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Allies in Education

A Profile of:

**The Boston Compact
Boston, Massachusetts**

September 1987

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A Profile of:

The Boston Compact Boston, Massachusetts

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September 1987

THE SCHOOL/BUSINESS COLLABORATIONS STUDY

This profile of the Boston Compact is part of an assessment by Public/Private Ventures of partnerships between business and education. The three-year study was funded by The CIGNA Foundation, The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, The Exxon Education Foundation, The IBM Corporation, The Pew Memorial Trust, and The Rockefeller Foundation. The assessment addressed three basic issues:

- o What is the nature of school/business collaborations? What achievements are expected?
- o What types of youth are served by these collaborative efforts?
- o What role does business play in the collaborations? How did business get involved? Why does it continue to be involved?

Public/Private Ventures has published Allies in Education: Schools and Businesses Working Together for At-Risk Youth, a two-year volume report these central questions. Profiles of nine different partnerships assessed as part of this project are included in the report's second volume.

PUBLIC/PRIVATE VENTURES

Public/Private Ventures is a not-for-profit corporation that designs, manages and evaluates social policy initiatives designed to help disadvantaged people, especially youth, become productively employed and self-sufficient.

To achieve that goal, P/PV works with schools, government, employment and training organizations, community-based agencies, foundations and business in a variety of ways:

- o We design new strategies to remedy such pressing problems as the high dropout rate, illiteracy and youth unemployment.
- o We evaluate the effectiveness of programs designed to confront these problems.
- o We conduct multisite national demonstrations to rigorously test promising new solutions.
- o We help the public and private sectors replicate initiatives that have proven effective.

From all our work, we distill the best practices and most significant research findings, and actively promote their use in the development of sound public policy.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. CONTEXT OF THE COMPACT'S DEVELOPMENT	7
III. SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT	13
IV. THE BOSTON PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL	35
V. BUSINESS PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT	39
VI. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	51

TABLES

III.1 Boston Public Schools Metropolitan Achievement Tests Results: 1982-83 to 1984-85 (Median Percentiles)	23
III.2 Percentage of 12th-Graders Falling Below Promotional Standard on Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) Test (Promotional Standard=64)	27
III.3 Average Daily Attendance by School 1981-82 to 1984-85.	29
III.4 Changes in Dropout Rates Among Boston Public High School Students	30
V.1 Summer and Permanent Job Placements Among Boston Employers Through the Boston Compact	44
V.2 Status of the Class of 1985 Six Months After Graduation	45

I. INTRODUCTION

The Boston Compact is an initiative designed to encourage school improvement in Boston by setting objective performance goals for public schools, employment goals for business and organized labor, and admission goals for postsecondary institutions. The schools pledged to improve average daily attendance, standardized test scores and graduation rates. Boston corporations, unions, colleges and universities pledged to help the school district achieve these goals by providing technical assistance, offering political support and increasing employment and educational opportunities for Boston public school students and graduates.

Participants in the Compact describe it as a bargain between the schools, universities and businesses. Each agreed to work in coordination with the school district according to a common plan to produce school improvement. Each also committed itself to a set of goals against which the Compact's achievements could be assessed. The superintendent of schools, in his 1985 annual report, summarized the key points of the Compact (1986:161-162). Within schools, success of the Compact bargains would be measured against the following:

- o A 5 percent increase per year in the number of students who graduate, using as a base the number who enter 9th grade;
- o By 1986, demonstration by all graduates of the reading and math skills necessary for employment, through the achievement of minimum competency standards established by the School Committee;
- o A 5 percent increase per year in average daily student attendance in the high schools; and,
- o A 5 percent increase per year in the number of students placed in jobs or in further education.

Business, for its part, agreed to develop a priority hiring system for graduates of the Boston Public Schools. The specific goals for businesses were to:

- o Sign up 200 companies to participate in the priority hiring effort in 1983, adding 100 more in 1984;
- o Expand the Jobs Collaborative, the Private Industry Council's school-based career education and job placement program, from three to six schools in 1983, and to 12 schools by 1984;

- o Place 400 qualified graduates in jobs by October 1983 and place 600 by October 1984; and
- o Provide jobs for 1,000 students during the summer of 1983 and 1,500 during the summer of 1984.

Colleges and universities committed themselves to enrolling 25 percent more Boston public school graduates in higher education between 1983 and 1988. Colleges and universities also agreed to:

- o Provide expanded information and awareness programs to high school students;
- o Assist the Boston Public Schools in improving college preparatory curricula and instructional strategies;
- o Expand the base of financial aid available to qualified Boston public school graduates; and
- o Improve their own retention efforts and special programs, particularly as they relate to Boston public school graduates.

William S. Edgerly, chairman of the State Street Bank and Trust Company and a key actor in launching the Boston Compact in 1982, described the Compact as "an effort to assure young people and their teachers that hard work in the Boston Public Schools would pay off in jobs and in opportunities for further education." The Compact's goals, he said, are "to increase attendance, to reduce the number of dropouts, to improve student academic performance so that all who graduate are competent in basic skills, and to increase access to jobs and further education . . ."

Under the Compact umbrella, existing adopt-a-school programs involving high schools (Tri-Lateral Council for Quality Education), youth employment activities (Jobs Collaborative) and school management improvement programs (School-Based Management Project, School Improvement Program) were refocused toward the Compact's goals. New initiatives were also begun. Each initiative or program was directed at improving the quality of education through increased school-based planning, teacher training, the introduction of new personnel to assist both schools and students, and clear links between achievement in school and employment and education opportunities.

The Compact was designed to foster school improvement in all public schools--elementary, middle and secondary. The initiative was directed principally at high schools, though school adoptions with elementary and middle schools also increased or were revitalized. In addition to the business community and the

universities, trade unions also joined the Compact. A number of labor unions agreed to increase openings in their apprenticeship programs to Boston public high school graduates under the Boston Trade Union Compact.

The Compact has also spawned additional programs and initiatives by participating businesses that go beyond the initial parameters of the agreement but are extensions of its intent. The Boston Plan for Excellence was started in 1983 with several endowments in excess of \$1 million. The Plan comprises four initiatives:

- o The School Initiatives Grant Program, established with a \$1.5 million endowment by the Bank of Boston, awards grants to schools and teachers that develop innovative projects in elementary and high schools;
- o ACCESS (Action Center for Education Services and Scholarship), launched with an endowment of \$1 million from The New England Mutual Life Insurance Company (The New England), focuses its efforts on graduates of the Boston Public Schools who plan to go to college but who either need counseling about obtaining financial aid or "last dollar" support when they have exhausted other resources. The \$1 million from The New England was a challenge grant, and other organizations and businesses in Boston have contributed in excess of \$2 million toward the ACCESS goal of \$5 million;
- o The Teacher Fellowship Program, established with a grant of \$300,000 from the Bank of New England, supports continuing education for outstanding Boston public school teachers; and
- o HEART (Hancock Endowment for Academics, Recreation and Teaching), created with a \$1 million grant from John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company, awards grants to Boston public middle schools for basic skills and recreation programs.

While each of these newer efforts and special programs is potentially important, some were only in their initial stages when the P/PV study was conducted in mid-1986, and others are beyond our focus on school/business partnerships and will not, therefore, be assessed in this study.

P/PV's assessment of the Compact is part of a larger study of school/business collaborations that focuses on several key questions:

How do school/business collaborations work and what do they do?

Do school/business partnerships actually result in significant benefits to minority and disadvantaged youth?

What makes a partnership effective?

What incentives do these partnerships offer the private sector?

Public/Private Ventures included the Boston Compact as part of its study of school/business collaborations for several reasons. The Compact is an example of an initiative that seeks to change the quality of education provided by an entire school district through a partnership between the school district and the public corporate community. In pursuing this goal, the Compact displays several distinctive features:

- o Comprehensiveness. The Compact encompasses many examples of collaboration among schools, businesses and other institutions--adopt-a-school programs, curriculum development, work/study opportunities, after-school and summer jobs programs, scholarships and grants. Many of these discrete efforts exist in other communities. Boston's approach is interesting because it attempts to coordinate the different efforts of multiple corporate and individual actors.
- o Service to a minority and disadvantaged school population. The Boston Compact seeks to improve the quality of education in a school system that serves a student population composed predominantly of minorities and the economically disadvantaged. Its efforts are directed at a school district that has faced significant social, political and economic problems for more than a decade.
- o Clearly elucidated quantitative goals. Although all school/business collaborations espouse quality education and improved employment opportunities for graduates, the Compact has achieved consensus on concrete numerical levels toward which program activities can be directed and against which program success can be measured.

In addition to the basic questions concerning school/business collaborations, several other questions specific to the Compact also emerged. Some of these questions center on its systemic approach:

What evidence exists to suggest that the Compact is more than its individual components?

To what extent has the Compact redirected or revitalized existing school improvement programs in Boston?

As the Compact has matured, in what ways has business participation evolved?

To what extent has the Compact been able to foster educational change or the delivery of education within Boston public schools?

P/PV's review of the Compact is not intended to be a definitive history or evaluation. Other researchers have already completed in-depth descriptions of its development and initial years. Still others have undertaken in-depth studies of individual schools and components of the Compact. Similarly, simply considering the Compact's achievement of numerical goals would, we believe, be inappropriate as the sole measure of an initiative whose larger objective is fostering a supportive context for public school improvement in Boston. In contrast to other studies, P/PV's assessment seeks to study the Boston Compact as an operating school/business collaboration. The report focuses on the activities of three key actors in the Boston Compact--the Boston Public Schools, the Private Industry Council and the Boston business community. Each will be treated separately in ensuing chapters drawing upon P/PV's observations and quantitative data relevant to specific Compact goals.

This report is based on extensive observations and interviews conducted by P/PV during the late spring and early summer of 1986. The research team conducted site observations in eight high schools. The observations included class visits and interviews with headmasters, guidance office staff, teachers, members of the schools' planning teams, development officers, career specialists and students. In addition, the team interviewed representatives of more than a dozen businesses involved in the Compact, talking with managers, human resource or personnel office staff, and supervisors. The team also interviewed individuals closely linked to the development and execution of the Compact, including its director, the director of the Private Industry Council and others. P/PV also analyzed Compact documents and used aggregate data from the school district to assess school- and district-level changes in key educational indicators.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows: Chapter II provides a brief summary of the context from which the Compact emerged, noting key events leading to its creation. Chapter III discusses the Compact as it is implemented in the schools; Chapter IV, the role of the Private Industry Council in implementing and coordinating many parts of the Compact initiative; and Chapter V, business participation and commitment. The final chapter presents an assessment of the Compact as a vehicle for school improvement and considers the implications the initiative has for school/business collaborations in general.

II. CONTEXT OF THE COMPACT'S DEVELOPMENT

Like many urban areas during the 1960s and 1970s, Boston experienced significant changes in its various communities, its economic base and its social and political climate. These changes were reflected and often amplified in the public schools. The business community was also affected; its relationship with and interest in city issues markedly increased. The Boston Compact was rooted in this context.

