.

Offering the additional coursework is expected to cost the school system between \$12 million and \$20 million a year to hire an additional 240 math and science teachers, to create 1,200 more classes, and to equip more science laboratories. In Fall 1996, CPS did not receive the additional funding necessary to continue the phase-in process through 1999; however, district officials say they have experienced success in training teachers from other disciplines to teach math and science courses.

Student Promotion Policies

In August 1996, the Chicago School Reform Board adopted a rigorous student promotion policy that requires underachieving students in grades three, six, eight, and nine to complete a summer school program before being promoted to the next grade. The policy sets performance standards

based on ITBS scores for third-, sixth-, and eighth-graders, and on TAP scores for ninth-graders. Students who score more than one year below their grade level (one-and-a-half years for sixth-graders) on the standardized tests, or who fail reading or math, must successfully complete a six- or seven-week summer remediation program. (The duration of the summer program varies by grade level). All ninth-graders who miss more than 20 days of school or fail to earn the required 4.5 core credits are also required to attend the summer-school programs. Students who fail the summer programs are held back.

Student Achievement

Illinois Goal Assessment Program. Test scores for CPS students on the 1997 Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP) rose in all grades in math and science, but showed no improvement in reading. In math and science, Chicago students more than doubled the gains made statewide. For grades 3, 6, and 8, between 39 to 45 percent of Chicago students scored at or above the state math average. Twenty-two percent of CPS tenth graders scored at or above the math average. In reading, Chicago's third grade students made no significant changes, while students in grades 6, 8, and 10 performed significantly lower than the previous year. For each of the tested grades, between 15 to 22 percent of Chicago students scored at or above the state reading average. IGAP scores for the 1997-1998 school year will be available in September.

Test of Achievement and Proficiency. Students' scores on the 1998 Test of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), which tests ninth and eleventh graders, showed significant gains in both math and reading. In math, 31 percent of CPS ninth and eleventh graders performed at or above national norms, a slight increase from 1997 and 9 percent increase from 1996. However, eleventh grade math scores dropped slightly as ninth grade scores increased. In reading, 27 percent of the ninth and eleventh graders were at or above national norms, which is a 4 percent increase from 1997 and 8 percent increase from the 1996 test.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Finally, test scores on the 1998 Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), which tests students in grades 3-8, showed progress. On the math section, 40 percent of third through eighth graders performed at or above the national norm, which is almost 4 percent more than last year and 9 percent more than 1996. The most significant progress was found in grades 3 and 4, where 43 percent of students scored as well or better than their national counterparts. Eighth graders in Chicago dropped 2 percent since last year in comparison to U.S. eighth graders. In reading, the ITBS demonstrates that 35 percent of third through eighth graders in Chicago score at or above the national norm, which is an increase of 4 percent since 1997 and 6 percent more than in 1996. The gains are consistent throughout all the tested grades.

On the 1998 ITBS, 93 of the 115 schools on district probation reported gains in reading scores, and 92 reported gains in math. Five of the 7 reconstituted schools reported gains in the percentage of students scoring at or above the national norm in math, and 3 reported gains in the percentage on the reading section.

The improvements in test scores are consistent with increases in attendance and graduation rates, which are at the highest levels since 1986. Also, chronic truancy and mobility rates have dropped over the past three years.

Annenberg Grant

Philanthropist Walter Annenberg awarded Chicago \$50 million to support the development of school reform networks. Under the terms of the grant, Chicago is expected to match the grant with \$100 million in public and private donations. In the 1996-97 school year, there are 220 schools involved in 55 networks throughout the district. The networks have three goals: to foster a closer adult/student relationship in schools; to restructure schools to allow teachers the time and resources necessary to develop professionally; and to break down the barrier of isolation that often exists among schools and educators. Although the networks have only been in place for a short time, there have been promising steps made in developing relationships among educators from different schools, including peer mentoring and enhanced professional development.

Professional Development

The Teachers' Academy for Mathematics and Science. The impetus for establishing the Academy came in 1989 from a team that included representatives of the U.S. Department of Energy, the National Science Foundation, the offices of the Mayor of Chicago and the Governor of Illinois, and a broad coalition of the city's education activists. Located on the campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology, the Academy provides intensive programs in math and science to public school teachers in Chicago.

The Academy's core program spans at least 18 months plus summer sessions and is designed to be integrated within a three-year cycle that includes strategic planning. Participating teachers explore the content of instruction in math and science, learn and practice new knowledge and skills, review and analyze their curricula and standards, examine different forms of student assessment, and experiment with new educational technology. The Academy has also created a school improvement unit that helps the schools implement organizational changes to better support teaching and learning.

By the end of the 1994-95 school year, the Academy had served more than 2,400 teachers in 70 schools presented workshops on innovations in math and science education to 9,000 additional teachers, and created electronic networks that link more than 100 public schools in Chicago. Although the focus has remained consistent, funding for the program has decreased and the number of schools involved has dropped to 54 in the 1996-97 school year.

The Quest Center. In February 1992, CTU received a \$1.1 million grant from the MacArthur Foundation to create the Quest Center (QC) to promote reform in Chicago Public Schools. For the first three years, QC selected 46 Quest schools, each of which received \$3,000 and three years of assistance from QC staff. Many of these schools developed interdisciplinary or thematic curricula, created teams of teachers, integrated academic and vocational work, used portfolios and performance assessments, and incorporated projects and real-life experiences to make learning more meaningful to students.

In 1996, the center worked with district trustees to develop new academic standards. The Board approved the standards in Spring 1997, and all schools implemented them in the 1997-98 school year.

Currently, the Quest Center provides services to the original 46 Quest schools, as well as other CPS schools as requested. During the 1997-1998 school year, QC chose 10 schools for in-depth work. Facilitators visit the 10 schools at least once per week to assist staff in school improvement and restructuring plans. Additionally, all CPS teachers are eligible to participate in the QC Summer Institute to develop their knowledge and skills. The Quest Center is now entering into its second year of working with "Partnerships for Professional Practice", which is a teacher induction program administered in collaboration with the University of Illinois and CPS.

Teacher Recruitment. In 1998, CPS embarked on an aggressive campaign to recruit teachers from the top education schools in the country. Representatives from CPS, including principals and the Chicago School Reform Board of Trustees President, will visit 44 schools throughout the nation.

Limits on Collective Bargaining

The 1995 Chicago School Reform Act targeted the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) by limiting the items subject to collective bargaining and placing a moratorium on strikes for 18 months. It barred managerial employees from union membership and allowed the new board to adopt a contract that runs four years, one year longer than was allowed prior to its passage. Its restrictions prevent teachers from bargaining over many issues that were previously negotiable, including class size, staffing and assignments, academic calendars, hours and places of instruction, and pupil-assessment policies. Also, the union has no input on decisions about charter schools and experimental educational programs. The CTU filed a lawsuit challenging these restrictions and the loss of job protection for paraprofessionals but voluntarily dropped the suit later in 1995.

The CTU and CPS have entered into early negotiations this summer for a contract that will take effect in 1999. A central focus of the negotiation is the terms under which the district will reconstitute schools. The CPS Chief Executive Officer, Paul Vallas, has recommended that no

new schools be reconstituted until an agreement is reached between CPS and the CTU and reconstitution outcomes are evaluated.

