

Boston's Youth Employment and Education Indicators January 2017



Defining “Opportunity Youth”

- The most common measure of youth disconnection is the number of 16-24 year olds who are **neither in school** nor **employed** at the time of being surveyed.
- The term “**Opportunity Youth**” was coined to highlight the positive assets inherent in disconnected youth, and the potential societal benefits if these young people reconnect. The terms Opportunity Youth and Disconnected Youth are *often* used interchangeably, though Opportunity Youth tends to be defined more broadly in recent literature.

The Key Indicators of Disconnection & Connection

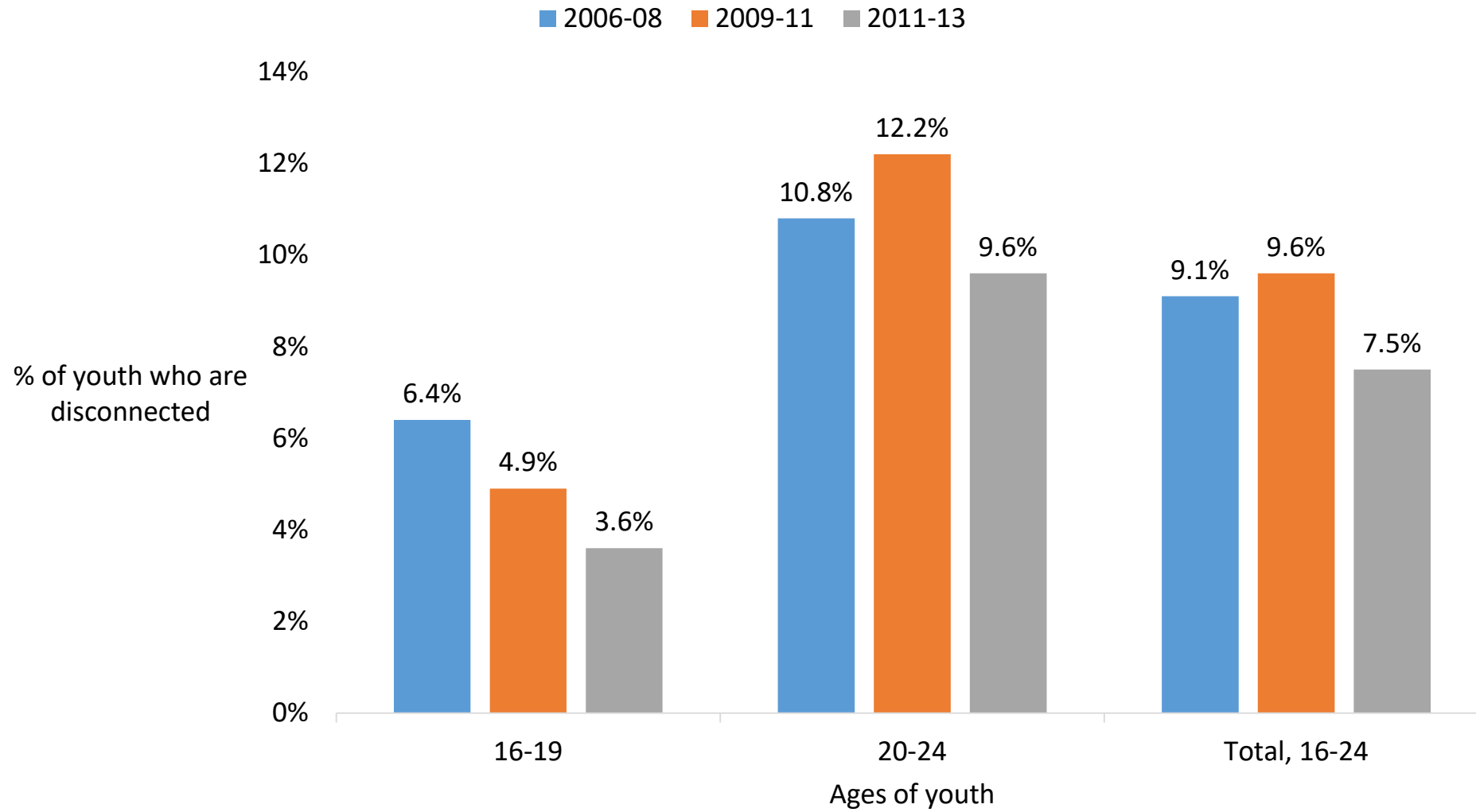
Boston is tracking these indicators that impact the size and characteristics of the population of opportunity youth and inform potential interventions:

