



*Cheryl Maloney,
New Assistant Superintendent
for Curriculum and Instruction*

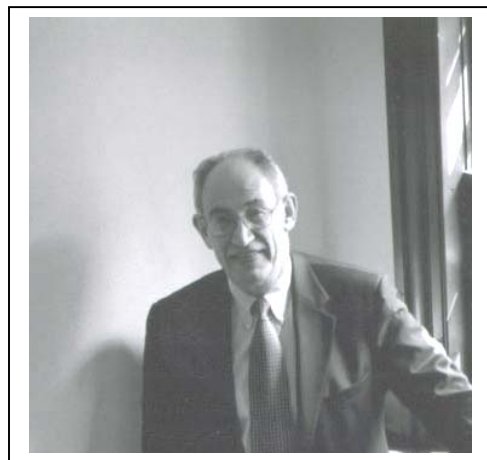


*Judith Belliveau,
New Assistant Superintendent
for Business and Operations*

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT



*Richard Houde,
Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum and Instruction 1989 - 2003*



*John Stayn,
Assistant Superintendent for
Business and Operations 1970 - 2003*

REPORT OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Oversight and Administration

The Weston School Committee sets the budget, establishes educational policy, and hires the superintendent for the Weston Public Schools. The committee is composed of five residents who are elected by the town to staggered three-year terms. The School Committee usually meets at least twice a month, with dates and times posted at the Town Hall, the Weston Public Library and Weston High School. All meetings are open to the public. Dr. Alan Oliff, Superintendent of the Weston Public Schools since 1998, is responsible for supervising and managing the daily operations of the schools.

During 2003, the School Committee and School Administration were focused on the selection and transition of two new Assistant Superintendents. Cheryl Maloney succeeded Dr. Richard Houde as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and Judy Belliveau succeeded Dr. John Stayn as Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations. Dr. Houde and Dr. Stayn were dedicated, highly respected members of the school community each of whom served the Weston Public Schools for more than 30 years.

Schools and Enrollment

Weston has five schools serving students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Country and Woodland Schools serve students from kindergarten through third grade; Field School serves students in fourth and fifth grades; Weston Middle School serves students in the sixth through eighth grades; and Weston High School serves students in the ninth through twelfth grades. Since 1999, Weston has also operated an integrated pre-school, called Weston Windows, to fulfill its mandate to educate children with special needs from the age of three. Weston Windows is currently located in the Country School.

Enrollment for the 2003-2004 school year, as of October 1, 2003, was 2,330 students. This represents an overall increase of 31 students, or a 1.3% change from the previous school year:

- +18 students, or +1.7%, in grades K - 5;
- 15 students, or -2.6%, at the Middle School; and
- +28 students, or +4.4%, at the High School.

Overall, enrollment is projected to level off over the next several years but the cohorts with peak enrollment levels will continue to have an impact on staffing and the budget as they move through the school system.

Academic Achievement and College Placement

The School Committee believes that many factors need to be considered in evaluating students' academic achievement and describing how well the schools educate their students and use the town's resources. Some of these factors are class size; teaching quality; the variety and types of academic, artistic, civic, and social experiences offered to students; performance on standardized tests; and college placements. Committee members consider and are guided by all of these considerations in making budget and policy decisions affecting the schools.

With respect to standardized tests, Weston students continued to perform well at all grade levels in 2003. This was the sixth year that the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests were given statewide. The MCAS tests are designed to evaluate students' knowledge of specific subjects at the third, fourth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and tenth grade levels based on curriculum frameworks established by the Massachusetts Department of Education. Weston's average scaled score for all tests placed it eleventh in the state and the tenth grade combined average scaled scores for English and Mathematics ranked fifth. Fourth grade scores were fourth

in the state and eighth grade scores were eighth in the state. The data generated from the results of these tests continues to be used to strengthen and expand classroom curriculum and instruction.