**Selected Public Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics
for Illinois and the Chicago Public Schools**

	U.S. 1995-96	Illinois 1995-96	Chicago 1995-96
Enrollment	44,840,481	1,943,623	412,921
White	65%	64%	11%
Black	17%	21%	89% minority
Hispanic	14%	12%	
Asian	4%	3%	
American Indian	1%	0%	
Number of public schools	87,125	4,142	606
Revenues for elementary/secondary education	\$273.1 billion ¹	\$12.0 billion ¹	\$2.5 billion ²
Federal	7%	6%	12%
State	47%	28%	32%
Local	44%	63%	55%
Private	3%	2%	
Per pupil expenditures	\$5,988 ¹	\$6,136 ¹	\$5,613 ²
Pupil/teaching staff ratio	17.3	17.1	18.0

NOTE:

1. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1994-95 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.
2. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1993-94 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.

All percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 1997 Digest of Education Statistics.

**Selected Public Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics
for Illinois and the Chicago Public Schools**

	U.S. 1994-95	Illinois 1994-95	Chicago 1993-94
Enrollment	44,108,775	1,916,172	409,499
White	66%	64%	11%
Black	17%	21%	89% minority
Hispanic	13%	12%	
Asian	4%	3%	
American Indian	1%	0%	
Number of public schools	86,221	4,195	609
Revenues for elementary/secondary education	\$260.1 billion ¹	\$11.3 billion ¹	\$2.4 billion ²
Federal	7%	7%	15%
State	45%	28%	34%
Local	45%	63%	51%
Private	3%	2%	
Per pupil expenditures	\$5,767 ¹	\$5,893 ¹	\$5,551 ²
Pupil/teaching staff ratio	17.3	17.3	18.9

NOTES:

1. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1993-94 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.
 2. Revenue and per-pupil expenditure amounts are for the 1992-93 school year, the most recent nationally-uniform data available.
- All percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, 1996 Digest of Education Statistics.

Chicago is ensuring that promotion to the next grade reflects students' learning the content to enable them to succeed. In August 1996, the Chicago School Reform Board adopted a rigorous student promotion policy that requires underachieving students in grades three, six, eight, and nine to complete a summer school program before being promoted to the next grade. The policy sets performance standards based on test scores for third-, sixth-, eighth-graders, and for ninth-graders. Students who score more than one year below their grade level (one-and-a-half years for sixth-graders) on the standardized tests, or who fail reading or math, must successfully complete a six- or seven-week Summer Bridge program. All ninth-graders who miss more than 20 days of school or fail to earn the required 4.5 core credits are also required to attend the summer-school programs. Students who fail the summer programs are held back. Results show that over 80 percent of Chicago students were able to meet the promotion criteria; many would not have done so without the intensive summer instruction provided through the Bridge program.

Highlights of Improvements in the Chicago Public Schools

November 1998

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125 South Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603

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HIGHLIGHTS OF IMPROVEMENTS IN CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOVEMBER 1998

Since 1988, the Chicago Public Schools have gone through dramatic change. Following is a comparison of the two phases of change in the schools. *Phase One* details the changes from the period of 1990 to 1995. This includes school improvements since the reform legislation was enacted in 1988 to the passage of the Amendatory Act in the spring of 1995. *Phase Two* details the school progress since Mayor Daley and his administrative team took leadership.

IMPROVEMENTS ON THE NATIONALLY NORMED TESTS OF READING AND MATH

Throughout the years of *Phase One*, reading scores continued to be a concern. During the five-year period, high school reading scores declined. In elementary schools the scores went up slightly the first three years and then showed no progress from 1993 to 1995. During *Phase One*, 55% of all schools showed growth in reading, while only 9% of the high schools showed any improvement. Improvement in the lowest quarter of our students was inconsistent during this period.

During *Phase Two*, elementary scores consistently increased to a new high in the spring of 1998. High school scores continued to decline for the first two years. With the implementation of High School Redesign, reading scores for the last two years have increased and are now at the highest point since the initial reform year of 1989-90. It appears that high schools have recovered and are now showing increased growth. During *Phase Two*, a phenomenal 92% of all schools have shown growth while 70% of the high schools have seen improvement. Also, during *Phase Two*, the number of students in the lowest quarter has decreased. The fewest number of students are in this lowest group in both elementary and high schools since prior to 1990.

During *Phase One*, again, math scores in elementary and high schools showed little growth. Numbers in the lowest quarter remained stagnant.

During *Phase Two*, math scores in both the elementary and high schools are at their highest level since prior to 1990. Student scores in the lowest quarter are smaller than they have ever been since prior to the reform legislation.

OTHER TEST MEASUREMENTS

At the end of *Phase One*, in 1994, the State of Illinois developed a list of underperforming schools. It identified schools in which fewer than half of the students met or exceeded expectations as determined by the Illinois Goals Assessment Program (IGAP). In 1994, which is the first year this number was calculated, there were 148 Chicago schools on that list. That number has gone down each year to a current number of 58.

During *Phase One* there was a consistent decline in IGAP reading scores. These scores have begun to improve in *Phase Two*. Average scores are higher than they were in 1995 in all grades tested. The decline has stopped. In math, the increases that started in 1990 have continued with record high averages in all grades tested in 1998.

The American College Testing program (ACT) showed no increases during *Phase One*. The last year before *Phase Two* began, there was a decrease. In *Phase Two*, ACT scores have consistently improved.