- **High school credential attainment: The 4-year and 5-year graduation rates of Boston Public School classes and annual high school dropout rates.**
 - An **increase** in high school credential attainment is generally associated with a **decline** in the incidences of disconnection, as high school graduates are better prepared for the labor market and postsecondary training opportunities than those youth without a regular diploma. Boston is experiencing lower disconnection among high school aged youth as the high school graduation rate increases. The majority of opportunity youth in Boston possess at least a high school credential but have encountered difficulty transitioning from high school to employment or postsecondary education.
- **Postsecondary education enrollment and attainment:** The postsecondary college and training enrollment rate of high school graduates pursuing postsecondary education within 16 months of earning their diploma.
 - An **increase** in the postsecondary enrollment rate will **reduce** the number of recent high school graduates that are disconnected from school and work.

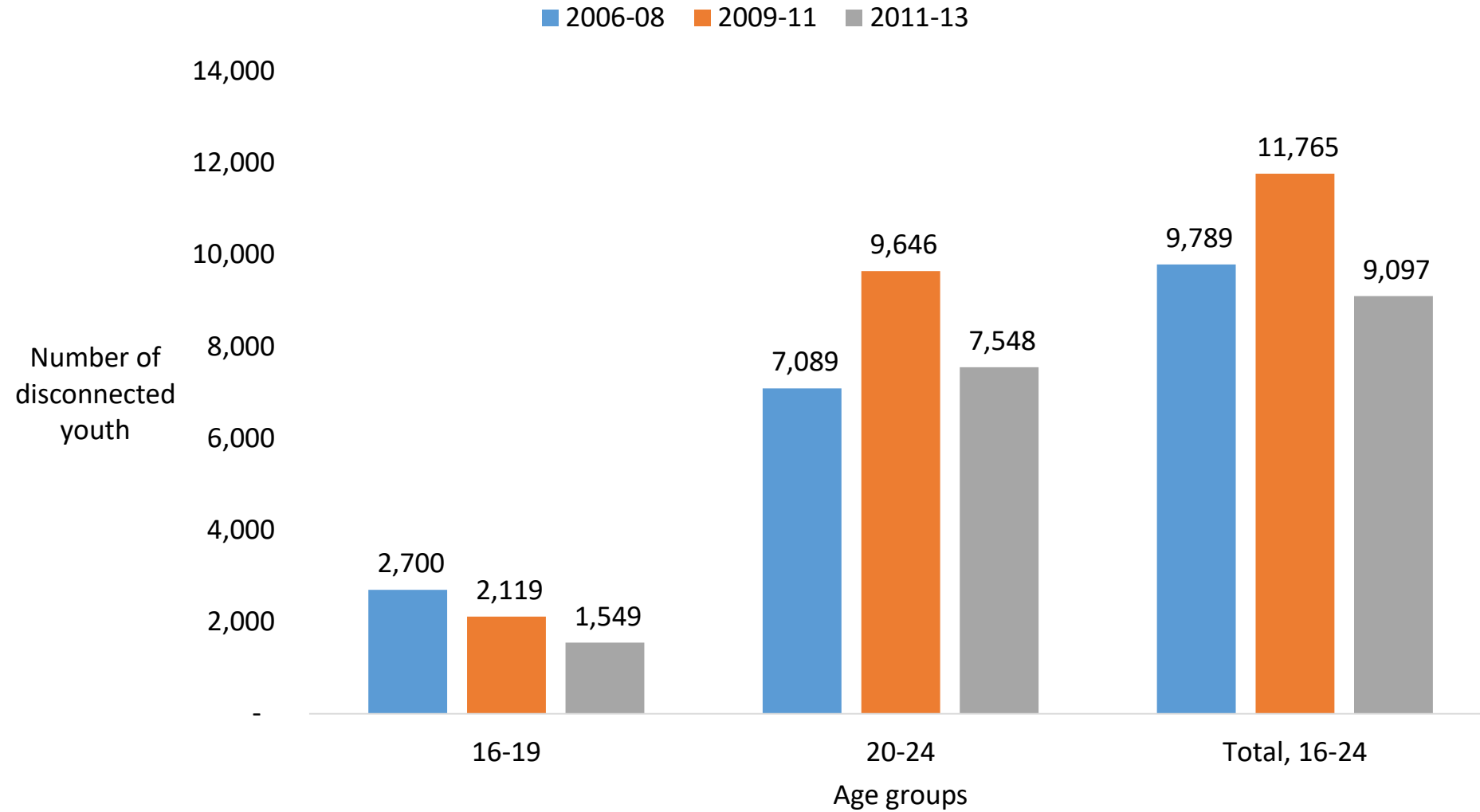
The Key Indicators of Disconnection & Connection