Elementary and middle school students also take tests developed by the Educational Records Bureau, familiar to parents and students as the "ERBs." These are standardized tests that evaluate ability, skill, and knowledge in language arts and mathematics and provide scores and rankings for participating urban and suburban public and private schools across the United States. Weston students continue to score very well on these tests. Further information on our district's performance is available from the School Department.

The Class of 2003 comprised 140 students. The average scores for this class on the SAT I (scale of 200 to 800) was 604 on the Verbal test (compared to a national average score of 507) and 616 on the Mathematics test (compared to a national average score of 519). Ninety-nine percent of the class took the examination and 15% of the class qualified as either National Merit Scholarship Semi-finalists or Commended Students.

The SAT II achievement exams test knowledge and skills in specific subjects. The more competitive colleges and universities typically require their applicants to take the Writing and English Composition and Math SAT II tests. Performance by the Class of 2003 on these tests was very good. The average score on the Writing/English Test was 653, compared to the national average of 596, with 72% of the class taking the test. The average score on the Math L1C was 627, compared to a national average of 590, with 56% of the class participating; and on the MathL2C (a more advanced level of the test) was 676 versus 662 nationally, with 25% of the class taking the test.

Participation and test results in Advanced Placement courses is another widely accepted measure of academic performance, and here, too, Weston High School students did well. Our participation rates are high. In 2003, 52% of juniors and 67% of seniors took at least one Advanced Placement course. Those students took a combined total of 420 AP tests. Eighty-five percent of exams earned scores that would qualify for college or university credit.

Fifty-two percent of the Class of 2003 will be attending the top 11% of the 1,491 colleges and universities evaluated in terms of competition to gain admission as listed in Barron's Profile of American Colleges. Furthermore, 54% of the middle fifth of the class will also be attending these schools.

Facilities

The school community is very grateful to the Town for supporting the renovation and expansion of the educational facilities. Construction at the Country and Woodland Schools began in July 2001 and Phase II is nearing completion. Students began school in September under less than ideal circumstances but by mid-November the kindergarten was moved out of the High School, the Pre-School was moved out of Regis College and all grades were occupying the new spaces. By December the cafeteria facilities were on-line and students were learning how to purchase their lunches with the new computerized "pin" system. The projects will be closed out following completion of the punch list work. Maintaining the new, expanded facilities to protect the Town's investment will be a priority for the School Committee and Administration.

The Field School, which houses grades 4 and 5, is the only facility that was not fully renovated and as a result has many capital needs. Therefore, the School Committee will be prioritizing its capital expenditures to make improvements over time as necessary.

Curriculum and Other Initiatives

One of the most significant accomplishments in 2003 was the completion of curriculum standards in every subject area. This was the culmination of three years of work by teachers and administrators to develop learning standards for all grade levels in K-12. The curriculum standards are one aspect of the district-wide "Standards Based Education" initiative, which focuses teaching on what students should know and be able to do, rather than driven by topics to be covered. This approach shapes the way in which subjects are taught. The standards guide teachers on content and skills, allowing them to become more specific with students about what constitutes good quality work. Progress is assessed using Benchmark Assessment Tasks. The School Department held forums for parents to inform them about the standards and to demonstrate how they will be used in the classroom. All teachers have been engaged in dialogue during the year to continue the implementation of this effort.

Special Education

Weston Public Schools is committed to the inclusion of children with special needs in the classroom and supports the inclusion model with resources to make it a successful experience for all students. This model provides cost effective programs for students in special education that are consistent with the high quality educational programs provided to all students in the district.

The pre-school Special Education population has grown twice as fast as the rest of the Special Education population and the severity of their needs has also grown. In response to this, the Weston Public Schools established an integrated pre-school for both typically developing and special needs children in 1999-2000. Now in its fifth year, the program is well regarded by parents of both regular and special education children and its quality has been noted by the Department of Education. This program is one of the single best initiatives for offering a long-term cost-containment strategy with corresponding program effectiveness. The classrooms were temporarily housed in a building on the Regis College campus while the elementary school renovations were in progress, but now occupy a wing of the Country School with space that conforms to the age and needs of the pre-school students.