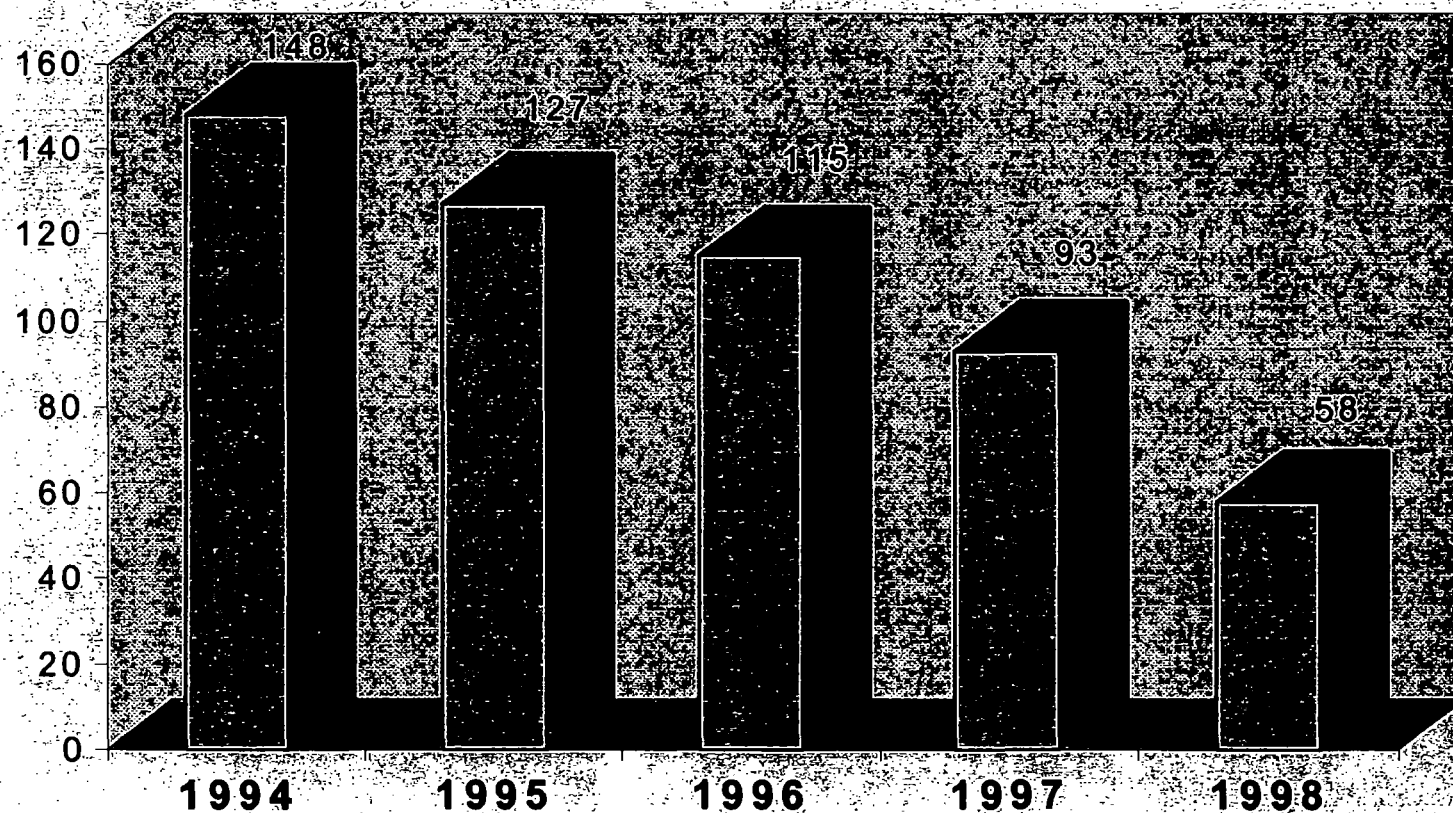
NON-ACADEMIC DATA

Attendance rates for our students, as measured by the Illinois State Board of Education, are at their highest rates since prior to 1990. Attendance declined during *Phase One* and has consistently gone up during *Phase Two*.

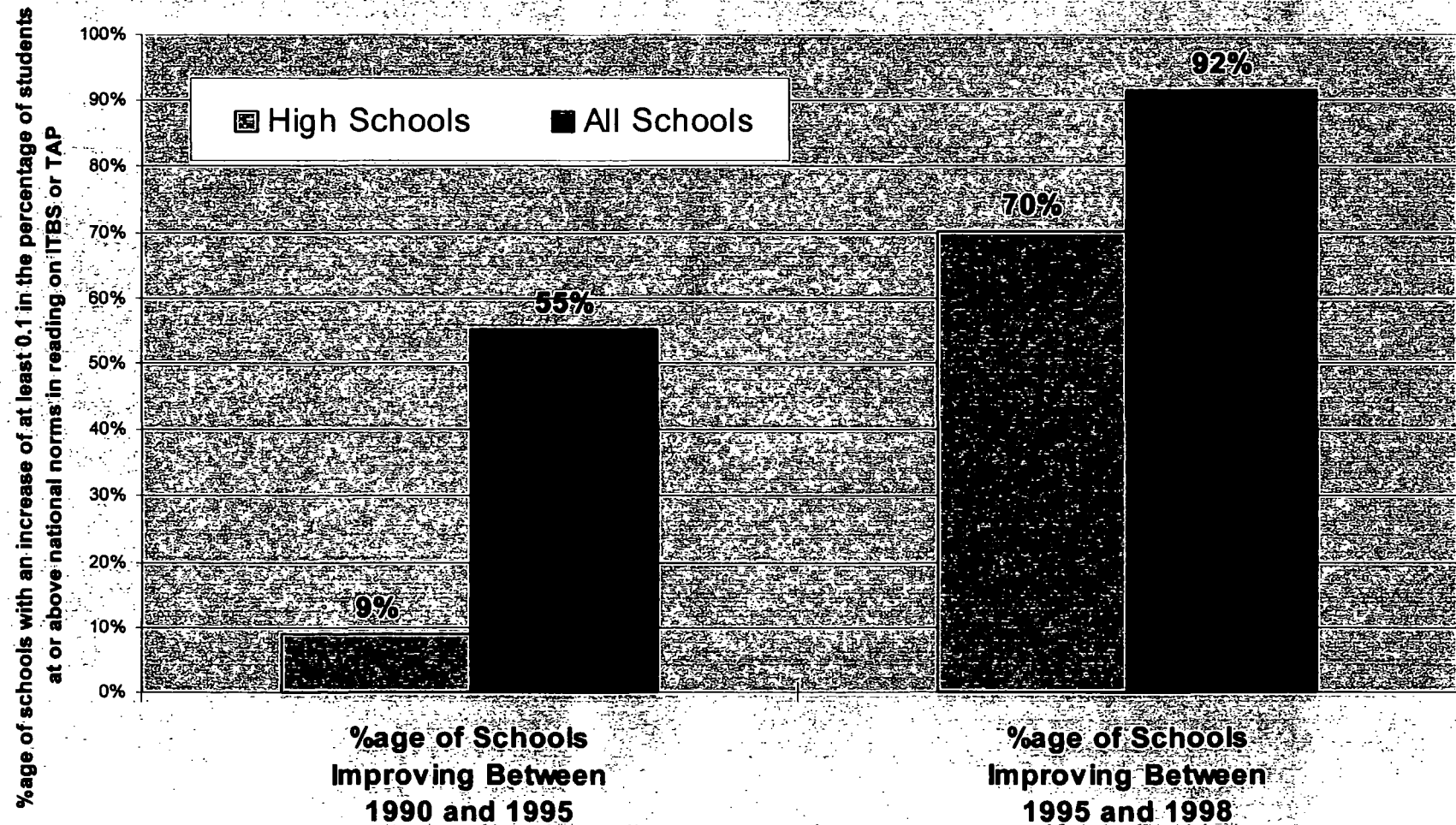
The truancy rate increased during the *Phase One* period. Each year since *Phase Two* the truancy rate of our schools has gone down.

The mobility rate of our students has gone down throughout the both Phases. At this point, the rate is at its lowest level since prior to 1990.