A brief review of critical events in Boston during the last 15 years provides insight into the confluence of factors that helped raise demands for system-wide improvement in the public schools while simultaneously forging the linkages prerequisite to implementing the "bargains" set forth in the Compact. These factors include such school system changes as desegregation, rapid turnover of school and district leadership, ineffective management within the school district and the erosion of public confidence in the school system. Changes in demographic, residential and labor force composition had caused concern among the city's corporate leaders, who predicted a diminishing pool of qualified entry-level workers and a change in the overall image of the city as a center of employment.

DESEGREGATION

In 1974, Federal Judge W. Arthur Garrity handed down an historic 152-page opinion that stated:

The court concludes that the defendants [*The Boston School Committee*] have knowingly carried out a systematic program of segregation affecting all of the city's students, teachers and school facilities and have intentionally brought about and maintained a dual school system. Therefore, the entire school system of Boston is unconstitutionally segregated. (Lukas: 1985: 238)

The court action followed the failure over several years of local and state authorities to resolve the problem of racially unbalanced schools; by state law, a school was considered unbalanced if it contained 50 percent or more black students. The Boston School Committee had purposely avoided the issue, and the number of unbalanced schools had risen from 45 in 1965 to 67 in 1971. In 1974, attempts were made to repeal the legislation that had set the standards for assessing the degree of imbalance in the schools (the Racial Imbalance Act) as another way of deferring desegregation. Although unsuccessful (the state legislature voted to repeal the Act but Governor Sargent vetoed the measure), a proposal for voluntary one-way busing or "freedom of choice"

for blacks was offered as an alternative, along with an emphasis on magnet schools designed to attract integrated enrollments.

Despite these attempts to impede integration, Judge Garrity appointed a panel of experts known as "masters" to develop a plan to desegregate the schools. Subsequently, he placed one high school and an administrative office in the central school district office in court receivership. Among Judge Garrity's first actions to redress the racial imbalance was the imposition of court-mandated busing. He and his staff then set about devising a permanent citywide plan to reflect the racial composition of the city and its communities.

One immediate impact of the desegregation order was chaos in both the streets and the schools, followed by massive white flight to the suburbs or the transfer of white students to the extensive network of private, mostly parochial, schools within the city. As a result, city schools lost their traditional constituency. From 1970 to 1982, enrollments in public elementary and secondary schools declined from 93,000 to 61,000, a decrease of 34.8 percent. This decline was 60 percent greater than that in the rest of the state and more than two and a half times greater than the public school enrollment declines in the rest of the country. Projections prepared in 1982 for 1995 stood at 40,000 students enrolled, a reduction of 57 percent in 25 years.

SCHOOL DISTRICT PROBLEMS

In the decade following desegregation, the school district was characterized by many observers as lacking leadership and effective management. The position of school superintendent was filled nine times in almost as many years. The School Committee, in addition to resisting court-ordered busing, grappled with the implications of prison sentences for committee members involved in bribery and charges of having greater interest in allotting patronage jobs than in education. Many of the senior administrative positions in the School Committee were either vacant or filled on a temporary basis.

Lacking leadership and support at the district level, individual school leadership suffered. The example of Charlestown High illustrates this problem: a headmaster who had been immensely popular prior to desegregation was forced to take sick leave following death threats and constant verbal attacks by students, parents and residents of Charlestown when busing was implemented.

ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

In contrast to the turmoil in the schools and Boston neighborhoods, the decade preceding the signing of the Compact saw the

beginning of growth and expansion in jobs, particularly in banking, insurance, retail firms, medical facilities and government offices. The housing industry--both redevelopment of old houses and new home construction--was healthy. Major downtown development projects such as the Fanueil Hall area and the new City Hall/Government Center were other manifestations of an awakening economy. With this improved image and the celebration of the nation's bicentennial, Boston's appeal to tourists and local pride grew.

Increased housing costs, resulting from urban growth and gentrification, coupled with white flight from desegregation, produced changes in the labor market, particularly among entry-level workers. Employers could not attract entry-level workers from the suburbs. In fact, many larger corporations shifted some operations to new sites to tap the suburban employee pool. Nevertheless, many positions remained in center city Boston, though fewer and fewer traditional entry-level workers lived there. Demographic changes also affected the number of young adults available to fill such positions. The business community began to realize that shortages in entry-level workers--43 percent fewer 19-year-olds in Massachusetts are projected by 1993--could severely jeopardize future economic expansion.

This potential dearth of qualified entry-level workers became a major factor in demands for academic improvement in the Boston Public Schools. The student body was 70 percent black or Hispanic; 60 percent came from families receiving welfare, 40 percent lived in public housing, and many of these students had academic deficiencies. The recognition that these were the city's future entry-level workers provided an impetus for the business community to get involved.

BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT AND LINKAGES

Prior to 1981, business involvement with the schools had taken the form of school/business partnerships, an effort designed by the Tri-Lateral Council for Quality Education, a nonprofit organization established in 1974. It aimed to foster business partnerships with the schools at the time of desegregation. The Tri-Lateral Council was the first to suggest establishing measurable goals as a more coherent way to attack the problems of the school system. Frustrated with its apparent lack of impact over the preceding eight years, the council, consisting of representatives of both the schools and the business community, suggested a measurement known as the "90/90 formula": 90 percent retention of freshman through graduation and the successful placement of 90 percent of graduating seniors in jobs or further education.

A parallel development was the addition in 1978 of Title VII of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Title VII

mandated, on an experimental basis, the inclusion of private sector employment as part of this federal employment and training legislation. In particular, Title VII provided limited grants to create Private Industry Councils (PICs) to coordinate employment and training activities within the private sector. While the PIC was originally formed to address the issue of unemployment among disadvantaged adults, the focus gradually expanded to include non-literate, potentially unemployable youth who later would become unemployed adults.

The PIC was able to tap into the existing network of corporate leaders known as the Coordinating Committee, or Vault, an umbrella organization for the business community's civic activity. While not previously active in either youth or education-related programs, members of the Vault were recruited onto the PIC board by William S. Edgerly, former chair of the President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives and active member of the Committee for Economic Development on the national level.

The PIC emerged as an effective organization, dealing with issues of youth and employment through the success of two major programs, the Boston Summer Jobs Program--an initiative designed to place high school students in private sector summer jobs--and the Jobs Collaborative--an in-school job preparation program established in three high schools through a 1981 grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. With both programs designed and operated as collaborative efforts by the school system, the Tri-Lateral Council and the Neighborhood Development and Employment Agency (NDEA), a solid working relationship was built.

These working relationships made it possible to assemble a group of representatives from both public and private arenas with interest in improving public school education. Many of these individuals had worked together before on issues relating to employment and training of the disadvantaged. Jim Daar, executive director of the Boston PIC, and Bob Schwartz, executive director the Compact, had previously worked together at the Center for Public Service at Brandeis University. Schwartz had worked also with Paul Grogan, head of the NDEA, while acting as advisor on education to the mayor of Boston. And both Daar and Schwartz had worked on the Vice President's Task Force on Youth Employment under the Carter administration with William Spring, who was head of the Tri-Lateral Council in 1982 when the Compact was designed. With a sense of trust and respect already established, work on the Compact proceeded.

The final and perhaps key factor in the context was the appointment of Robert Spillane as superintendent of schools in 1981. Recruited from second-in-command at the New York State Department of Education to fill the "revolving-door" office of school superintendent, Spillane was the fourth superintendent hired in 13 months.

His early actions signaled the business community that he was a man of action, willing and able to take control. In Spillane's first months, he averted a teachers' strike, hired a financial administrator to control the school district budget, filled the vacant or temporarily-held senior administrative positions in the school department, laid off teachers, replaced "recalcitrant" headmasters, established a base for improvement by publicly admitting a cumulative dropout rate among public school students approaching 50 percent, and sought outside support and assistance for the schools in frequent speeches before groups of community business leaders.

One other event provided additional impetus to the creation of the Compact. In 1978, the Youth Incentive Entitlement Pilot Project (YIEPP) was passed as part of The Youth Employment Demonstration Programs Act. YIEPP was designed to test the effects of a guaranteed job, part-time during the school year and full-time during the summer, on the attendance and performance of urban youth. Boston was chosen as one of the demonstration sites, creating a good working relationship between business, the employment and training programs, and the schools, and also developing a cadre of individuals in Boston with experience in the problems of youth employment.

THE COMPACT

In September 1982, members of the business community and representatives of the city and the school district came together to formally sign the Boston Compact. After several months of meetings, representatives of the PIC, the business community and school district developed a 107-page document describing a strategy for revitalizing the public schools that involved the schools and the larger community. The text of the Compact details the expectations for school improvement and a promise to provide job opportunities for graduates. The agreement also describes specific steps that employers agree to follow in recruiting and hiring Boston public high school graduates and sets conditions for them to evaluate their participation in the Compact on a yearly basis. Fifteen companies and other organizations signed the Compact at its inception. More than 250 additional companies joined during the next year. By 1987, 369 employers had signed the Compact. Many more Boston companies participated in Compact activities without signing the agreement.

Publicity surrounding the Compact was extensive and positive. The Boston Globe described its signing as "as good a piece of news as the city has received in some time," noting that while business involvement was not purely altruistic, schools and students would benefit. An initial campaign to recruit business

support was emphasized by the Compact because it was the first symbolic goal to which the business community had agreed.

The Compact itself was not a totally new initiative, but rather a further formalization of public/private relationships that already existed in Boston. Although the specificity of goals (5 percent annual improvements in daily attendance, test scores and dropout rates; 200 jobs) were not matched with programs that were as specifically delineated, it set a structure to be followed when other groups, the universities and the unions, became part of the Compact. These institutions could not just "sign" the Compact; participation had to be closely linked to job training and placement, preparation for further education or assistance with financing higher education.

III. SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT

School improvement is the primary objective of the Compact's many activities and it is in the schools where the most visible activities occur. While the Compact seeks to improve public education at all levels, its major activities have been directed at secondary education. It is in the high schools where the problems--attrition, low attendance, poor academic achievement--reach their highest levels. It is also directly from high schools that students apply for jobs. Finally, it is to students in high school that businesses can offer work experience and full-time employment as part of an effort to improve the quality of education.

As part of its research effort, P/PV visited eight of Boston's 17 public high schools. They were chosen by school district personnel to enable observation of a range of business involvement in Compact activities and of school innovation within the Compact framework.¹

This chapter summarizes observations made during these school visits, focusing on the dual role of the high schools--as participants and as recipients--in the Compact. It begins with a brief summary of the Boston public school system and the role the school district has taken in the Compact. Second, the discussion focuses on educational and management thrusts in the schools since the initiation of the Compact, including a new emphasis on planning and leadership, and creation of new school positions. Section three reports the changes in several educational indicators--average daily attendance, standardized test scores and student retention rates--by which some of the effects of the

¹The eight schools visited were Boston Technical, Brighton, Jeremiah Burke, Charlestown, Copley, East Boston, English and South Boston. The selection of these schools was not random. Two examination schools, Boston Latin School and Boston Latin Academy were excluded for two reasons--the admission standards for enrollment mean that their student bodies are not educationally disadvantaged, and their involvement in Compact activities was limited. Two other schools--Dorchester and Jamaica Plain--are believed to be highly involved in Compact activities, but are being intensively studied by other educational researchers; it was argued that another set of observations would be an undue strain. The remaining 13 schools were then ranked by the director of the Compact according to his assessment of the degree to which they espoused the initiative. From this ranking, 10 schools were selected to represent the full range. Scheduling conflicts (examinations, school trips, researcher availability) reduced the pool of schools to be visited to eight.