School Budget

The School Committee's 2003-2004 budget was \$23.6 million, a 1.86% increase over the previous year. This was the smallest increase to the School Department budget in over twenty years and reflected the economic climate and fiscal constraints of the Town. As part of its budget the School Committee reluctantly instituted an activity fee for the first time, requiring students to pay for participation in sports and co-curricular activities. It was the expectation of the School Committee that the fee would be temporary and would be eliminated in the subsequent budget cycle. In spite of the institution of the fee, many compromises were made in programming and instruction as well as in capital spending and maintenance in order to keep the budget within Proposition 2 ½ constraints.

METCO

For over thirty-five years the METCO program has served to diversify our student body and community with minority students from Boston. The program continues to provide an educational opportunity for both Weston and Boston students and to lessen racial isolation for all students. A representative of the Weston/Boston METCO Parent Organization participates in School Committee meetings and provides valuable perspectives to discussions. METCO also contributes to the school community through such activities as Teacher Visiting Day in Boston, potluck dinners, and staff development workshops.

In 2003, the METCO program graduated a wonderful and talented class. Several of our students were awarded college scholarships worthy of their talents in academics, music and athletics. Included in this group was Chantel Hampton, an aspiring vocalist and writer, who was a featured vocalist and performer for the Berklee College of Music summer program and entered Berklee in the fall as a scholarship student.

Volunteer Organizations

The school system benefits from a wide variety of private financial and volunteer support, without which it could not offer the variety or quality of education experiences that it does. The Weston Education Enrichment Fund Committee (WEEFC), in its eighteenth year, raised record funds at its fundraising auction, which it used to pay for projects, programs and equipment that could not be funded within the regular school budget. Unlike past years when WEEFC could support activities that enriched the school programs, WEEFC funded more “essentials,” such as professional development, given the very difficult budget climate. Since its inception WEEFC has received contributions of more than \$1 million and funded more than 1,500 projects.

The Weston Boosters Organization continued its unfailing support for Weston’s athletic and co-curricular programs. The successes of our athletic teams are due in part to the Boosters’ contributions to purchase such items as scoreboards, uniforms and equipment to name just a few.

Finally, the schools benefited greatly from the efforts of the Weston Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). The PTO serves as a vital link between parents and the schools, facilitating communication and providing volunteers and resources to enhance school programs. Curriculum was enriched by programs brought in by the Creative Arts and Science Council committees, organized and funded by the PTO. A Parent Education effort was introduced this year in conjunction with the town-wide wellness initiative. The PTO organized programs like Active Parenting, brought in speakers and held forums to address numerous issues of interest to parents. Weston is fortunate to have large numbers of eager volunteers at every grade level who spent time in classrooms, planned and carried out special events, and served on committees and School Councils.

Notable Events of 2003

Retirements

The following long-term, valued members of the school community retired during 2003. Their contributions have significantly enhanced and supported the education of our students.

John A. Stayn, Assistant Superintendent for Business, formerly High School Assistant Principal and High School Science Teacher, since 1962;

Joan Boghosian, Elementary Teacher and Grade Leader, since 1968;

Joseph Verovsek, High School Social Studies Teacher, since 1969;

Donald C. Taggart, III, High School Science Teacher, since 1970, and WESA President from 1999-2003;

Bill Laswell, Case House Custodian, since 1971;

Denise Price, Kindergarten Teacher, since 1971;

Richard Houde, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, formerly Math Department Head, since 1972;

Janet Wohlers, Middle School World Language Teacher, since 1972.

Joanne Frolich, Elementary Learning Center Teacher, since 1978;

Community Service Projects

Students in every school participated in community service projects during 2003. At the high school, 266 students who completed at least twenty hours of volunteer work received certificates of recognition for their work.