Number of Chicago Public Schools on the State's List of Underperforming Schools

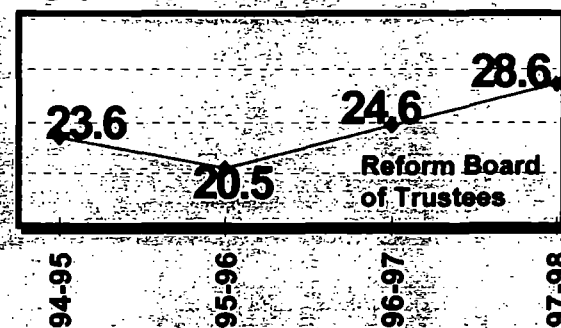
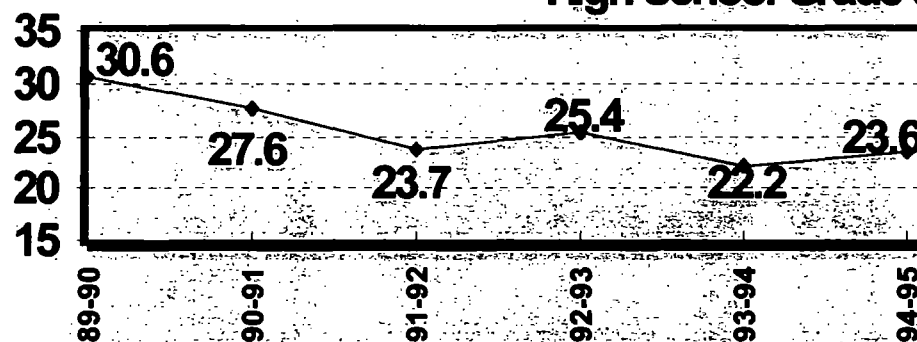


Percentage of Chicago Schools with Increased ITBS or TAP Reading Scores

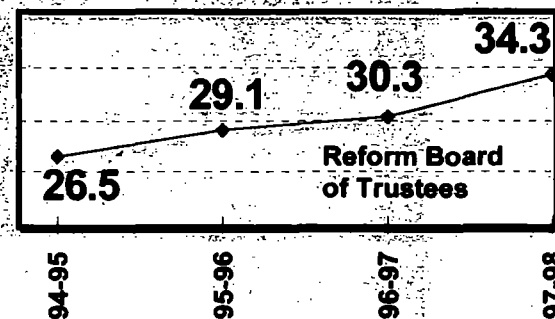
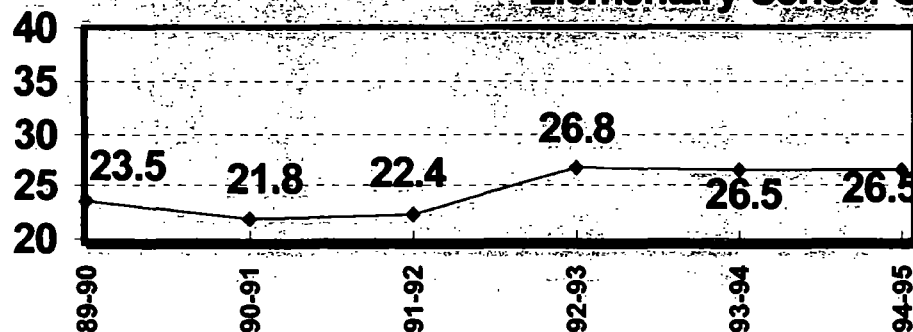


Percentage of Students At or Above National Norms in Reading Chicago Public Schools

High School Grade 9 and 11 Reading (TAP)

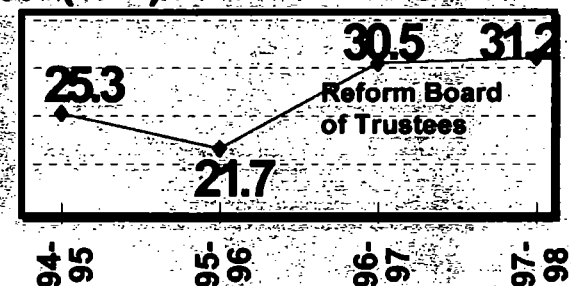
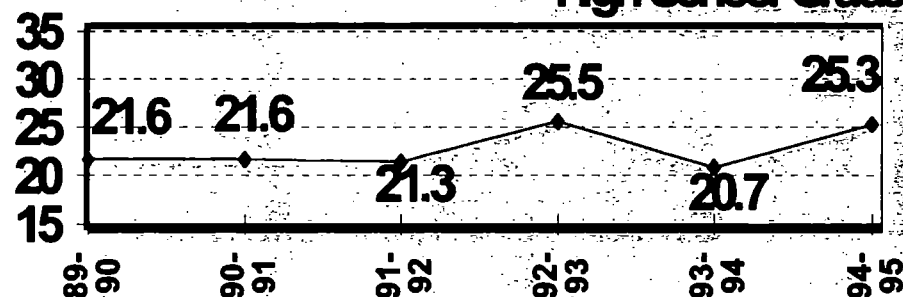


Elementary School Grade 3-8 Reading (ITBS)

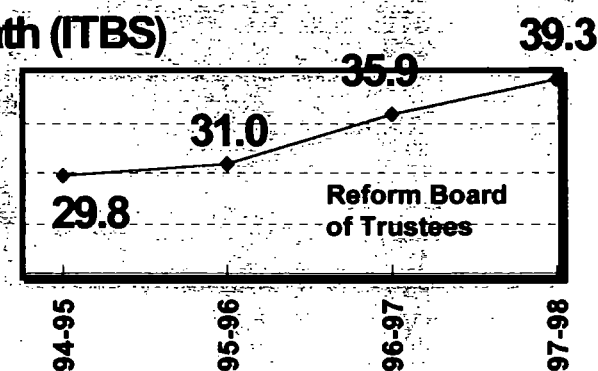
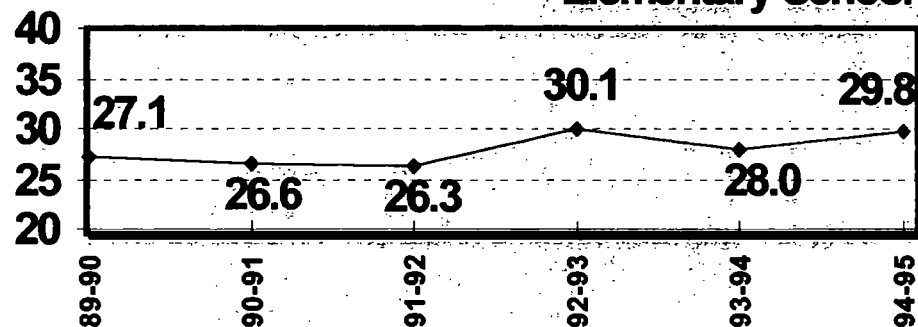


Percentage of Students At or Above National Norms in Math Chicago Public Schools

High School Grade 9 and 11 Math (TAP)

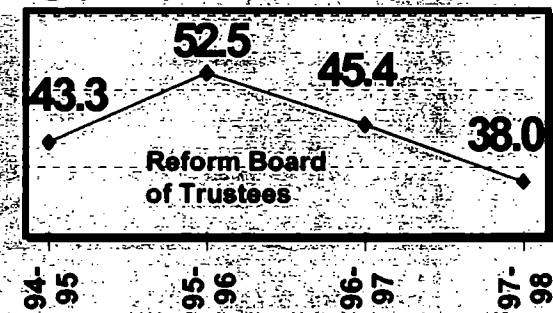
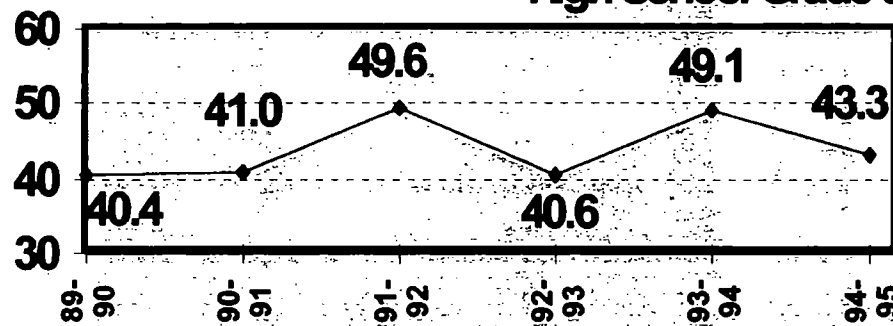