Compact can be assessed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the longer-range educational effects that the Compact might have.

THE BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS: THE SETTING

The Boston public school system, the object of considerable national and local attention during the past two decades, is, by many standards, relatively small. In 1984-85, the most recent school year for which data are available, the system served about 55,000 students in grades K-12 in more than 115 schools; about 15,500² were enrolled in 17 high schools. This contrasts with the estimated 75,600 students enrolled in 160 Boston public schools in 1977-78, and the 20,000 students enrolled in secondary schools in 1978-79.

During 1984-85, more than 4,800 administrators, teachers and other professionals and an additional 800 teachers' aides staffed the schools. Among the system's 4,150 teachers, almost two-thirds (64%) hold academic degrees at the master's level or beyond. Substantial decreases in enrollment during the past seven years have not brought a corresponding reduction in teachers: during the six-year period, the teaching staff declined by about 75.

Despite its relatively small enrollment, the Boston public school system has been confronted by problems and issues normally experienced by much larger systems. Because they serve a linguistically diverse population, Boston schools provide instruction in more than 20 languages. A number of high schools have separate bilingual programs in Italian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Greek and Khmer, in which almost 15 percent of all students are enrolled. Systemwide, Boston public school students are broken into the following racial/ethnic categories: 27 percent white, 50 percent black, 8 percent Asian and 12 percent Hispanic.

As described in Chapter II, the schools have also been the focal point of considerable racial and ethnic tension. Some schools weathered the period of tension with little turmoil. In other cases, the toll on education for students and teachers was considerable. For example, Charlestown High School was the center of considerable strain in the years following the desegregation order. Television news crews daily set up their equipment in Bunker Hill Monument Park across the street from the high school's original site³ to report any problems that arose

²Excluding 7th and 8th graders enrolled in two examination schools.

³The school moved to a new facility in 1978.

during the school day. Learning in that environment became secondary to making it through another day. Even at its new location, Charlestown has not been able to free itself from controversy; a student was shot during a sporting event at the school during the first year the new school was open. However, over time, the effects of desegregation diminished as new students entered and the fears of the 1970s waned.

The 17 public high schools in Boston are quite different from each other. Some were built before the turn of the century; others in the last decade. They include three premier schools-- Boston Latin Academy, Boston Latin School and Boston Technical High School--where passing a highly competitive examination is required for enrollment. The other Boston high schools house a variety of magnet schools, many initially established in response to forced desegregation. Magnet programs, available in most non-examination high schools, include business, specialized vocational education, agribusiness, the performing arts, health careers, home improvement enterprises and international studies.

Indicators of school performance also vary widely across the 17 schools. For example, in the three examination schools, average daily attendance surpasses 90 percent, standardized test scores indicate that more than 90 percent meet or exceed Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) standards of competence, and average scores on the Metropolitan Reading and Mathematics tests are up to 40 percentile points higher than the all-Boston average. In a recent survey, more than 90 percent of the 1985 graduates of the Latin Academy and Boston Latin were enrolled in postsecondary education (more than 75 percent enrolled in four-year colleges). Among graduates of Boston Technical High School, three in five were enrolled in post-secondary education.

In contrast, average daily attendance rates at the other public high schools dip as low as 76 percent. Academic achievement levels are also low. Systemwide among 12th-graders, three in eight (37.5%) fail to meet the DRP standard. While post-secondary enrollment school rates reach 50 percent in some non-examination schools, less than one-third of 1985 graduates of Boston High, Hyde Park and South Boston high schools enrolled in postsecondary education.

THE COMPACT IN THE SCHOOLS

The Boston School Committee, led by then Superintendent Robert Spillane, agreed to the terms of the Compact as a means of garnering support from the business community. For its part, the district established a small unit to help schools and businesses establish relationships and to challenge schools to develop plans and programs to achieve the goals set by the agreement. Spillane charged this unit, headed by Robert Schwartz, with implementing

the Compact within the schools. Spillane underscored his commitment to achieving the Compact's goals by locating this unit in his office. Under Schwartz's leadership, the unit developed guidelines for school planning, required individual schools to submit their plans for review and comment, and distributed planning grants of \$1,000 to \$1,500 to individual schools. These small grants often served as "seed money" for new initiatives in the school but were insufficient to support entirely new programs.

Beyond the creation of this unit, Spillane continued his role as ambassador to the business and academic communities, and his headmasters and principals. Their performance would be evaluated using the standards set by Compact. Each school was expected to show progress by improving standardized test scores, raising average daily attendance and lowering dropout rates. Headmasters whose schools failed to improve on these measures would be judged accordingly. Within the district, the Compact and its initiatives were presented as tools for headmasters and school planning teams to use in achieving the school's targets in attendance, attrition and test improvement.

Four elements characterize the implementation of the Compact in Boston's high schools:

- o Annual School Plan;
- o New emphasis on educational leadership and management within the schools;
- o Creation of new support in the positions of school development officer and career specialist; and,
- o Revitalized relationships between the schools and their business and university partners.

Below, we discuss these elements in detail.

Annual School Plan

One of the principal components of the Compact was a mandated, formal annual planning and review process for each of the 17 high schools. The annual school planning process comprised several steps: identifying school strengths and weaknesses, establishing goals for school improvement, proposing steps to achieve these goals and evaluating progress made toward them.

The products of the process were preliminary annual plans submitted to the Superintendent's Office for School Assistance. The annual plans were required to address five major areas of concern:

- o Academic achievement--improving test scores and the student dropout rate, increasing college and/or employment placements and focusing on staff development;
- o Parent/community support--increasing parental and community involvement in the school, and promoting staff participation in community meetings and events with a view to building a constituency for the school and allies in support of school policies;
- o Graduate placement--increasing the number of college and job placements;
- o School climate--improving average daily attendance (of both students and staff); reducing tardiness, the dropout rate, vandalism, suspensions and expulsions; and increasing participation in extracurricular and interscholastic activities; and
- o New school initiatives--identifying an area of the school, either physical or academic, that is in particular need of attention during that year.

Each school was required to submit an annual School Improvement Plan and was awarded a small planning grant to pursue the proposed improvement activities. Some headmasters appointed school planning councils to help develop the plan. Some councils had as many as 20 members; others as few as six. Membership included administrators, department heads, teachers and representatives of the school's business and college partners. Some councils also included parents, students and other members of the community. Larger councils often divided into small committees to draft sections of the plan. In some schools, headmasters chose to draft the plan themselves, with limited participation by others in the school.

In schools where the planning was an important aspect of school administration, the planning team usually met two or three times a year: at the end of the school year to review the goals for the year, assess the effectiveness of the efforts taken to meet those goals, and develop the plan for the coming year; at the beginning of the new school year to present the plan to the staff and generate enthusiasm for the planned activities; and at mid-year to evaluate progress made toward the goals and to revise strategies to meet them.

The planning process was for the most part welcomed as an opportunity to provide input into school management and tap into

resources made available through the Compact. Staff support was often enlisted following initial resistance to perceived "top-down" directives and interference from outsiders. Three headmasters complained that drafting the plan was time consuming and onerous, especially when some sections were sent back for revision following review.

The plans themselves vary widely. The format consists of a set of questions or topics on which the school's planning team must formulate a response. Teams are required to describe their school, its educational strengths and weaknesses, and the strategies proposed to improve overall educational delivery. Three of the six plans P/PV reviewed are notable because they used the questions as springboards for discussion of educational issues. The other three respond perfunctorily to most questions, providing only the minimum facts, statements and data to answer questions. Administrators in two of the eight schools visited were unable to locate a copy of their school plan.

In five of the schools visited, headmasters and administrators seized upon the planning process as an opportunity to elicit comments and support from all parts of the school community and to develop jointly a master plan for enriching the school. The plan became a catalyst for action. Planning councils met as often as once a month and subcommittees also met frequently. In these schools, teachers were aware that a plan existed; many cited it in discussions and expressed an interest in the following year's plan and objectives. As one headmaster put it, "I don't necessarily refer to the plan every day, but each month or so I pull it out to see how we're doing." Some headmasters also noted that the exercise of writing an annual school improvement plan helped formalize and quantify their ideas for improvement, and the Compact made resources available to make them operational.

Other schools used the opportunity to plan even more extensively. In one school, instead of the two or three planning team meetings described above, the team held regular monthly meetings during which the five subcommittees (which coincide with the five areas targeted for improvement) reported on the preceding month's progress and discussed new objectives. The leadership role taken by the headmaster and the staff support generated by the school development officer played an important role in establishing the team as an active and involved decision-making body that produced results. The attendance of the business partner at these monthly meetings also proved useful in garnering resources. One example: a school's business partner, observing an outstanding need, asked his own employees to volunteer their time to paint the interior of the whole school.

In two of the schools visited, the development of the annual plan appeared to have been completed merely to satisfy submission requirements. School planning councils were small, represented

only a few of the school's departments and met only once a year. The document was of little use to the school as a planning tool or blueprint for school improvement. Within these schools, few teachers had heard of the document and even fewer had seen it. Even in a school where planning did occur (though outside the framework of the Compact), a headmaster underscored his resentment at submitting a plan by stating: "Just because a program is successful at Dorchester High [a school where most Compact components were experimentally tried] doesn't mean that it should be introduced here."

Emphasis on School Leadership and Management

Each of the eight schools visited was characterized by a strong headmaster, several of them fairly recent appointments. Conversations with them, departmental chairs, faculty and students indicated that the headmasters had made their mark on the school by developing new programs, managing crises and setting school priorities. One example was the headmaster at English High School, who reorganized his school into its present schools-within-school concept. In an attempt to anchor students and make the school more manageable, the 10-story school was divided into three school-within-school units: the Cluster Program for 9th-graders, and a choice of the Traditional/Magnet Arts Program or the Fenway Program for 10th- to 12th-graders. The headmaster was also credited with dramatically improving school morale and public image.

Few teachers named the Compact as the source of the improvements they saw. In fact, teachers often either downplayed the importance of the Compact or separated specific aspects or programs from the entire initiative. Many expressed suspicion of the school district's motivation for entering into the Compact. They wondered whether some of the solutions might have been more easily found within the schools than outside the them. Teachers also expressed concern that the business community was unaware of the depth and magnitude of school problems and would merely offer simplistic solutions that laid both additional burdens and blame on teachers. Thus, while teachers were genuinely receptive to many specific aspects of the Compact, they were reserved in their support of the overall initiative.

New School Positions: Development Officer and Career Specialist

Perhaps the most visible symbol of the Compact within high schools was the creation of two new positions in the schools. Development officers are the principal liaisons between the schools and their business partners. Career specialists, whose role is more fully described in the next chapter, are full-time employees of the Private Industry Council assigned to the high school as part of a contract the school district had with the PIC. Their activities were confined to job preparation and job-

matching tasks; they helped students with their resumes and job search skills and developed work positions among Compact sponsors and other organizations.

