

BPS PARENTS RELEASE ANALYSIS OF BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDRAISING INEQUITIES

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Contact: qualityforeverystudent@gmail.com (personal information of contacts removed for privacy)

Quality Education for Every Student (QUEST), a grassroots organization of parents with children in Boston Public Schools, today released an analysis of private fundraising and grants across Boston's 125 district schools. The data show vast differences in the private funds of individual schools, which often correlate with their racial demographics. The group believes the data demand further study and policies to address disparities.

The audit data, from a 2018 district-wide Ernst & Young audit, was not widely shared nor has it been examined for inequities between schools. Yet it reveals large gaps between individual schools' fundraising efforts and abilities. "The disparities are stark, with a few elementary schools raising hundreds of thousands of dollars more than most others, and one huge outlier, Boston Latin School, with an endowment of over sixty million dollars," said Travis Marshall, a parent of two BPS elementary students.

In addition to collating 2018 school funds, QUEST found that roughly one fifth of Boston Public Schools had 501(c)(3) tax-exempt fundraising organizations associated with them. Schools with these nonprofit organizations were among the top fundraisers across the district.

QUEST also compared 2018 enrollment totals and demographic data of students with the reported funds raised by schools, and found schools with the most money raised per student often had fewer students categorized as economically disadvantaged. "Schools with families who tend to be wealthier, who have more connections to business and philanthropy, can supplement the resources for their students in a major way," said Marshall. In addition, differences by race also stand out. Although there were some outliers, in general schools with higher percentages of Black and Hispanic students had access to less privately raised funds. An analysis shows that for every 1% increase in African American and Hispanic students, the private fundraising by student decreases on average by \$35 (Lee, 2021).

Katy Briggs, a teacher at the McKay School in East Boston, addressed related concerns in a recent survey on facilities and programs in BPS: "A lot of the root of inequity is actually parents and private partnerships. Obviously everyone wants what's best for their children, but schools with a high concentration of wealthy parents are able to fundraise to fill gaps. This lowers the political pressure for the city and state to fully fund schools, because some schools are being fully funded but through private partnerships and fundraising."

QUEST asks Mayor Kim Janey and the Boston School Committee to seek remedies to the perpetuation of racial and economic inequity through private fundraising in Boston Public Schools. The group requests that privately raised funds be examined annually through an equity analysis and that measures be taken, as is done in other districts, to level the playing field.

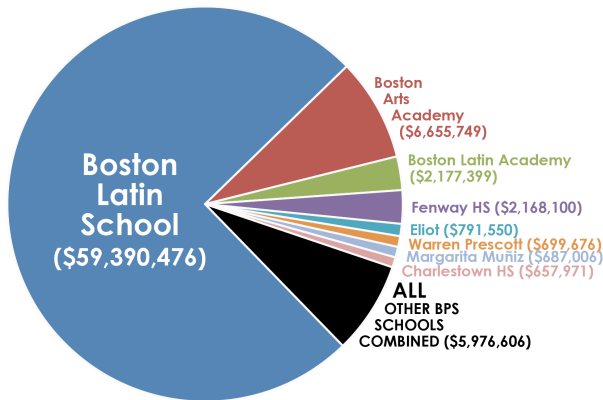
Resources

1. [Collated data](#) from [Ernst and Young reports](#)
 - a. Tab 1: Funds per school with demographics - alphabetical
 - b. Tab 2: Funds per student with demographics - highest to lowest
2. **Report:** "BPS Race and Private Funding," by Erika F. Lee (B.A. Economics and Mathematics, M.A. Economics, Boston University 2022, efl99@bu.edu)

Graphics

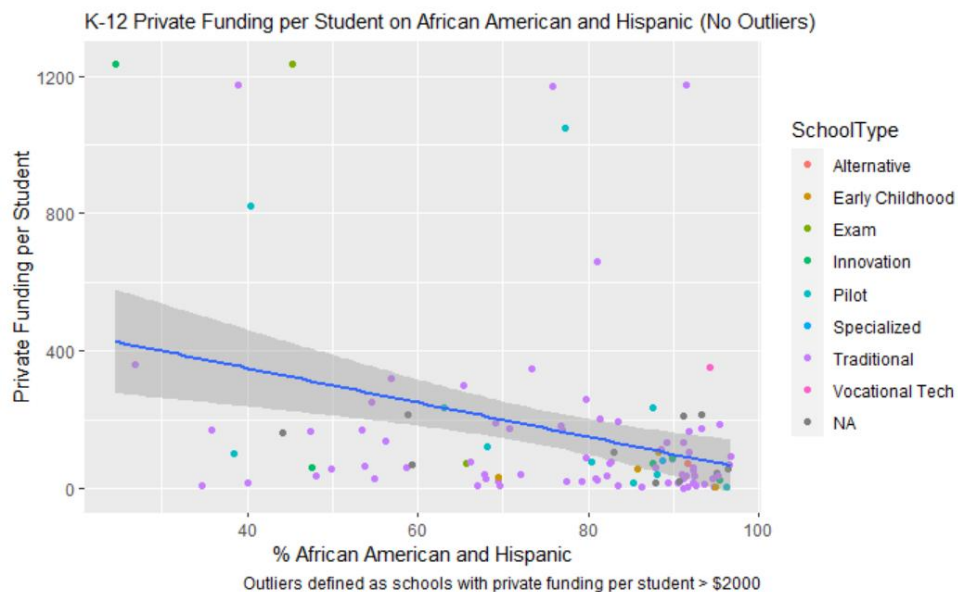
Privately raised funds per BPS School, pie chart (Kristen Johnson, BPS parent)

Privately Raised Funds per BPS School



(Ernst and Young, 2018)

K-12 Private Funding per Student on African American and Hispanic Students (Erika Lee, see resources)



[Visualizations](#) (Travis Marshall, BPS parent)

- Tab 1: Total 2018 Private Funds Per Student vs. % African American & Hispanic Students
- Tab 2: Total 2018 Private Funds Per Student vs. % African American & Hispanic Students (Excluding High Schools)
- Tab 3: Total 2018 Private Funds Per Student vs. 2019 Opportunity Index
- Tab 4: Total 2018 Private Funds Per Student vs. 2019 Opportunity Index (Excluding High Schools)
- Tab 5: Total 2018 Private Funds Per Student vs. 2019 Opportunity Index (ONLY High Schools)