Recognition and Awards

Many students and staff were recognized in 2003 for excellence for a wide variety of activities and endeavors. Some of them were:

Administration and Faculty

- Don Benson, High School History Teacher and Mary O'Brien, High School Computer Specialist, were honored with Meritorious Service Awards at the Eastern Mass Swim Coaches Association Dinner. Don also had his third article published in Scholastic Coach Magazine.
- Peter Foley, Director of Athletics, was selected as winner of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators' Distinguished Service Award and was also selected for induction into the State of Maine Swimming Hall of Fame.
- Laura Galopim, Middle School Health and Physical Education teacher and Weston High School Field Hockey coach was named Coach of the Year by the MetroWest Daily Newspaper.
- The High School Athletic Program was named to the MIAA Sportsmanship Honor Roll.

Student Awards

Art

- The photographic artwork of five Weston High School seniors, Lindsay Brady MacDonald, Eli Horowitz, Meena Bolourchi, Jessica Chin, and Anne Lettieri, was displayed at the Gibbs Gallery in the Arlington Center for the Arts.
- The following high school students were award winners at the Annual Boston Globe Scholastic Awards: Eli Horowitz for Photography; Alex Huckstepp for Sculpture; Lisa Wen for Mixed Media; and Courtney Wetmore for Painting. Middle School student winners were Elizabeth Connolly for Mixed Media; Lea Hachigian, Will Hulings, Rachael Mazzella and Steven Rubash for Computer Graphics; Matthew Hatfield and Nathan Lipkin for Drawing.

Drama & English

- The entire cast of students won awards in the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival for set design; music composition and performance; acting; and choreography for their production of "Pericles." Alex Lawrence and Elizabeth Charpie won awards for acting in all three rounds of the festival and were named to the All-State Company. The production won the preliminary and semi-final rounds of the Mass High School Drama Guild Festival, taking Weston into State Finals at the John Hancock for the fifth time in seven years.
- Luke Taylor won second place in the state for the Massachusetts High School Drama Guild Acting Scholarship Competition.

Math

- The High School Math Team won the Massachusetts Small Schools first place trophy and second place at the New England Regional Championships.
- Michael Posa was 14th in the State for the 39th Annual Olympiad High School Prize Competition in Mathematics.

Computer Science

- The High School Computer Science team placed third at the Providence College Annual High School Computer Science Competition, finishing in the top three for the second consecutive year.

Music

- Twenty-three Weston students were selected to participate in the 2003 Northeast Junior District Festival in Band, Orchestra and Chorus.
- Nineteen Weston students were selected to participate in the 2003 Northeast Senior District Festival in Band, Orchestra and Chorus.
- Nine students, Dan Rogers, Band; Nicholas Cuneo, Cody Wood and Dylan Wood, Orchestra; and Jonathan Carlson, John Condakes, John Dryden, Roderick McMullen and Jeff Remis, Chorus; were selected for the 2003 All State Band, Orchestra and Chorus, and performed at Symphony Hall on March 22, and Junior Brian Kelley, trumpet, was selected for the National High School Honors Orchestra.



Visiting Russian students with their teacher.

World Language Exchange

- The Weston International Affiliation, formerly known as Rombas, continued its fifty-one year tradition of sponsoring international student exchanges.
- Five Russian students and their teacher spent several days visiting the high school during a two-week trip to Weston organized by History teacher Jim Smith. The visitors stayed with Weston students and their families.

Sports

It was another outstanding year for Weston High School athletics:

- The Girls Track Team earned a runner-up trophy at the State Class "D" championship meet.
- Junior Kaitlin Machen was State Champion in the 300-meter race.
- Senior Kris Cook was a Division III State Champion in his weight class.
- The Field Hockey team won its second consecutive Eastern Massachusetts Division I championship and was runner-up in the State Finals for its second consecutive year.
- Senior Andrea Posa was named The Boston Globe Field Hockey Player of the Year.
- The Boys Swim Team won its fifth consecutive State Division II Championship and won the National Dual Meet Small Schools Championship.
- Senior David Warren was named an Academic All-American in Swimming.
- Eric Nilsson, Eliza Butts, Erica Stutius, Allison Simeone, and Bridget Appe were named High School All-Americans in Swimming.
- Freshman Eliza Butts was named The Boston Globe Swimmer of the Year.