Elementary School Grade 3-8 Math (ITBS)

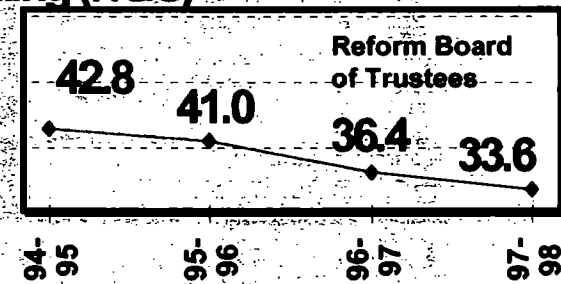
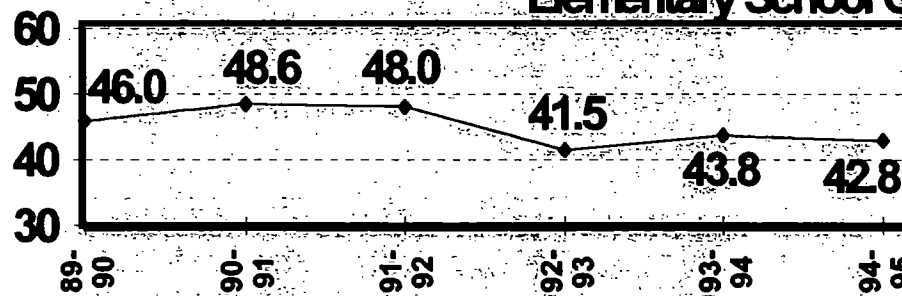


Percentage of Students in the Bottom Fourth of the Nation in Reading Chicago Public Schools

High School Grade 9 and 11 Reading (TAP)

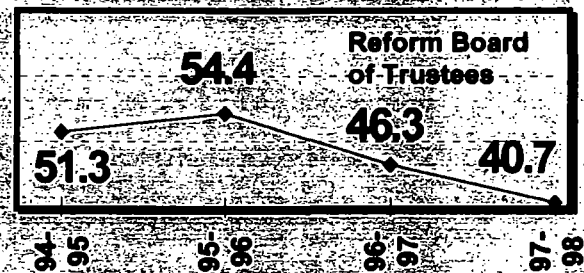
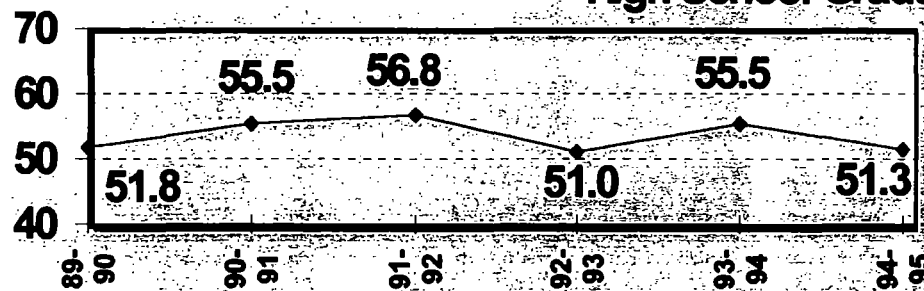


Elementary School Grade 3-8 Reading (ITBS)

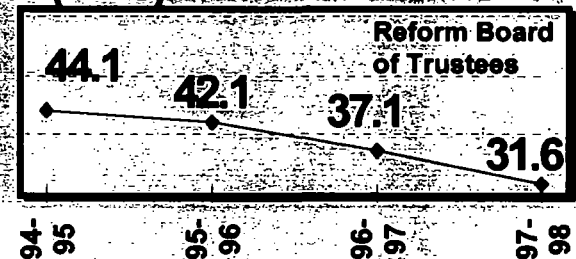
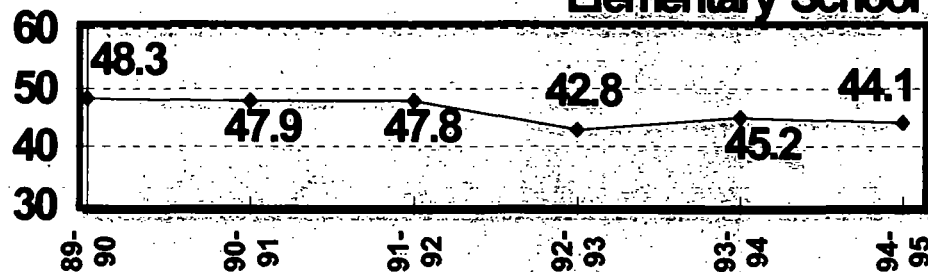


Percentage of Students in the Bottom Fourth of the Nation in Math Chicago Public Schools

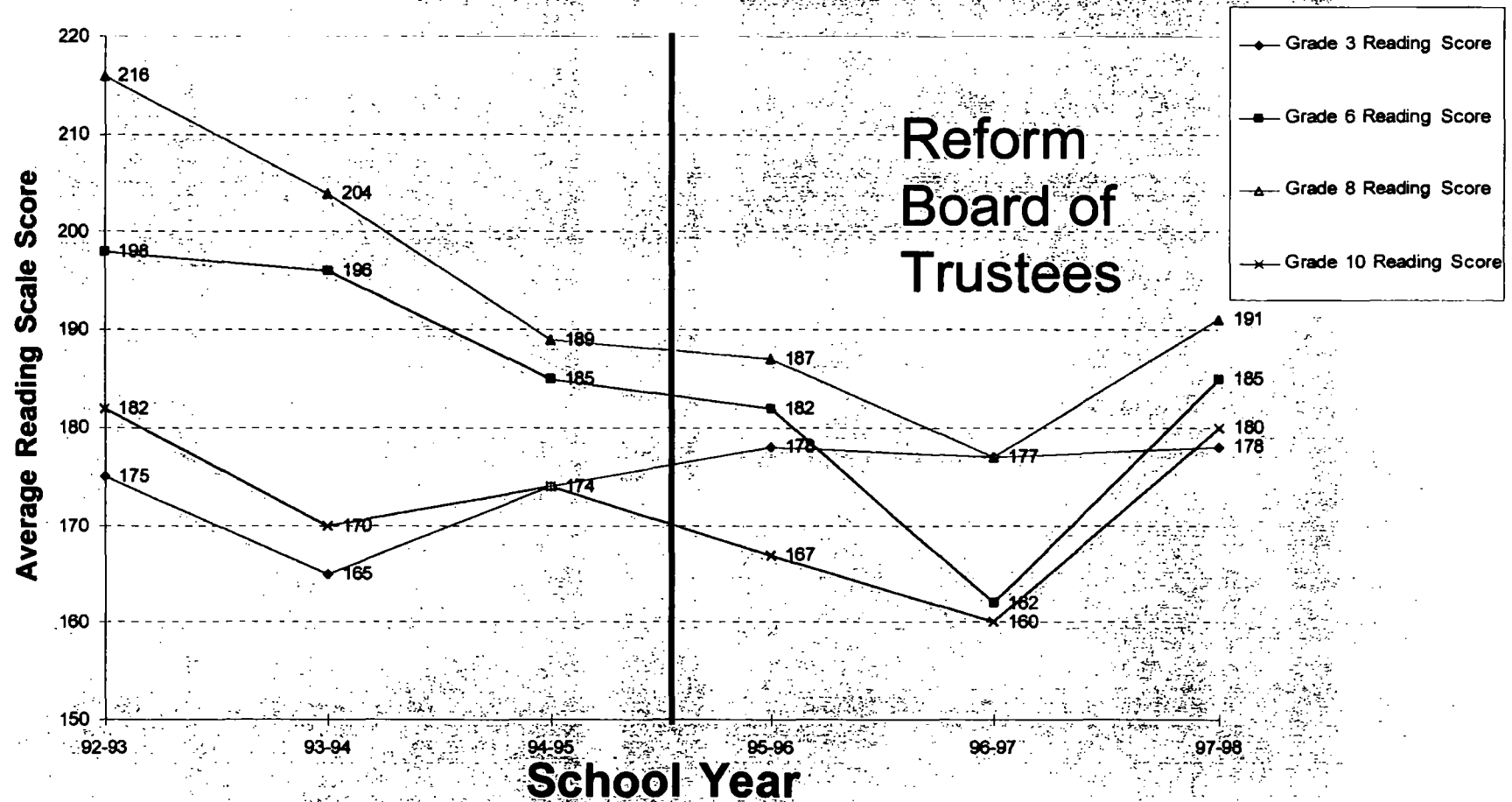
High School Grade 9 and 11 Math (TAP)