- **Employment Rates:** The percent of the 16-19 and 20-24 year old populations that are employed at the time of the American Community Survey.
 - The number of opportunity youth **increases** when employment rates **decline** and vice-versa.
- **Indicators disaggregated by race and ethnicity:** Boston is focusing on the disparities in access to opportunity that disproportionately affect young people of color.
 - On every education outcome tracked in this dashboard, there is a persistent race-ethnic gap.

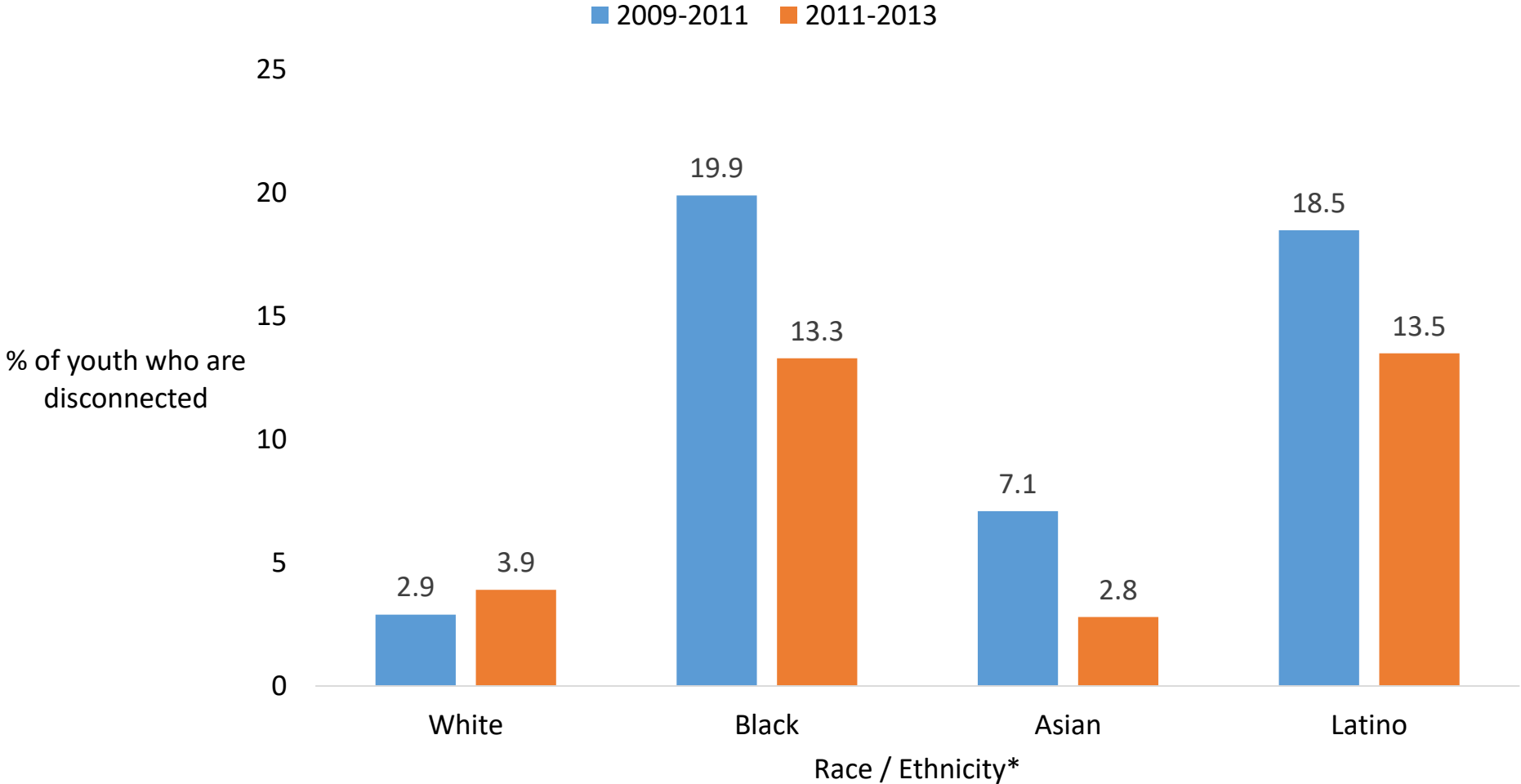
Trends in Disconnection Rates of Boston's Youth, 3-Year Averages