Development officers observed in six high schools helped the school take advantage of the resources that the Compact offered. In two high schools, Copley Square and South Boston, partnership activities were coordinated by either an administrative assistant or an assistant headmaster in addition to their other responsibilities. The development officer's job was to solicit a list of the needs of the school, its departments, its teachers and its students on an ongoing basis, then, using the flexibility and opportunities allowed by the Compact, to draw on the resources of the school's business partner, the community and the Compact office itself to meet those needs. In general, development officers coordinated guest speakers, field trips, tutor and mentor programs, awards banquets and SAT workshops, and identified needs in the school that the business partner or other community resource might address. In the two schools in which the development officer role was delegated on a part-time basis, the range of benefits and contacts that the development officers could maintain with the schools' business partners was limited.

In addition to coordinating these partnership activities, the development officer was also a member of the School Improvement Planning Team. The emphasis and scope given to this role, however, varied among schools: in four of the eight schools, development officers concentrated on morale-building activities rather than academic achievement programs; in two schools, development officers divided their time equally between the two. Only in one or two instances, however, was the development officer directly involved with curriculum and instructional improvement.

In all but one case, the development officer was a former teacher in the high school. Several had been departmental chairs in the school or had served in administrative positions; others had taught for only a few years before accepting the position as development officer. Development officers were members of the teacher's union and could, if they wished, return to teaching. If they had been granted tenure as teachers, this status was not jeopardized by accepting the development officer position.

In general, development officers received high praise from headmasters, departmental chairs and teachers. Their efforts on behalf of the school were appreciated. Their mandate to secure support in the community meant that the school became more accessible to business partners and others. Teachers and headmasters also noted that development officers provided them the opportunity and contacts to reach out into the community themselves. In particular, teachers cited development officers for setting up relationships between teachers and businesspeople

to share ideas, keep abreast of new developments or discuss ways to integrate real world experiences into their teaching. Several teachers also secured summer internships in area businesses through programs coordinated by their development officer.

The primary effect of the development officers' activities has been most apparent in the area of teacher morale. The development officer could address teachers' concerns and needs as they arose. The development officer helped to gain access to resources outside the school. Teachers commented that their development officer obtained financial support, in-kind contributions, tours and other services that in the past they had not been able to secure. They reported that these actions improved how they and their colleagues felt about teaching.

In many instances the development officer and the career specialist worked in tandem to meet the needs of the school. In several cases, they shared common or adjacent offices and worked as a team. In other schools, the development officer was treated as part of the administration and the career specialist was only nominally integrated into the rest of school.

Brighton High was an example of a school where the development officer and career specialist worked closely. The position began as a part-time school improvement coordinator and grew into a full-time position as development officer. The Brighton development officer worked with the Brighton Board of Trade, a local small-business group, to develop new jobs beyond those supplied by the school's business partners.

At Charlestown High School, the development officer and career specialist shared an office near the guidance department. The development officer focused on identifying the needs of individual teachers and departments and the school in general. However, he also referred students to the career specialist and worked with the specialist to develop outreach programs for students who might obtain jobs through the Compact.

The change in superintendent from Robert Spillane to Laval Wilson brought uncertainty to the position of development officer in many of the schools. Faced with a need to reduce the overall school budget and constrained by the number of positions protected within each school under desegregation orders, Wilson requested that headmasters make decisions on which positions to eliminate. Often, the position of development officer was vulnerable. While one headmaster was hard-pressed to choose between the value to the school of the career specialist and the development officer, others were quite clear on which of the positions they would rather retain. While the career specialist brought jobs to the students, the benefits accruing to the school through the development officer were seen as far outweighing those jobs. However, despite this preference among headmasters

to retain their development officer, the superintendent opted to sustain the contract with the PIC for career specialists. As a result, development officer positions in at least three of the six schools were targeted for elimination. However, most development officer positions were retained and in the subsequent fiscal year's budgetary process, recommendations for staff cuts did not include the development officer positions.

This change may affect many Compact activities in the school. The development officer often served as the catalyst for developing new programs, discovering new resources for the school and generating enthusiasm for achieving the school's academic and morale goals.

CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS

Within the Compact, schools committed themselves to improving their performance on several key educational indicators. At the system and school level, three measures are of particular significance: achievement in reading and mathematics, average daily attendance and dropout rates. A summary of progress on these indicators is presented below.

Achievements in Reading and Mathematics Skills

Boston public schools use the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) to assess academic performance in reading and mathematics for 9th-, 10th- and 11th-graders, and to compare their achievements with national norms. Table III.1 shows how BPS students fared in reading and math in the period between 1982-83 and 1984-85. These data are presented in median percentiles, a measure that compares the performance of the average student in the Boston Public Schools--the student who achieves a median score, or the score above which half of the students score higher and half score lower--to national norms. A median percentile of 70 would mean that the average BPS student--the one who scores exactly at the median for his grade level in the Boston Public Schools--had a score that was higher than that of 70 percent of the students at that grade level in the national sample. Similarly, a median percentile score of 38 means that the student who scored at the median of the distribution for BPS students only scored higher than 38 percent of the students in the national sample.

The citywide median for all high school grades in 1982-83 placed Boston students in the second quintile (median percentiles between 21 and 40) for both reading and mathematics. Looking across all grades, for both reading and math, Table III.1 makes it clear that as a general rule Boston public school students score lower than the national norm in both reading and math. The median percentile ranges from 21 to 41, suggesting that Boston students are outscored by between 60 percent and 79 percent of students in the national sample.

TABLE III.1

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS:
 1982-83 TO 1984-85
 (Median Percentiles)

	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	Change
<u>Reading</u>				
Grade 9	38	46	48	10
Grade 10	36	40	46	10
Grade 11	40	44	40	0
<u>Mathematics</u>				
Grade 9	30	42	50	20
Grade 10	36	40	44	8
Grade 11	38	46	46	8

Since 1982-83, however, substantial system wide improvements in both reading and mathematics have been made, especially among 9th- and 10th-graders. For example, the 1984-85 9th-grade median percentile in mathematics was 50, an increase of 20 percentiles since 1982-83. Thus, Boston 9th-graders matched national levels in mathematics by 1984-85. Reading medians increased 10 percentiles among 9th- and 10th-graders during the same period. Improvements of less magnitude in mathematics among 10th- and 11th-graders have also been recorded. No net change in 11th-grade reading medians was recorded. Overall, MAT scores improved enough during the period to place Boston 9th-, 10th- and 11th-graders within the third quintile (41 to 60), though still below the national median. In sum, the results suggest that although they remain below national norms, Boston students have made some progress in reading and mathematics.⁴

It is important, however, to learn whether these improvements are confined to one or two schools with extraordinary improvements or reflect a pattern of systemwide change. Analyses of the performance of individual schools on these tests during the same period indicate that baseline performance varies widely and that the degree of improvement also differs. Few consistent patterns emerge: the college preparatory examination schools (Boston Latin School and Boston Latin Academy) report MAT scores that usually place them in the top quintile (81 to 100) in reading and mathematics for most grades. Given the already high achievement levels in these schools, it would be unreasonable to expect substantial improvement in their scores during the period. It would

⁴In 1986, after P/PV's field research period had concluded, Boston Public Schools released new MAT test results based on the May 1985 testing period. These results are those of a newly-normed standardized test that adjusted for the general rise in basic skills competencies throughout the nation's schools since 1978. In addition, the new test results differently weights various components in the overall final score. These scores indicate that among high school students, median percentiles in reading had risen by one point among ninth-graders and had dropped four and five points among 10th- and 11th-graders respectively. Relative losses in median percentile ranking in math were more pronounced. Declines of eight and seven points were reported among 9th- and 10th-graders and 12 points among 11th-graders. These findings must be interpreted cautiously and cannot be directly compared with prior scores and judged to indicate a decline in students' reading and math abilities. Rather, as the BPS report concludes, they indicate that "in spite of the significant progress achieved by BPS over the past few years, overall student performance lags behind national norms." (1986:6).

be impressive if each school could maintain its position. In fact, few changes were reported.

Although the other examination school (Boston Technical High School) cannot boast the same high levels as its college preparatory sister schools, it too reported median percentiles for mathematics in excess of 60 for all grades, and reading scores near or above 50 across grades. Changes between 1982-83 and 1984-85 were modest, paralleling those of the two other examination schools.

Moving away from the examination schools to the BPS comprehensive high schools, substantially lower achievement scores were reported. While most median scores hovered between the 20th and 35th percentile, some schools reported initial baseline scores for the school year 1983-84 as low as 11 and 14. However, comprehensive high schools reported substantial increases between 1982-83 and 1984-85. In particular, four schools showed substantial improvements in testing results across grades. These were Boston High School, Charlestown High School, Mario Umana Technical High School and Jamaica Plain High School. Each was ranked among the schools reporting the greatest improvement in reading and math scores for all grades.

The consistent appearance of three or four schools in such rankings is not surprising. A concerted effort to improve in testing in general, or in a particular subject area, can result in substantial change. However, a review of school improvement across all grades for reading or mathematics reveals that only six of the 17 schools never appear among the five with the greatest improvement, and three of these are the examination schools whose existing levels of academic achievement make striking increases unlikely.

Changes in academic performance, though of uneven magnitude across schools, seem to be occurring throughout Boston high schools. Three or four schools consistently showed substantial increases, but they were joined by most other comprehensive high schools in making some improvements. Within the context of academic achievement on standardized tests, Boston public schools are improving and have begun to approach national norms.

However, comparisons with national norms do not directly assess the students' competency level in these subjects. Beginning with the 1985-1986 school year, the Boston School Committee adopted the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) test to assess reading competencies⁵ at various grades. DRP scores can range from 15

⁵No competency test nor standard for mathematics competency has yet been adopted by the School Committee.

(extremely easy prose) to 100 (extremely difficult prose). The school district describes the DRP this way:

The test (DRP) measures a student's overall reading comprehension level against a fixed scale of reading difficulty. It indicates a student's ability to process and understand prose in context, rather than showing where the student ranks relative to other students. (School Profiles, 1984-85:x)

The Boston School Committee adopted a standard of 64 as the promotional standard reading competency for 12th-graders. A DRP score of 64 is the approximate level of Time and Newsweek magazines or the editorial page of The Boston Globe. Students who fail to achieve this level are targeted for remediation or retention in grade. Table III.2 reports the proportion of 12th-graders failing to achieve the promotional standard at the end of the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years.

The findings suggest that approximately one in six 12th-graders failed to achieve the promotional standard in 1984-85. Although no comparable systemwide failure rate was reported for 1983-84, a review of the individual schools suggests that considerable progress was made in many schools since the prior year. The large majority of schools have shown progress in the reading competencies of their 12th-graders. Only a handful of schools reported a slippage. By imposing a promotional standard in reading, the BPS took a bold step toward certifying that graduates are competent. At the same time, however, 18 percent of all seniors failed to meet this standard, indicating that the system still has some distance to travel to ensure that all students who pass through the system are competent in reading.

Average Daily Attendance

In attempting to reach the achievement and dropout reduction targets of the Compact, schools also focused on intermediate goals to mark their progress. Among the most important of these was increased average daily attendance. Most observers agree with school officials that students who attend regularly are more likely to benefit from the educational program than those who are frequently absent. Like many inner-city school districts, Boston's average daily attendance (average number of students attending each day divided by the average number of students enrolled) was a cause of concern.