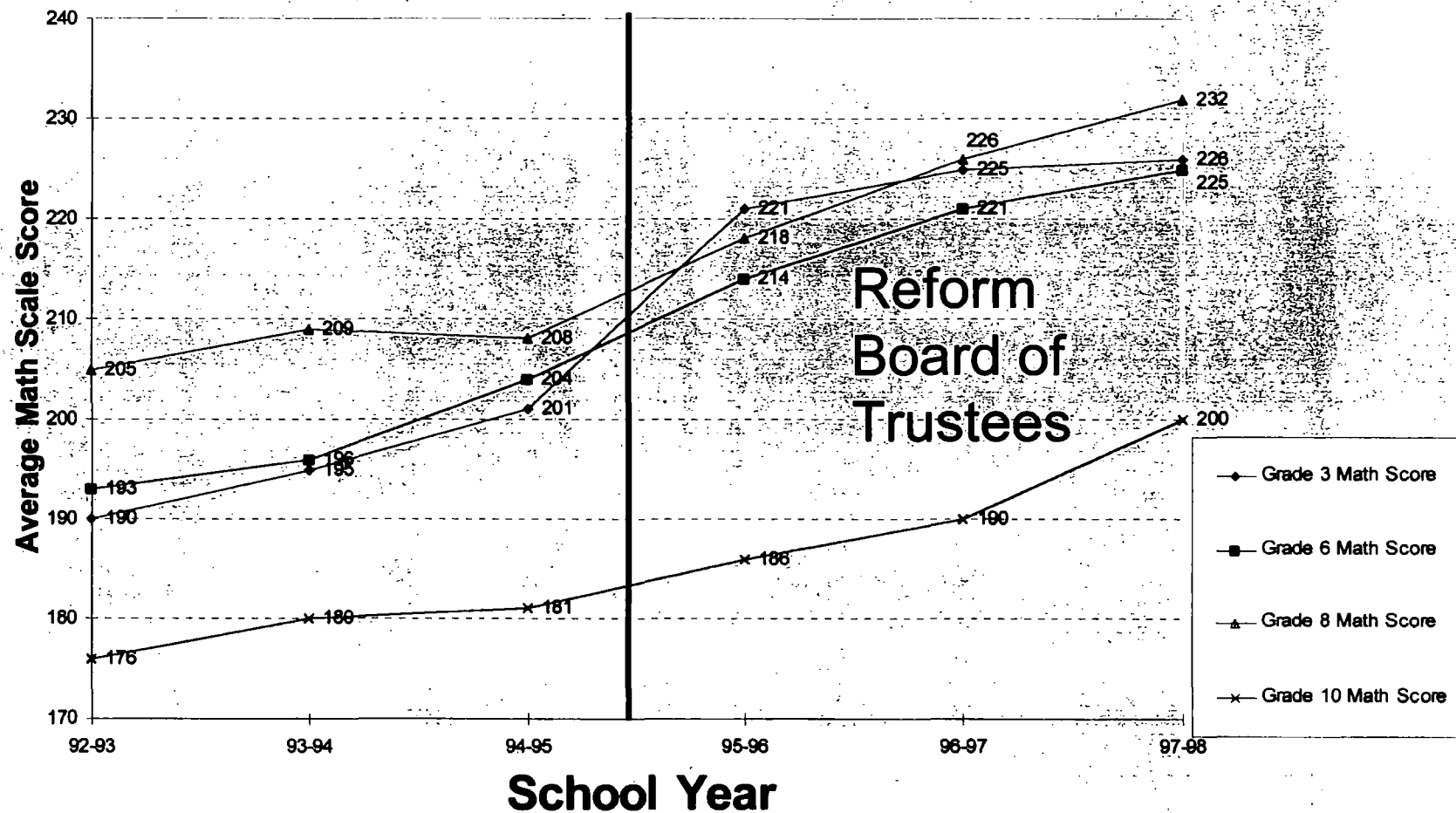
Elementary School Grade 3-8 Math (ITBS)