Conclusion

The Weston Public Schools continued to provide an excellent public school education in 2003 and our students' many achievements demonstrate that they have benefited from the town's commitment to their education. Changing demographics and the need to find and retain qualified staff, continued uncertainty of federal and state funding while new mandates such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) put additional pressures on school districts, and negotiations of all union contracts during a difficult fiscal climate present many challenges for the future. The School Committee, however, is committed to maintaining a high quality of education for all stu-

dents in the community and will continue to focus its resources to meet the challenges ahead.

PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS*

	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>1996</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>1997</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>1998</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>1999</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>2000</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>2001</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>2002</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u> <u>2003</u>
Kdg	159	167	168	177	172	181	160	166
Grade 1	160	166	176	177	186	181	185	173
Grade 2	173	177	181	177	183	182	184	201
Grade 3	165	188	184	189	183	187	171	188
Grade 4	174	180	190	191	197	185	193	175
Grade 5	185	178	184	196	193	196	188	196
Grade 6	130	185	179	183	198	190	192	179
Grade 7	130	137	185	177	181	193	193	192
Grade 8	140	133	140	185	179	176	197	196
Grade 9	136	117	113	143	174	169	164	185
Grade 10	120	139	116	106	143	167	171	155
Grade 11	97	111	136	120	106	139	161	164
Grade 12	<u>98</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>128</u>	<u>120</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>140</u>	<u>160</u>
TOTAL	1,867	1,971	2,062	2,149	2,215	2,254	2,299	2,330

*These enrollments include nonresident as well as resident pupils registered in the schools.

PRIVATE SCHOOL ENROLLMENT**

	<u>1996-</u> <u>1997</u>	<u>1997-</u> <u>1998</u>	<u>1998-</u> <u>1999</u>	<u>1999-</u> <u>2000</u>	<u>2001-</u> <u>2002</u>	<u>2002</u> <u>2003</u>	<u>2003</u> <u>2004</u>
Residents in Private School	315	324	351	364	416	419	418
% of Residents in Private School	15.8	15.3	15.8	15.7	17.2	17.0	16.5

**Source: annual January 1 census conducted by the Town.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF PUPILS PER CLASS - Grades K-8

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Standards</u>		<u>Actual</u>				
	<u>Min</u>	<u>Max</u>	<u>1999-00</u>	<u>2000-01</u>	<u>2001-02</u>	<u>2002-03</u>	<u>2003-04</u>
K	17	23	22.1	19.1	20.1	17.8	20.8
1	17	23	22.1	20.7	20.1	20.6	19.2
2	18	24	22.1	22.9	20.2	20.4	22.3
3	19	25	23.6	22.9	20.8	19.0	20.9
4	20	26	21.2	21.9	20.6	21.5	21.9
5	20	26	21.8	21.4	21.8	23.5	21.8
6	21	27	22.9	22.0	21.1	21.3	19.9
7	20	26	22.1	22.6	21.5	21.5	21.3
8	21	27	23.1	22.4	22.0	21.9	21.8

DISTRIBUTION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF BY SCHOOL LEVEL - 2003-2004