Table III.2

PERCENTAGE OF 12th-GRADERS FALLING BELOW PROMOTIONAL
STANDARD ON DEGREES OF READING POWER (DRP) TEST
(Promotional Standard=64)

	1983-84	1984-85	Change
All High Schools	N.R.*	18.0	---
Boston High	34.4	18.4	-16.0
Boston Technical	3.7	5.0	1.3
Brighton	42.1	27.7	-14.4
Burke	40.5	30.8	- 9.7
Charlestown	29.1	11.9	-17.2
Copley	12.2	22.7	10.5
Dorchester	50.5	30.2	-20.3
East Boston	4.6	7.8	-38.2
English	61.9	22.1	-39.8
Hyde Park	16.0	25.6	9.6
Jamaica Plain	34.7	37.5	2.8
Latin Academy	0.0	0.0	---
Latin School	0.0	6.2	6.2
Madison Park	47.9	19.7	-28.2
Mario Umana	19.8	13.2	- 6.6
South Boston	27.8	26.1	- 1.7
West Roxbury	27.5	22.5	- 5.0

*N.R. = Not reported

Table III.3 reports average daily attendance rates for the system and for individual schools between 1981-82 and 1984-85.⁶ System-wide average attendance in the 1981-82 school year was 77.6, indicating that almost one-quarter of all Boston public high school students were not in attendance on any given school day. One school (South Boston) reported an average daily attendance of less than 66 percent. In contrast, average daily attendance exceeded 87 percent among examination school students. By 1984-85, system-wide average daily attendance had risen 6.4 percentage points to 84 percent.

Across Boston high schools, improvements in average daily attendance varied widely. South Boston, the school reporting the lowest average daily attendance in 1981-82, improved 17.6 points to 85.7. In fact, 12 of the 17 schools reported increases of greater than five points during the period. No schools reported a decline in average daily attendance. Only three schools--Madison Park (0.0), Hyde Park (0.1) and Mario Umana Technical (0.8)--reported virtually no change in attendance rates.

Dropout rates

The most intractable problem Boston public schools have faced is the dropout rate, which mirrors that of many urban school districts in the nation. The problem was clearly recognized by the Compact initiative and specific goals were established to reduce dropout rates by 5 percent each year. Table III.4 presents the cumulative dropout percentage rates for the graduating classes between 1982 and 1985. A cumulative dropout percentage rate is based on analyses of the completion and attrition rates of members of the entering 9th-grade class expected to graduate in four years. In the analysis, all members of the entering 9th-grade class are followed through the 12th or 13th grade (to include nonpromoted 12th-graders). At that point, the total numbers of graduates and dropouts are divided by the number of students originally enrolled four (or five) years earlier to calculate the graduation and dropout rates. One interpretation of the dropout rate is that it indicates the probability that a 9th-grader will leave school without a diploma.

During this period, the overall dropout rate has increased by 6.8 percent. To some degree, the increase may have resulted indirectly from the Compact. As a result of the closer scrutiny given to school numbers and an effort to assess carefully the effects of the Compact, data collection procedures were improved.

⁶ Systemwide average daily attendance rates are estimates based on reported average daily attendance rates for individual schools, adjusted for the average size of the school's student body.

Table III.3

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE BY SCHOOL
1981-82 to 1984-85

School Year	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	Net Change
All High Schools*	77.6	80.1	82.5	84.0	6.4
Boston Technical	82.9	86.1	86.8	90.2	7.3
Brighton	71.5	79.0	79.5	85.7	14.2
Burke	75.1	71.0	82.3	80.7	5.6
Copley	79.1	82.3	86.5	87.4	8.3
Dorchester	73.7	77.3	81.4	83.3	9.6
English	75.3	74.7	81.1	82.8	7.5
Jamaica Plain	72.5	74.8	80.2	81.7	9.2
Madison Park	76.2	79.2	77.7	76.2	0.0
South Boston	65.7	72.9	79.4	83.3	17.6
Boston High	75.8	79.4	85.3	85.7	9.9
Charlestown	74.0	80.2	81.8	80.5	6.5
East Boston	75.9	77.1	79.5	82.8	6.9
Hyde Park	84.0	84.4	80.9	84.1	0.1
Latin Academy	87.1	90.6	90.4	92.2	5.1
Latin School	91.8	92.1	94.7	94.6	2.8
Mario Umana	81.0	80.9	81.6	81.8	0.8
West Roxbury	75.7	77.8	78.4	79.9	4.2

*Estimates of average daily attendance for the total system based on an average of individual attendance rates adjusted for school size.

Table III.4

CHANGES IN DROPOUT RATES AMONG
BOSTON PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Graduating Class	Cumulative Dropout Percentage Rate*
1982	36.2
1983	38.0
1984	40.7
1985	43.0

Source: Jeannette S. Hargroves, "The Boston Compact:
Facing the Challenge of School Dropouts," Federal
Reserve Bank of Boston.

*Cumulative dropout percentage rate is based on the entering 9th-grade class expected to graduate in four years. The cumulative rate follows a class from the 9th grade through the 13th year (to include non-promoted 12th-graders) and assesses their graduation/dropout status.

Jeanette Hargroves, who compiled these estimates for the Compact, notes that prior to the 1983-84 school year, many students who in reality had dropped out were erroneously classified as "Moved, No Address," "Other" or "Did Not Report." (1987:4) With new emphasis on accurate data collection, the dropout rates rose. A second interpretation of the reported increases in drop-out rates argues that increased attention to attendance and achievement may have forced less able or less interested students to drop out, leaving only students who have higher academic abilities or motivation in the schools. However, ignoring the debates on whether a "true" increase in dropout rates has occurred and focusing only on the newest rate, it is apparent that the problem persists; the Compact has not achieved its drop-out reduction goal. Almost one-half of all students entering 9th grade will not graduate. This represents more than 3,000 youth from each class who leave high school without a diploma.

The implications of these findings are clear. When attention is focused on a particular area of school improvement, steps can be taken to generate some change. For example, increased attention to academic achievement apparent in Boston and throughout the nation caused school officials to develop methods for improving student test scores. They expanded teacher training and introduced new pedagogical techniques. Several schools ran courses or seminars on how to take tests. Other schools encouraged teachers to emphasize materials that would be on tests, using approaches that better prepared students for the MATs. Teachers stressed the importance of taking the testing seriously and doing well.

In the case of average daily attendance, schools adopted a number of measures to identify student absences better and act on truancy. Schools more closely reviewed their enrollment lists to regularly purge students who had transferred or dropped out. Schools also adopted a plan of action to encourage students to attend. Several purchased automatic phone machines that called students' homes to inform parents that the student had not attended that day. Others pursued various programs to underscore the importance of attending regularly. Apparently, these efforts were fruitful. Reported increases in average daily attendance are likely a combination of improved attendance patterns and better record-keeping by schools.

Improvements in achievement scores and average daily attendance rates indicate that increased attention to schools has paid off, but the continuing dropout problem signaled that school improvement would not be without setbacks. The dropout problem became the major stumbling block in the Compact's attempt at school improvement. Reported at 36.2 percent for the class of 1981, it increased to 43.0 percent among students expected to graduate in 1985.

Under the mantle of the Compact, the Boston community has begun to address the dropout problem comprehensively. The school district, the city, area universities and the business community convened a working conference in May 1986 to discuss the dropout problem and outline an agenda to confront it. Two long-range goals were declared:

- o By 1989, reduce the number of students who drop out annually by one-half and double the number of dropouts who return to regular or alternative schools; and
- o Extend the focus and resources of the Compact to include middle schools and community agencies serving the needs of school-age children.

In response to the challenge posed by the dropout rate, participants suggested a variety of steps that might be taken to meet these new targets and goals. Suggestions included the creation of new alternative schools, better coordination between schools and human service agencies, assessment of school policies that possibly facilitate attrition, and development and expansion of specific dropout prevention programs. The School Committee and the city began by adopting several of these measures for the 1986-87 school year. One must caution, however, that despite the national attention that has been focused on dropping out in recent years, few solutions have emerged. Only limited and transitory gains have been made.

CONCLUSION

Boston's public schools have changed since the institution of the Compact. Academic achievement, as measured by standardized tests, has risen, though students remain below national norms in reading and mathematics. Average daily attendance has also improved. But school dropout rates remain stubbornly high and unresponsive to efforts thus far. In response, the Compact and the community have recently undertaken a new agenda to confront this issue.

There is also evidence of change within the schools. Educational leadership has become apparent at both the district and individual school levels. Many headmasters have taken opportunities created by the Compact and instituted their own new programs within their schools. They have been assisted by development officers in securing community resources for the school and by career specialists in linking students with part-time, summer and full-time employment.

For their part, teachers reported being aided in their work through specific efforts of the Compact. However, teachers

tended to credit individual headmasters and development officers for the improvements and not to attribute them to the Compact. Administrators, teachers and students uniformly spoke of improvements in overall school morale, citing increased school spirit and interest in extracurricular activities.

IV. THE BOSTON PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

The Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) coordinates the flow of students and jobs between the schools and the business community. The relatively few linkages between schools and corporations that existed prior to the Compact could be conveniently handled by the single school and its Tri-Lateral Council partner. The initiation of the Compact, however, greatly expanded the number of companies linked with the schools. While fewer than 25 companies were actively engaged in Tri-Lateral Council activities, the Compact eventually mobilized more than 350 companies and organizations. Most were committed to offering full-time and part-time positions to students and graduates. The sheer magnitude of this response, coupled with the actual mechanics of identifying, screening and matching hundreds with employers required a system to manage the process. The PIC's experience in job development and placement in general, and its management of the Jobs Collaborative in particular, made it the appropriate intermediary between schools and businesses for Compact employment activities. This chapter discusses the PIC's key responsibilities and activities.

Boston's PIC is regarded as one of the most effective in the nation. Its board membership closely parallels that of the Vault, and represents the most powerful corporate leaders in the city. Its bylaws require that only CEOs serve on its board; representatives or stand-ins are not allowed. This strong corporate support means that progress toward the Compact's employment goals are subjected to regular scrutiny by the Boston business elite. Yearly Compact employment goals are made public, and considerable peer pressure among PIC corporate members ensures that employment targets are achieved.

The PIC's experience in youth and adult employment and its strong professional staff make it an expert participant in the Compact. Since its formation in 1978, the PIC has been instrumental in screening, counseling and training unemployed adults and youth. In the years immediately preceding the Compact, it had primary responsibility for both the Boston Summer Job Program and the Jobs Collaborative, giving it considerable experience in dealing with youth.

The existence of a strong, experienced PIC ameliorated many of the "start-up" problems that the Compact's employment goals might have engendered. The PIC is the focal point for problem resolution relating to jobs and employment for businesses, schools and students. Employers encountering problems with a PIC-placed youth immediately call PIC offices or the PIC representative in the youth's school (Career Specialist). PIC efforts substantially reduced the work that would have been required in its absence to achieve the Compact's employment targets.

PIC ACTIVITIES

The PIC provides a variety of employment-related services to both businesses and students. These include job-readiness training, job development, candidate screening and matching, eligibility certification for wage-subsidy programs, student career and job counseling and resolving work-related problems among students and employers. The PIC also assumed the responsibility of coordinating the partnerships that already operated within the Tri-Lateral Council.