IGAP Average Reading Score Chicago Public Schools

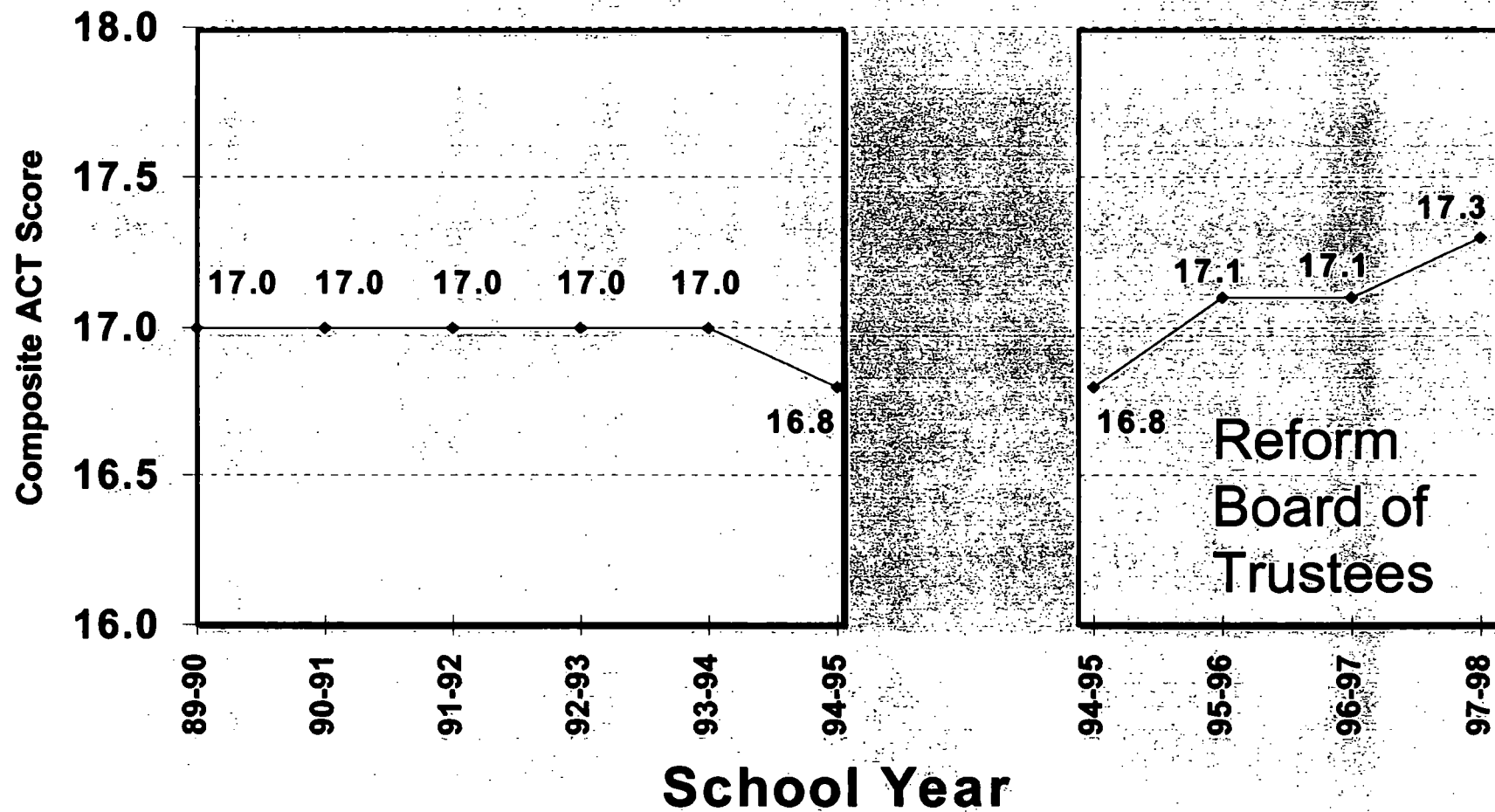


IGAP Average Math Score Chicago Public Schools

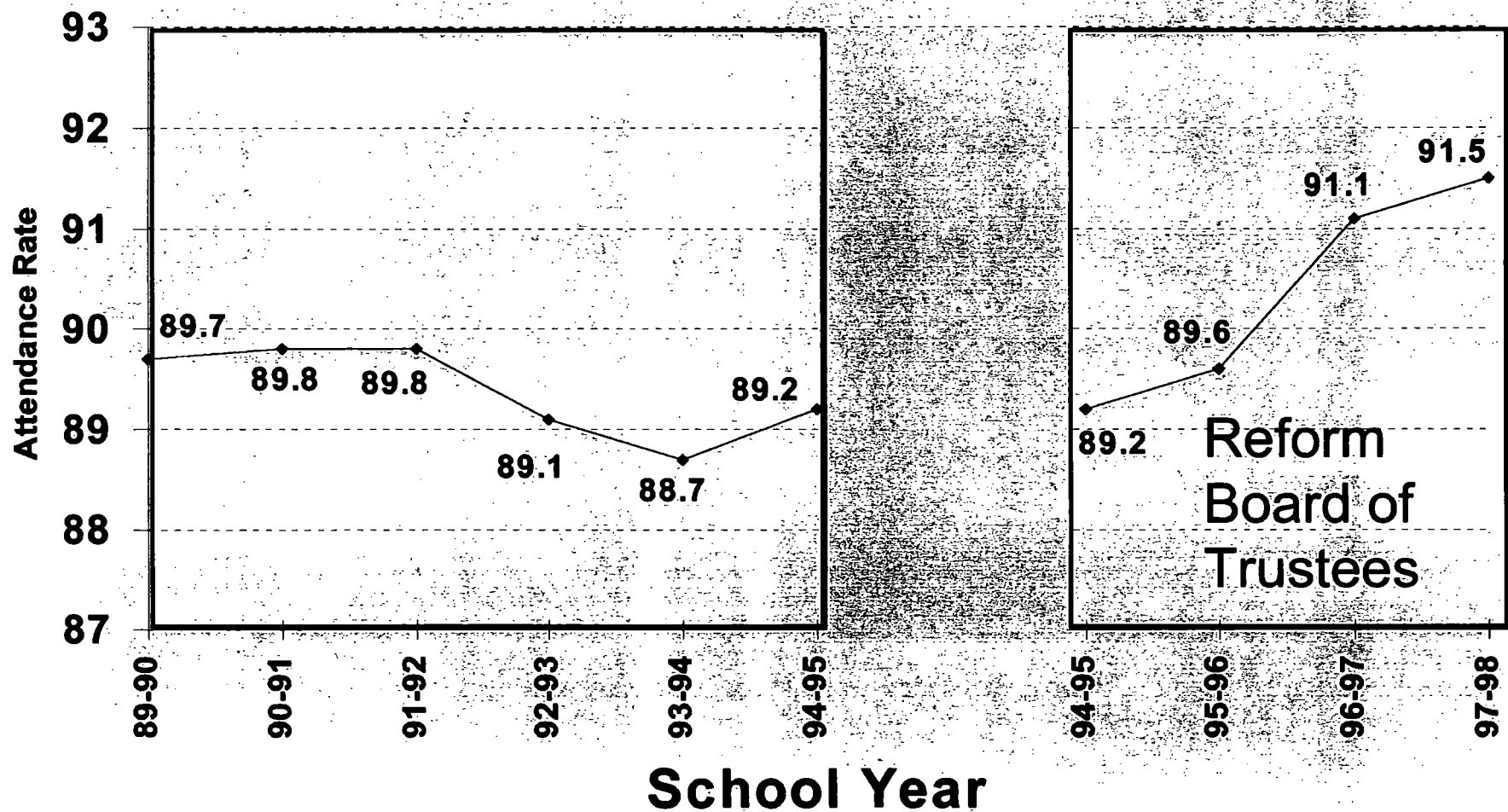


ACT Scores

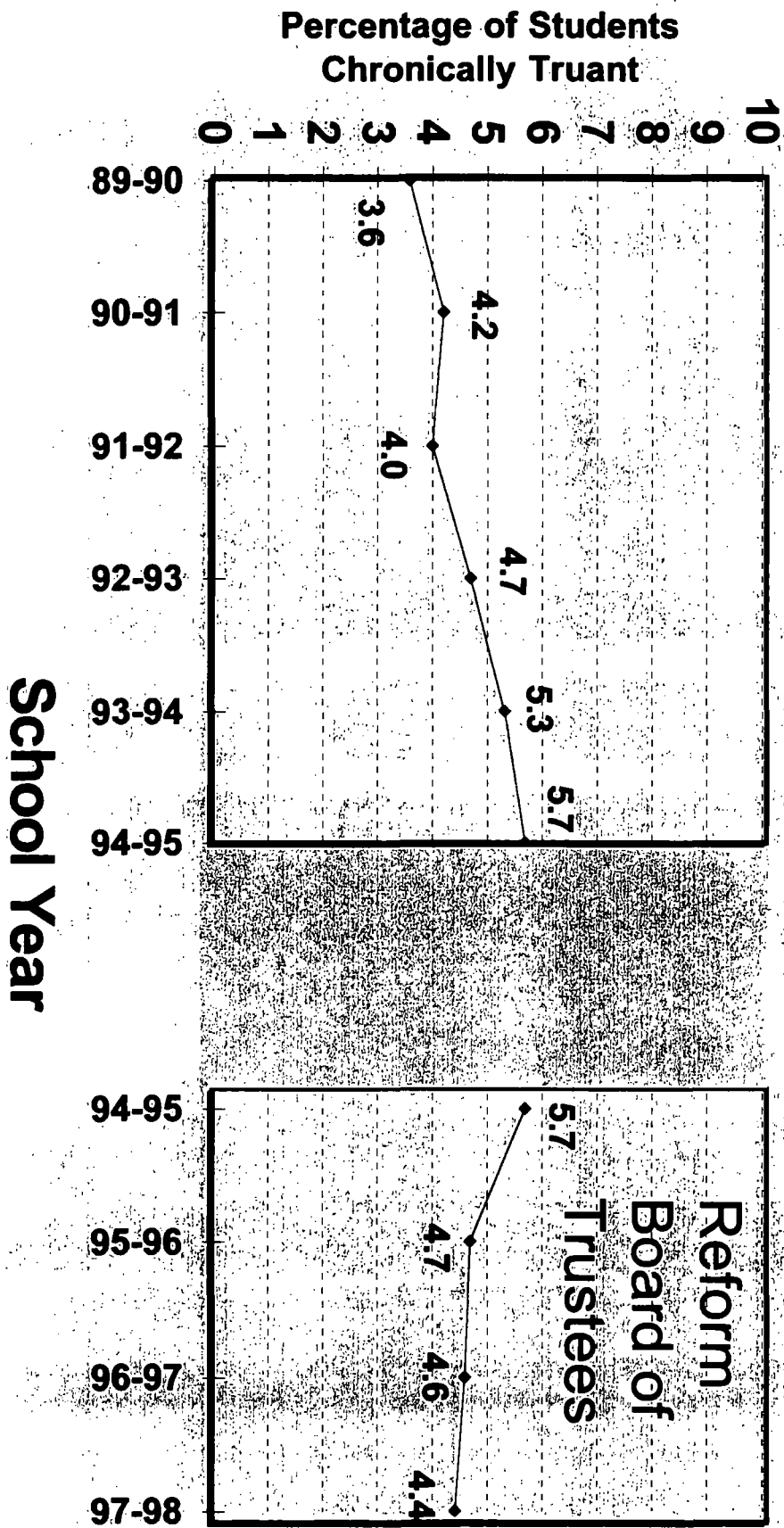
Chicago Public High Schools