	<u>High School</u> (Grades 9-12)	<u>Middle School</u> (Grades 6-8)	Elementary Schools (Grades K-5)
Administration	2.00	1.00	3.00
Supervisors	2.95	3.15	.40
Art	4.20	1.60	2.20
Business	1.00	0.23	--
English, Drama, & Dance	9.75	10.50	--
Foreign Language	8.25	4.30	2.20
Grades K-5	--	--	50.80
Guidance	4.10	3.00	3.00
Home Economics	1.00	--	--
Industrial Arts	--	.91	--
Math & Computers	10.50	8.00	2.50
Media Services	1.00	1.00	1.00
Music	1.06	1.46	3.65
Phys Ed./Athletics/Health	4.75	4.35	3.00
Reading Specialist	--	--	2.60
Science	8.75	6.30	1.00
Social Studies	8.50	6.30	--
Special Education	2.08	3.02	9.80
Student Activities	0.25	--	--
TOTAL SCHOOLS	70.14	55.12	85.15

In addition, there are 12.35 positions serving all schools and the pre-school, and 4.7 positions funded by State or Federal grants, for a total professional staff of 227.46, or 1.17 more than in 2002-2003.

RECORD OF POST SECONDARY EDUCATION PLACEMENT

Class	Number of Graduates	% to 4 Year Colleges	% to Other Education	% of Total Continuing
1993	99	92	5	97
1994	98	88	7	95
1995	121	87	10	97
1996	110	86	10	96
1997	100	86	7	96
1998	92	95	2	97
1999	108	93	3	96
2000	130	91	6	97
2001	119	89	4	93
2002	111	84	10	94
10 Yr. Avg.	109	89	6	96
2003	140	91	5	96

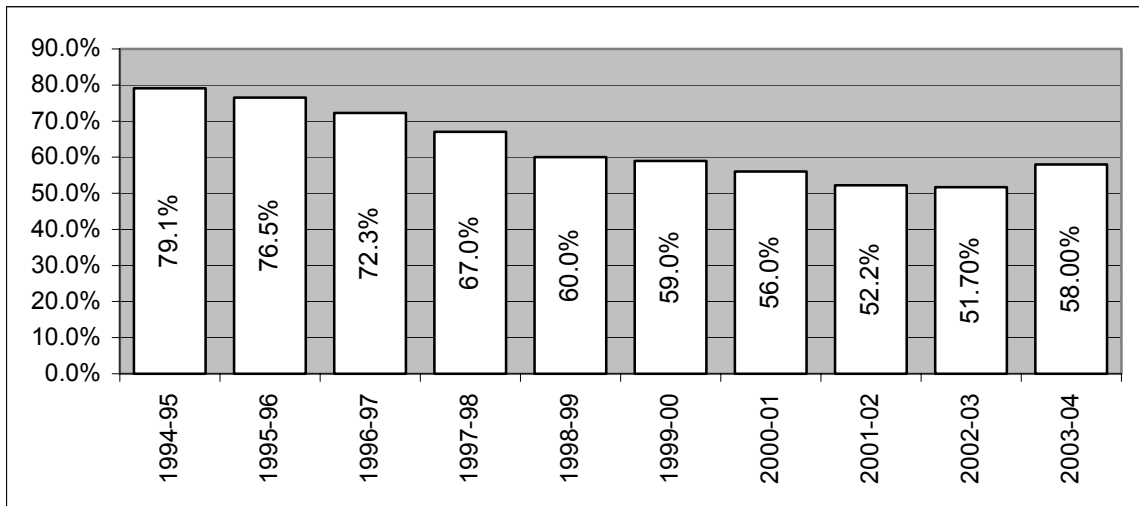
PROFESSIONAL STAFF STATISTICS - 2003-2004

Educational services are provided to Weston students by 254 full and part time professionals -- teachers, counselors, specialists, nurses, and administrators. Each one is a unique person with special talents and knowledge. The data below is an attempt to present a statistical picture of the Weston staff.

1. Education: Weston teachers are well educated: 78% have earned master's and doctoral degrees, and 32% have studied at least one year beyond the master's degree (master's + 30 credits). Fewer than half of the teachers were hired at the Bachelor degree level.
2. Experience: Approximately 58% of Weston teachers have twelve or more years of experience. Of the 30 new teachers hired this year 10 were hired at Step 1.