Employer Participation

After a business expresses an interest in supporting the Compact and agrees to give Boston public high school graduates preference in hiring, a PIC staff member contacts its personnel department to discuss its anticipated job openings, qualifications and other employment-related matters. This information is the basis for screening and referring candidates to the employer. Besides making full-time positions available for graduates, many firms maintain a bank of part-time and summer positions for students still in school.

Career Specialists in the Schools

The PIC has a contract with the Boston Public Schools to provide employment services and counseling in 14 high schools. This initiative, known as the Job Collaborative, was begun on an experimental basis in 1981 when career specialists, supported by a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, were placed in three high schools. Under the Compact, the program expanded the following year to six high schools and ultimately to 14 in 1985. (Three high schools--the two college preparatory examination schools and a school that was already heavily involved in work-study placements--do not have resident career specialists. However, students in these schools may still take advantage of PIC placement activities.)

Career specialists come from a variety of backgrounds, including teaching. Many have worked as job developers or company personnel employees. Some were involved in retail sales. They approach their jobs with considerable enthusiasm and with a "real world" attitude about what it takes for a student to get and keep a job. They meet with PIC staff assigned to Compact activities biweekly to discuss common problems in their work and upcoming placement initiatives.

The corps of career specialists is the cornerstone of the PIC's efforts within the framework of the Compact. The specialists work directly with administrators, guidance counselors, teachers

and students. Many offer courses in job preparation and readiness skills as part of their duties. Most keep a high profile within the school by encouraging students to talk with them about work opportunities and inviting teachers and guidance counselors to refer students who need help finding a job.

The principal reason that the career specialist position works, however, is because each specialist has access to a pool of positions in Boston companies to which he/she can refer qualified students. Each career specialist has 20 or so contacts with Compact signatories who have agreed to give Boston public school graduates preference in hiring. In addition to this base set of contacts, career specialists approach other companies and organizations to solicit full-time and part-time positions.

To qualify for a job through the career specialist, students must demonstrate a responsible attitude toward school, measured by good attendance and passing grades. A job is frequently an incentive for a student to meet these general criteria in hope of encouraging improvement. Students are, of course, able to seek jobs on their own, but those available through the career specialist are frequently more interesting and better paid. Specialists encourage employers to use the PIC referral system instead of hiring directly.

Career specialists divide their placement work across the three types of jobs described above--full-time employment for graduating students, part-time work for continuing students and summer job placements. Depending on the time of the year, the career specialists' activities shift to meet the next employment cycle or phase. Once they place or refer a youth, career specialists monitor students in their positions, serving as ombudsmen for student, employer and school problems. Employers experiencing difficulty with a student in their firm regularly call the career specialist to deal with the problem. Teachers who see a decline in academic performance by a working student may contact the career specialist to intervene. Finally, students themselves often contact the specialist for career and job-related advice.

In preparation for the summer youth employment program, career specialists do initial screening, eligibility certification and work with employers in setting up orientation programs and work assignments.

Career specialists are also an important resource for graduating seniors. Some students are able to convert a part-time or summer position into full-time employment. However, since the number of permanent hires is less than the number of summer hires, many students must seek positions with new companies.

The PIC expects career specialists to play an important role in meeting the Compact's employment objectives each year. As a result, the placement of graduates has become a highly competitive process and the PIC has established two incentive programs to encourage high placement rates. For each placement in excess of 20, the career specialists are paid a bonus or commission of \$10 by the PIC. A second approach pairs career specialists from two high schools. The pair with the highest placement rates share a \$500 bonus.

Although these incentive programs seem to encourage higher rates, they have been questioned by some who see meeting the needs of students and business becoming secondary to achieving high numbers of placements. For example, although some specialists share the jobs they are unable to fill from their own student body, others do not, resorting instead to placing any student rather than losing the placement to another career specialist with a more qualified student.

The PIC, then, serves as the linchpin between businesses and schools. Its corps of career specialists is a resource for students who seek jobs and is a preliminary screen for businesses seeking employees. The next chapter considers business involvement in Compact activities.

V. BUSINESS PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPACT

Business leaders' willingness to assist the schools and to make jobs available to Boston's students was crucial to launching the Compact. What is unique about the role of business is not the provision of jobs, but the level, continuity and vitality of corporate involvement. Agreement to develop and proceed with the Compact came from Boston's corporate leaders, including the CEOs of Blue Shield of Massachusetts, the New England, John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company, State Street Bank and Trust Company, and the Bank of Boston. They have not flagged in their willingness to provide the increasing resources needed to accomplish stated goals. Although supervision and oversight of specific programs in the schools were delegated to lower management levels, the commitment to recruit additional firms, design new initiatives and raise large sums of money has remained with the CEOs. Among the specific roles played by key figures are the following:

- o Developing support for the Compact in the schools and the business community, especially by keeping the Compact in the public eye;
- o Governing the Private Industry Council, which has played a key role in managing job-related components of the Compact;
- o Implementing program components that began or continued as part of the Compact agreement; and
- o Independently planning and executing new initiatives that extend the Compact, such as the Boston Plan for Excellence.

This section focuses on the major ways that business is involved in the Compact: providing jobs, serving as partners to individual schools and promoting increased corporate support. The description of the business role is based on interviews conducted in 10 private sector organizations selected by the PIC to represent different levels of business involvement. They include four banks, three large insurance companies, two management consulting firms, an accounting firm and a utility.

Neither manufacturing nor high-technology industry was included, reflecting in part their lesser involvement in the Compact. (However, two individuals from high-technology companies that were in partnerships with individual schools were interviewed during a school visit.) Interviews were conducted with CEOs or their high-level representatives, middle-level managers, such as personnel directors and staff from community service divisions, and supervisors of entry-level employees.

INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

The original motivation for business involvement in the Compact was twofold:

- (1) Businesses were concerned about a decline in the number of youth graduating from high school as qualified entry-level workers; and
- (2) The prolonged effort to desegregate the schools had shaken public faith in the quality of education in Boston and tainted Boston's reputation nationally, making it difficult to recruit employees.

Businesses view their participation in education through the Compact as enlightened self-interest. At the highest levels, they think of long-term benefits: an increased pool of stronger potential employees in a declining work force, a better economic climate in the city and more potential customers. For the short term, they see the Compact as community service, or "good corporate citizenry"; for banks in particular, involvement in public service is a "must." In some cases, businesses may view the Compact as a way of enhancing their chances of gaining governmental approval for expansion or for obtaining permits; moreover, hiring minority youth also helps them meet affirmative action targets. However, companies often exhibited a sense of "noblesse oblige," and were less concerned about benefits to themselves.

Business leaders also felt they had to become more involved in improving education because they defined the schools and the school administration and staff as "dismal." "It's a tragedy that the private sector has to intervene," said one high-level official whose company was influential in designing the Compact and executing its program components. Some feel that many of the schools still have a long way to go to become effective. "I can't imagine how anyone can get an education in some Boston schools," said another program coordinator. They recognize that many teachers are burned-out and alienated. They see a system that needs staff development and teacher empowerment; it is in these areas that business leaders see a match with their resources.

Several respondents commented on the low esteem in which the public schools in Boston are held. As a result of their involvement, the corporate community has become a stronger booster for the schools than has the general public. Participation in the Compact has become an accepted part of doing business in Boston, though there is wide variation in involvement.

PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES WITH STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

There are two components of direct private sector involvement with schools and students in the Compact framework. The first component is the jobs programs; the second is the partnership program with individual schools. Although both components preceded the Compact, both have grown during the Compact years: summer and permanent placements have doubled, and more money and effort has been expended in partnerships with individual schools.

The Jobs Program

The Boston Compact was framed around business' commitment of priority hiring for Boston's high school graduates in exchange for improvement in the school system. Although there were goals for the business community, individual companies were not required to supply a specific number of jobs in order to "join." They could participate as much or as little as they wished.

The business community hired students for three types of jobs programs: summer jobs, part-time school-year jobs (Jobs Collaborative and Externship Programs), and full-time jobs for graduates. All three are coordinated at the school level by a PIC-sponsored career specialist, whose job was described in the previous chapter. The largest and most visible job placement effort, both at the schools and within the businesses, is the summer jobs program. When one mentions "Boston Compact" in Boston, people are more likely to think of the summer jobs programs than of graduate hiring.

Through the efforts of career specialists and coordinating staff at the PIC, job commitments are solicited from Boston area businesses. Students are then selected and recommended by the school's career specialists for summer jobs in Boston companies. Students work in entry-level jobs, largely clerical, for wages uniformly above minimum wage and comparable to wages the companies offer regular entry-level workers. The low unemployment rate in Boston makes it difficult to find competent student workers for minimum wage. In the opinion of those interviewed at Boston companies, the summer jobs program is popular for a variety of reasons:

- o Students are prescreened by career specialists in the schools, and employers do not need to use an employment agency;
- o Students often substitute for vacationing staff, and supervisors prefer the consistency of a single student over transient staff from temporary agencies; and

- o Students' wages are usually paid from corporate personnel budgets rather than from the individual budgets of departments in which students work. This is true in eight of the 10 companies visited. Thus, departments are getting "free" help.

Some students are hired to continue after the summer--either part time if they are still attending high school or full time if they have graduated. Recent graduates are often able to convert their summer employment into a full-time position. If a student is hired as a permanent employee, departments have to pay wages from their own budgets. However, by the time the youth are on the departments' payroll, they are already trained, tested and integrated into the company's work environment. Thus, in some ways, the overall company subsidizes or provides "seed money" to departments to encourage more permanent hires from the Boston schools. Some employed students also find permanent jobs in other departments of the company as a result of their access to job postings and the increased confidence and improved skills they have gained.

The Private Industry Council's analysis of business participation in the 1985 Summer Jobs Program reveals a great deal about the nature of business participation in the jobs component of the Compact: 539 companies hired a total of 2,320 youth; one-fourth of the 2,320 jobs were provided by 15 companies, primarily those whose CEOs have been leaders in the Compact.

However, business participation in summer hiring was not restricted to large companies; over half the firms had fewer than 100 employees. Of the 539 companies that participated, over one-third had hired students for the first time in 1985. Among the most common types of firms hiring youth are banks (26%), health and hospitals (13%), retail (11%), and insurance (6%). It is not surprising that a majority of the jobs available in these companies are clerical, followed by maintenance and retail work.

For banks and large financial institutions, students are thoroughly screened for the jobs by career specialists and, in some cases, by the businesses themselves. Some companies have specific days when they interview students for available slots. One large company actually puts students through a comprehensive screening program; it begins with about 120 students in the fall and selects the best 75 for summer jobs in May. While one can argue that these students would have gotten jobs anyway, several company coordinators of the summer jobs program said that these students probably would not have either sought or been hired for these jobs without the program.

In many companies, the job is only one part of a comprehensive summer program developed by the school and business partner to

address specific educational concerns. There are special activities for students, including a mandatory writing workshop in one company, a communications workshop in another and social events in many.