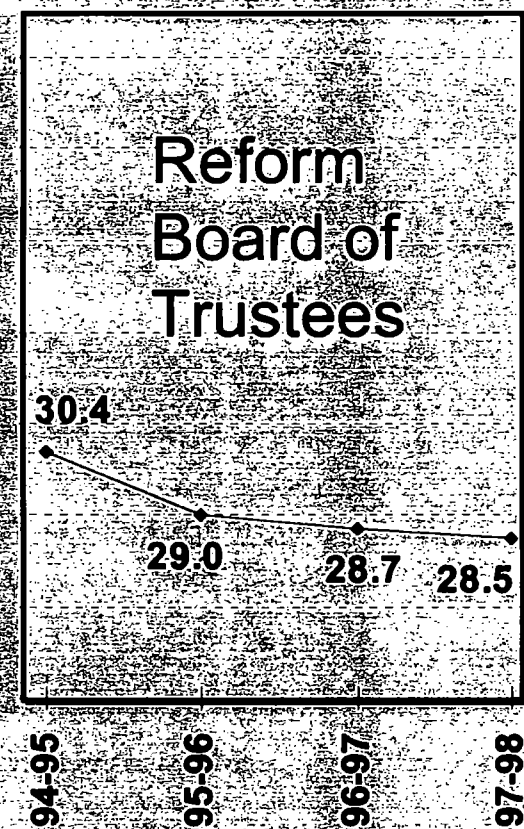
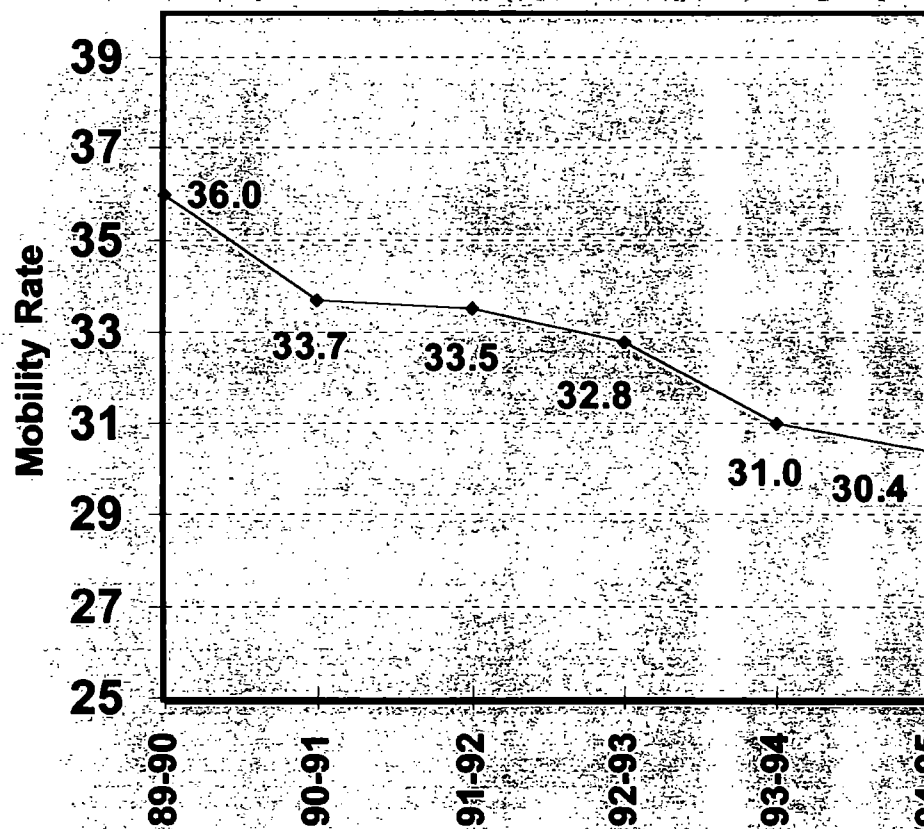
Attendance Rate Chicago Public Schools



Truancy Rate Chicago Public Schools



Mobility Rate Chicago Public Schools



School Year

Low Income Students Chicago Public Schools