Teachers at Top Step

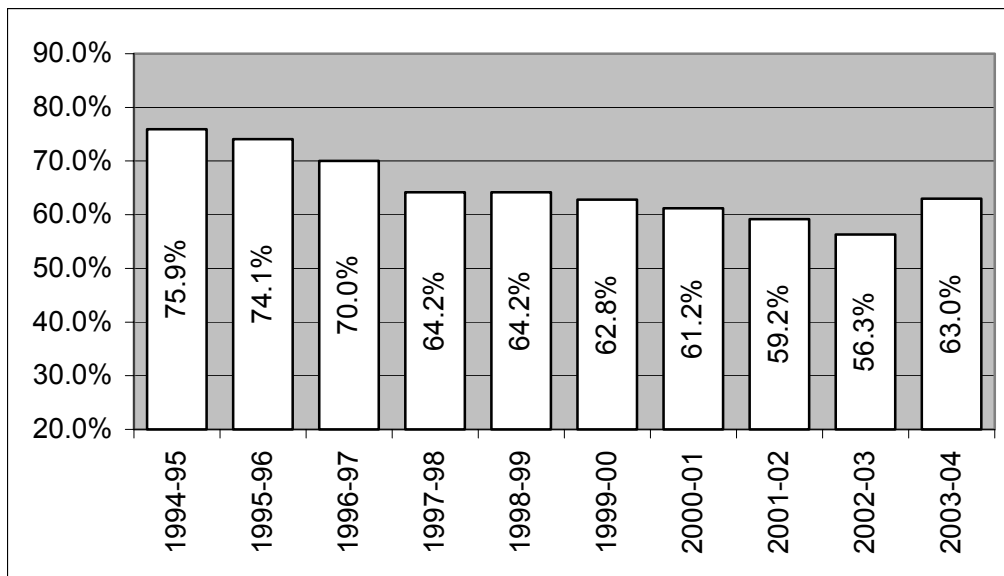
Fall 1994	79.1%	Fall 1999	59.0%
Fall 1995	76.5%	Fall 2000	56.0%
Fall 1996	72.3%	Fall 2001	52.2%
Fall 1997	67.0%	Fall 2002	51.7%
Fall 1998	60.0%	Fall 2003	58.0%



3. Professional Teacher Status: The percentage of teachers with "professional teacher status" has gone up slightly this year. This year 30 new teachers were added and 24 departed (2 were due to leaves of absence). Twenty teachers gained professional teacher status at the start of the school year.

Staff with Professional Teacher Status

Fall 1994	74.5%	Fall 1999	62.8%
Fall 1995	74.5%	Fall 2000	61.2%
Fall 1996	70.0%	Fall 2001	59.2%
Fall 1997	64.2%	Fall 2002	56.3%
Fall 1998	64.2%	Fall 2003	63.0%



4. Turnover: At the close of the 2002-03 school year 10% of the teachers left the Weston Public Schools. Of these, 96% left voluntarily.

Staff Turnover:

	<u>Left</u>	<u>Left Voluntarily</u>
1997-98	10.8%	90.0%
1998-99	11.9%	82.6%
1999-00	15.6%	80.0%
2000-01	10.5%	90.9%
2001-02	14.3%	90.9%
2002-03	10.0%	96.0%

CENSUS OF RESIDENTS AGE 0 - 5

As of January 1

BIRTH YEAR	CENSUS YEAR, JANUARY OF									
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
1989	132									
1990	157	164								
1991	113	118	129							
1992	121	140	150	169						
1993	105	124	128	134	160					
1994		106	120	127	135	153				
1995			134	137	144	152	173			
1996				103	113	121	145	156		
1997					133	144	157	187	187	
1998						119	141	163	170	172
1999							119	135	143	141
2000								100	105	112
2001									121	124
2002										96
TOTALS	628	652	661	670	685	689	735	741	726	645