A number of students were hired by their departments after the summer, though businesses did not seem to be concerned with keeping a record of such hires and measuring benefits of Compact programs. One of the supervisors said that he was so impressed with a student that he held a job open for four months until the student who had worked part time had graduated from high school. Supervisors spoke positively about most students, more strongly for the summer workers than the year-round part-time ones. Some supervisors formed strong relationships with the youth, and spent time discussing their postgraduation plans; many youth came back to visit.

There is substantial evidence to suggest that the Compact has influenced growth in the number of both summer jobs and permanent jobs that major corporations have committed to the program. Table V.1 presents employment goals and achievements for each year of the Compact. During 1982, the first year of the Compact, 852 students were placed in the summer program; by 1986, the number had grown to 2,591. The business community has also achieved its yearly permanent employment goals: the PIC reports that the number of graduate hires increased from 415 in 1983 to 967 in 1986.

Another 1985 PIC survey demonstrated the importance of the jobs program for Boston's high school graduates. The survey was conducted by the PIC six months after graduation and succeeded in reaching three-quarters of the graduates. As Table V.2 demonstrates, 59 percent were working either full or part time. Only 7 percent of those contacted were unemployed or not in the labor force; as a result of PIC contact through the survey, an additional 35 unemployed youth were placed in jobs, reducing the percentage of those not employed or not in the labor force to 4.5 percent. By comparison, in a sample survey of 10 percent of the class of 1982 conducted by Jeannette S. Hargroves of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, the unemployment rate was 20 percent.

Business Partnerships with Individual Schools

Many existing school/business partnerships underwent a metamorphosis following the creation of the Compact. Most partnerships had been established through the Tri-Lateral Council, but many had lost their focus and vigor in the decade since they were established. The Compact provided an opportunity to reevaluate the relationship. In two or three instances, the original partnership was dissolved and the school was paired with a new business partner. While all partnerships began to emphasize jobs, most have also chosen to focus on providing educational

Table V.1

SUMMER AND PERMANENT JOB PLACEMENTS
 AMONG BOSTON EMPLOYERS
 THROUGH THE BOSTON COMPACT

Year	Summer Placement Goal	Summer Placements	Permanent Placement Goal	Permanent Placements
1982	750	852	---	---
1983	1,000	1,181	400	415
1984	1,500	1,766	600	607
1985	2,000	2,320	750	823
1986	2,500	2,591	950	967

Table V.2

STATUS OF THE CLASS OF 1985
SIX MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION

Status	Percentage
Work Only	38
School Only	29
School/Work	21
Military	3
Unemployed	7
Other	2

Source: The Boston Private Industry Council, Inc. The Class of 1985: A Follow-up Study, p. 11.

and cultural services, increasing both the number and nature of these activities. The major contribution of the Compact to these activities has been an assessment of what was being done, how it fit in with the needs of the school and how it might be improved to better meet the educational goals of the schools and school district.

The revitalized partnerships are responsible for a variety of activities, few of which are unique to Boston. However, their presence in the schools indicates the degree of commitment that business has given to the Compact. Among the activities most commonly undertaken within the partnerships are:

- o Tutoring
- o Mentoring
- o Sponsoring school functions
- o Material and monetary donations, and
- o Part-time, summer and full-time jobs.

Tutoring has been an important activity in some high schools for many years. A popular partnership activity, tutors were found in five of the eight schools visited. English High is an example of a school with over a decade of experience with volunteer tutors provided by their partner, John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company. Placed in classes that range from English as a Second Language (ESL) to Computer Literacy to Vocational Education for the Handicapped, Hancock volunteers have become a coveted resource. One ESL teacher, originally instrumental in bringing the tutors into the school, yearned for the past when he did not have to vie with so many other teachers for tutors. The fact that volunteers gave up their lunch break once or twice a week indicates the importance they placed on this valuable addition to the classroom.

Mentoring, by comparison, is a relatively new activity. It was introduced into three schools (English, South Boston and Boston Tech) in 1985. Mentors are role models and resources for students who frequently lack such support mechanisms at home. Students, already exposed to the business through part-time jobs, were matched with employee volunteers in an attempt to foster support through more personal, one-on-one relationships. Two Hancock employees, for example, exhibited extra initiative and took their students to a local college to show students the school and obtain admission and financial aid information. Other mentor pairings have led to full-time jobs or focused career counseling for students not planning to attend college.

Sponsoring school functions has a much longer history, with the East Boston High/Massachusetts Port Authority (MassPort) partnership representing a good example of such involvement. The partnership, which preceded the Tri-Lateral Council agreement by almost a decade, began as a public relations effort on the part of MassPort to improve its image in the wake of community dissatisfaction over noise from Logan Airport. Sponsoring sports banquets at East Boston High was therefore seen as a popular response to such unrest and has continued ever since, with additional resources and services donated over time, including a "refenestration program" in which the majority of windows in the school were replaced to soundproof the building from airport noise. While the latter is perhaps an unusual response on the part of a partner to the needs of a school, underwriting the cost of special school functions and having company presidents attend such occasions is common. An advertisement called "A Class Act" recently announced the 1985 commencement exercises for Hyde Park High School; the Bank of Boston recognized all graduates by name in a one-page advertisement in The Boston Globe; the president of the Bank of Boston, Ira Stepanian, addressed the class gathering. Banquets and award ceremonies honoring students for good attendance, and recognizing outstanding efforts on the part of teachers, are also regular activities.

Donating material goods and financial resources to the school is perhaps the most frequent response on the part of a business partner. College scholarships are especially common. Each year, some businesses contribute between one and four full four-year scholarships for graduating seniors. In addition to the special services supplied to Brighton High (interior painting) and East Boston High (new windows), resources generally donated by business partners include computers, printing school newspapers and programs for special functions, tickets for local sports and cultural events, and funding special academic programs (such as the Reading Is Fundamental [RIF] program) and student foreign exchange programs. Numerous other forms of financial and moral support were also provided.

Companies like The New England report spending as much as \$175,000 a year on the partnership programs, including staff time, coordination time, and cash or in-kind contribution to schools. The range of activities is impressive and many have received national recognition.

Management of Partnership Activities

In recent years, large companies, particularly financial and other service industries in Boston and elsewhere, have institutionalized involvement with schools and other public service organizations. Community Affairs, Public Affairs or Human Relations departments have been given the responsibility and budget to do this. In Boston, the Compact created a frame-

work to coordinate and focus some of this activity within a corporation. The individuals who coordinate activities with the schools, usually middle managers, perform this work as part of their regular job. For some, it is a major portion of their job, and for others, it must be combined with other responsibilities. As a result of this structure, business coordinators can be more energetic and systematic about school activities than their school counterpart, often a development officer, administrator or teacher who has many other responsibilities.

At one large bank, several employees complained that "there should be more accountability on the school side for the partnership and its effectiveness," and "we are evaluated on our performance in the partnership; they [headmasters, for example] are not." This company, and several others, found school partners to be reluctant to allow business people into the schools. Partnership activities are often not given as much priority in the schools as they are in the businesses, despite the fact that the business people volunteer and take time from other activities to assist the schools. The lack of priority is sometimes reflected in poor coordination. In one school, for example, a trip to an amusement park was scheduled in conflict with a mentor breakfast. As a result, only half the mentors had their students attend the breakfast. In several schools, the teachers were "nonbelievers" for a long time or were afraid that the business people wanted to tell them what to do. They had to be convinced that the business partner was there not to tell them how to teach but to be helpful and to provide assistance and resources.

Other corporate partners faced different problems of management and communications. One school asked for too much and had to be told that while the business wanted to help achieve educational goals, it was not a bottomless source of funds. Several business coordinators were concerned about improving communication and establishing realistic expectations of what the business partner could contribute.

In general, involvement of business partners has been sustained because there are institutionalized roles in the corporations to fulfill these duties. As a result, some of the activities have become highly routinized and the coordinator overseeing partnership activities may fail to give them adequate scrutiny. In some partnerships, a periodic change in a business's leadership or liaison person with the school has been helpful in keeping the partnership vigorous.

THE IMPACT ON BUSINESSES

It was difficult to get business respondents to describe how companies benefit from the programs. Some said that individual employees enjoy working on some partnership activities; they

cited seminars and the supervision/mentor aspect of working with summer hires. In general, they said companies do not think in terms of what they get out of it, but in terms of what they give. Few alluded to any increase in good employees or major changes in hiring practices.

One benefit of the Compact has been its ability to foster communication between businesses and schools and give individuals in each sector the opportunity to learn about one another's problems. While there is better communication between the business community and the schools, there is still some tension between them. There is also widespread concern about the large number of dropouts and the condition of the schools in general, but the private sector is not disillusioned or discouraged, particularly at policy-setting levels. Rather, the corporate community has developed a growing feeling of responsibility for the schools and has begun several initiatives on its own. These initiatives have been grouped under the Boston Plan for Excellence.

The Boston Plan was launched in 1983 by the Bank of Boston as "a broad supportive umbrella under which a number of separate initiatives and programs can be launched in support of the schools." Established as an independent foundation for public education, the plan was funded by a donation of \$1.5 million as a permanent endowment; the first initiative consisted of school improvement grants "to stimulate and reward initiative and creativity by an individual teacher and local school." Since that time, three other major corporations have funded new initiatives through the foundation:

- o The Bank of New England donated \$300,000 for a five-year Teacher Fellowship Program;
- o The John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company established a \$1 million endowment to be used as grants for basic skills and sports programs in the middle schools; and
- o The New England Mutual Life Insurance Company established a \$1 million endowment for the ACCESS program, a financial aid advice and "last dollar" scholarship program for Boston high school students who wish to continue their education beyond high school.

The reach of ACCESS has recently been expanded by a multi-million dollar fundraising drive to ensure that no qualified graduate of the Boston Public Schools be denied access to higher education due to lack of financial counseling and/or resources. To this end, a goal of \$5 million has been set to establish a permanent endowment for financial counseling and tuition aid. Almost \$4 million had already been raised by the time the fundraising drive

was announced publicly in the fall of 1986. In addition, the business community pledged priority hiring of those public school students who graduate from college.

There is little question that the Compact had a significant impact on the whole concept of school/business partnerships in Boston. While many had been in existence for several years as a result of the Tri-Lateral Council, both the degree and focus of involvement were considerably altered as the partnerships became routinized. Many businesses shifted primary emphasis to the jobs component of the partnership to meet the terms of the Compact agreement. However, their experience in the jobs component often encouraged them to revitalize their involvement in other school improvement activities as well. Greater access to and utilization of resources, along with greater attention to planning and goals, perhaps represent the most widely noted impact of both the Compact in general and the partnerships in particular.

The recruitment of CEOs and their direct involvement and interest in partnership activities appears to account for this difference. Prior to the Compact, businesses were usually represented by middle managers with little if any direction from above. With the Compact came accountability as well as an increase in the workload of the business coordinator. CEOs became highly visible in their support not only of the partnerships but of the public school system itself.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The Boston Compact has been widely heralded as a unique and innovative partnership between the business community and the public school system, a partnership in which both sectors made commitments that would ultimately benefit the economy and the schools. The private sector offered the incentives of jobs for students and graduates, and continued support and assistance to the schools; the school district agreed to increase its effectiveness by meeting targeted and measurable goals.

The Compact has been acclaimed for its concept, comprehensive scope and specific components. Communities all over the country either claim or plan to be "another Boston Compact." The interest in the Compact continues even as it evolves and matures. New initiatives involving the business community have emerged and, while finding their genesis within the original Compact, have sometimes replaced the Compact in the public eye. However, corporate interest in the Compact has not flagged. New employment and educational objectives have been established and a 1986 conference on dropout prevention placed the Compact squarely in the center of its proposed initiatives.

This report has described the goals and origins of the Compact, and the implementation of its principal program components. In this final section we review the accomplishments of the Compact as of the summer of 1986 and the factors that influenced its outcomes. We not only assess the accomplishments of its program components but also reflect on the structural and attitudinal changes that may have occurred in the schools and businesses and in the relationship between the two sectors as by-products of the Compact. Further, we draw some lessons from our study of the Boston experience and the implications of those lessons for establishing a successful and comprehensive linkage between the business community and schools, one that can improve both the economy and education.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE COMPACT

The Compact is a bargain between schools and businesses under which each would establish and achieve measurable goals. According to objective indicators, the business community has been more successful than the schools in achieving its goals in a measurable way. The number of jobs provided to both students and graduates of the Boston Public Schools increased substantially during the past five years. Each year, new and higher targets for employment were set and achieved.

As part of the Compact agreement, the school district pledged to improve its performance as measured by higher test scores,

improved attendance rates and decreased rates of dropping out. Schools were more successful on some of these measures than others. Between 1982-83 and 1984-85, median test scores on national achievement tests in reading and mathematics increased by 8 to 20 percentiles for grades 9 through 11, with the exception of 11th-grade reading scores, which did not change. Although the system still lags somewhat behind national norms, it made considerable progress toward national medians in reading and mathematics. Positive changes were reported across the school district; no single set of schools accounted for the increases. Although recent test results indicate some slippage relative to new national norms, progress has been impressive.

Average daily attendance increased between 1981-82 and 1984-85 as well. While almost one-quarter of all high school students were absent daily during the 1981-82 school year, absences decreased to just over 15 percent by 1984-85.

The problem untouched during the past five years is attrition. Since the Compact was signed, dropout rates have remained stubbornly high. Forty-three percent of all 9th-graders leave school before graduating. A variety of factors and pressures have been identified as proximate causes for the intransigence of these rates, but limited solutions have been found. The Boston community recently committed itself and the resources encompassed by the Compact to deal with the problem. New initiatives have been undertaken and existing, promising programs expanded. By the 1986-87 school year, Compact Ventures, the dropout prevention program directed at 9th-graders, had been initiated in 10 high schools. It is too early to determine the success of these efforts.

It would not be sufficient to review the accomplishments of the Compact only in terms of its measurable achievements. We observed other outcomes that were not a part of the formal plan or agreement. These may be as important as, and with greater potential for long-term impact than, the actual school improvement outcomes that were pledged. Areas that were affected by the Compact are as follows:

- (1) The business community increased its support of Boston's schools. Involvement of the business community in the design and implementation of the Compact included individuals at all levels: executives, middle managers, line supervisors, and rank-and-file staff. They were involved in setting policy, hiring and supervising young people, and participating in school partnership activities. As a result, a large number of people came directly in contact with the schools, and became more and more aware of both the problems and successes that characterize the public schools and their students. While these tangible signs of support are critical, a potentially more important development was

the political support engendered by this awareness and familiarity with the schools. Growing advocacy for the schools has emerged within the business community, at a time when the schools' traditional constituency--parents, homeowners, the general community--was disappearing or losing clout.

- (2) Teacher and school morale improved. Within the schools we visited (and reportedly in the others), teacher and school morale rose in response to the business community's increased attention and participation. This occurred largely through the efforts of the revitalized partnerships, which brought additional resources into the schools. Some business efforts targeted teachers directly, through teacher recognition programs and special courses or workshops. Many teachers felt rewarded and recognized, at a time when the improved morale and self-confidence of teachers is needed to promote more committed teaching and learning in the schools.
- (3) Physical improvements were made in the schools. The presence of the business community in the schools contributed many physical improvements. Several partnerships provided money and materials directly. Others advocated increased allocations by the school district for renovation and repair. Teachers and students cited improved physical environments as the reason for increased morale.
- (4) Students may have raised their aspirations. Although some school indicators, like dropout rates, have not improved, many individual students were greatly influenced by opportunities provided as a result of the Compact. These include job experiences, relationships developed with supervisors and exposure gained through partnership activities. Though the study was unable to capture the total scope of these effects, we were impressed by the frequency with which administrators, teachers and students mentioned them.
- (5) Business developed additional initiatives. The Compact served to reinforce the private sector's interest in working to improve the public school system. Although the Compact in Boston remains the focal point of much business involvement in public schools, the involvement of the business community in education has been expanded to include other educational activities. The most visible new initiative is the Boston Plan for Excellence.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE COMPACT'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Despite the fact that the school improvement outcomes that were pledged were not all achieved, the cumulative impact of the Compact, its unintended as well as intended outcomes, is such that the Compact must be considered a success. In this section, we note the factors that contributed to its accomplishments. In a subsequent section, we comment on factors that may have hindered achievement of some of the Compact's objectives.

The following are factors that contributed to both the private sector's and public schools' ability to translate the Compact concept into specific components and to implement them rapidly:

- o The involvement and commitment of the city's top corporate leaders. The role of the Vault in creating and giving legitimacy to the Compact should be emphasized. The commitment of key business leaders is needed for bold new initiatives, especially when broad changes are sought.
- o The presence of the PIC as a strong intermediary. Boston's PIC had experience in job development for youth, the backing of the most influential business people in the city and competent leadership. The organization's role in the design, management and monitoring of the Compact components, particularly the employment programs and the revitalized partnerships with schools, were key to the success of those components. Particularly effective were the career specialists who were hired and coordinated by the PIC, and who, for the most part, had private sector experience. Although some had more trouble than others in gaining acceptance from school administrators and staff, most were considered important additions to the high school staff and filled roles not carried out by existing staff.
- o Responsibilities and obligations defined for both parties to the agreements. The Boston Compact stipulated obligations for both the business sector and the educational sector. From the outset, the theme of the Compact has been that both parties to the agreement had a responsibility to meet their goals.
- o Building on existing programs. Many of the program components of the Boston Compact were not new, but built on existing programs and, in some cases, revitalized them. A major feature of the Compact was assembling several components under

one umbrella, strengthening each and creating a whole that is somewhat greater than the sum of its parts. Predating the Compact were the Jobs Collaborative, the Tri-Lateral Council and other school improvement program initiatives.

- o The presence of an innovative and risk-taking superintendent. Spillane, the superintendent of the Boston Public Schools when the Compact was designed, was able to gain the confidence of the business sector. Equally important was his willingness to take risks and invite the involvement of the business community. Since many educators and educational administrators fear exposing their system to outsiders in the business community, the progress of the Compact was in no small measure due to the willingness of key leaders to take the risk. Even upon Spillane's departure, the Compact remained viable and continues as the primary link between business and public education in Boston.
- o Visibility and national exposure. The Boston Compact captured the imagination of the greater Boston community and a national audience as well. Such visibility often breeds participation and involvement.

LIMITATIONS OF THE COMPACT

The Boston Compact is grand in concept and in scope. In reflecting on why all its goals were not achieved and where it fell short, a question arises: is it realistic to expect the private sector to stimulate the school district to accomplish systemwide school improvement, with measurable gains in outcomes? This is what the Compact set out to achieve. It was not designed as a "program." It was meant to be a stimulus, a "carrot" for school improvement. Officially, the collaboration ended there; it would be up to the schools and the system's leadership to develop and implement plans for school improvement.

Therein may lie the problem. The Compact was a "top-down" phenomenon, with little linkage between those who planned and led the initiative and those responsible for implementation, particularly in the schools. Agreements were made between high-level business people and school district executives. There never was a grand design, collaboratively derived, for school change. The Compact staff offered regular assistance in meeting the requirements for completing the annual school plan. However, in many schools, the mandate for improvement was perceived as just another directive from the district office involving additional

bureaucratic paperwork. It was the occasional entrepreneurial headmaster who utilized this opportunity to achieve his or her agenda for school reform. In such cases, the Compact was a boon. That is not the same as "system change." The level of coordination for the school improvement process offered by the Compact office was not sufficient to overcome its weaknesses.

We can speculate that there are additional explanations for why systemwide change--or at least more school improvement outcomes--did not occur. Since school improvement is the ultimate focus of the Compact, it is not surprising there is considerable difference between the goals of the business community and the school district. The business community's obligation to provide jobs did not include assigning specific numbers to individual firms nor was a firm even required to provide any jobs or resources as part of supporting the Compact. But each high school was held accountable for improvements in test scores, attendance and dropout rates. Also, the business community's obligation to find and hire qualified candidates is met by career specialists and the PIC. With the exception of the development officers who were asked to perform a wide variety of tasks and career specialists whose placement efforts reduced some demands on guidance officers, the high schools did not receive comparable assistance.

In two of the eight schools that we visited, there was no development officer, and others were at risk of being cut from the budgets at the end of the school year. Some schools did receive new and additional resources from their business partners, in part stimulated by the Compact. However, this varied from school to school and the resources were not necessarily tied to school improvement activities that would produce measurable results. The school development plans differed little from the mechanisms that other school district improvement programs had been using. Except for a dropout prevention program for 9th-graders that the PIC was supporting in some schools, and some additional coordination of Tri-Lateral Council partnership activities, the schools were left on their own to find new ways to achieve school improvement. Thus, it should be no surprise that the Boston Compact did not eliminate all of the school system's problems.

School improvement is a slow process, and perhaps it is too early to know whether the changes stimulated by the Compact will foster and sustain reduced dropout rates, higher achievement and other school changes. Other factors operating on the schools are equally compelling and may actually block the changes that were expected. Increasing graduation requirements and the tightening of standards in the short term are actually likely to increase rather than decrease the dropout rate. If students could not graduate under the old system, it may be even harder now, especially without the infusion of major resources and assistance to overcome their deficiencies. Finally, the arrival of a new superintendent in the fall of 1985 heralded a predictable slow-

down in the force of the Compact. Although he didn't reject the Compact, the new chief executive officer naturally promoted his own agenda and attended to a number of other emergent issues.

It may be unreasonable to expect that an external initiative that loosely coordinates a variety of programs can produce rapid educational change throughout an entire school system. Change has begun to occur in individual schools and classrooms. Change in the whole system requires more time. For this reason, it is encouraging that the Boston business community has expanded its support of the schools with a new venture, the Boston Plan for Excellence. Although it targets individuals, it aims to benefit the entire system. The business community sees this effort as an extension of its support of the Boston Public Schools under the Compact.

The Boston Compact set in motion a process and a structure by which responsibility for improvement of the educational and career opportunities of Boston's youth is shared by the larger community and does not rest solely with the schools. To the extent that the Compact framework remains flexible enough to respond to the changing needs and priorities of both the schools and the private sector, it can continue to serve as a vehicle for school improvement.

The Compact is a link in the continuing chain of community responsibility for the public schools. It built on previous efforts by the business community to become involved in the schools, generated additional efforts and created the foundation for new directions that are being taken today. It is this cumulative composite that may ultimately effect "systemic educational change" in Boston.

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