Boston's Disconnected Youth By Age Group, 3-Year Averages

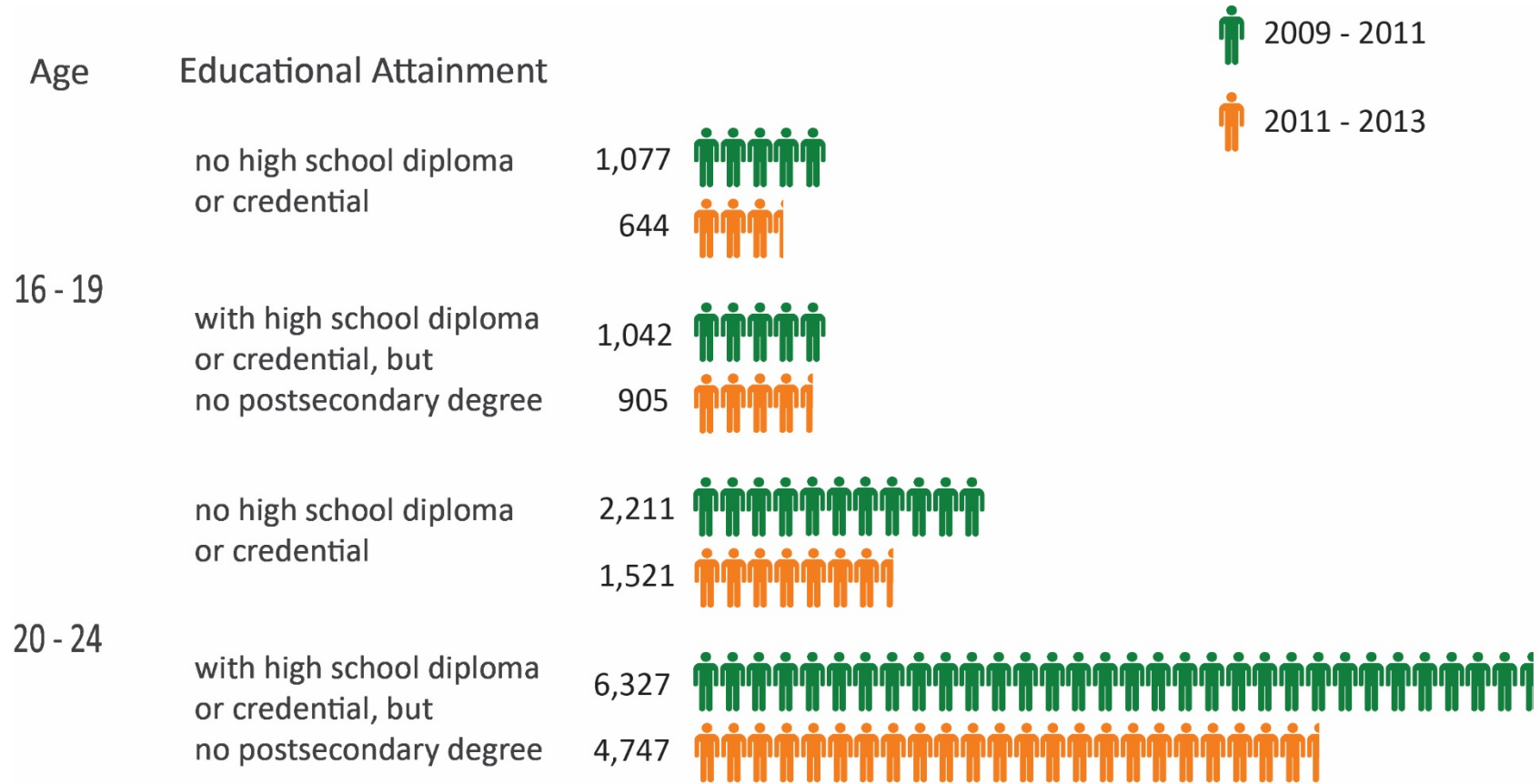


Trends in Disconnection Rates of Boston's Youth, by race and ethnicity, 3-Year Averages

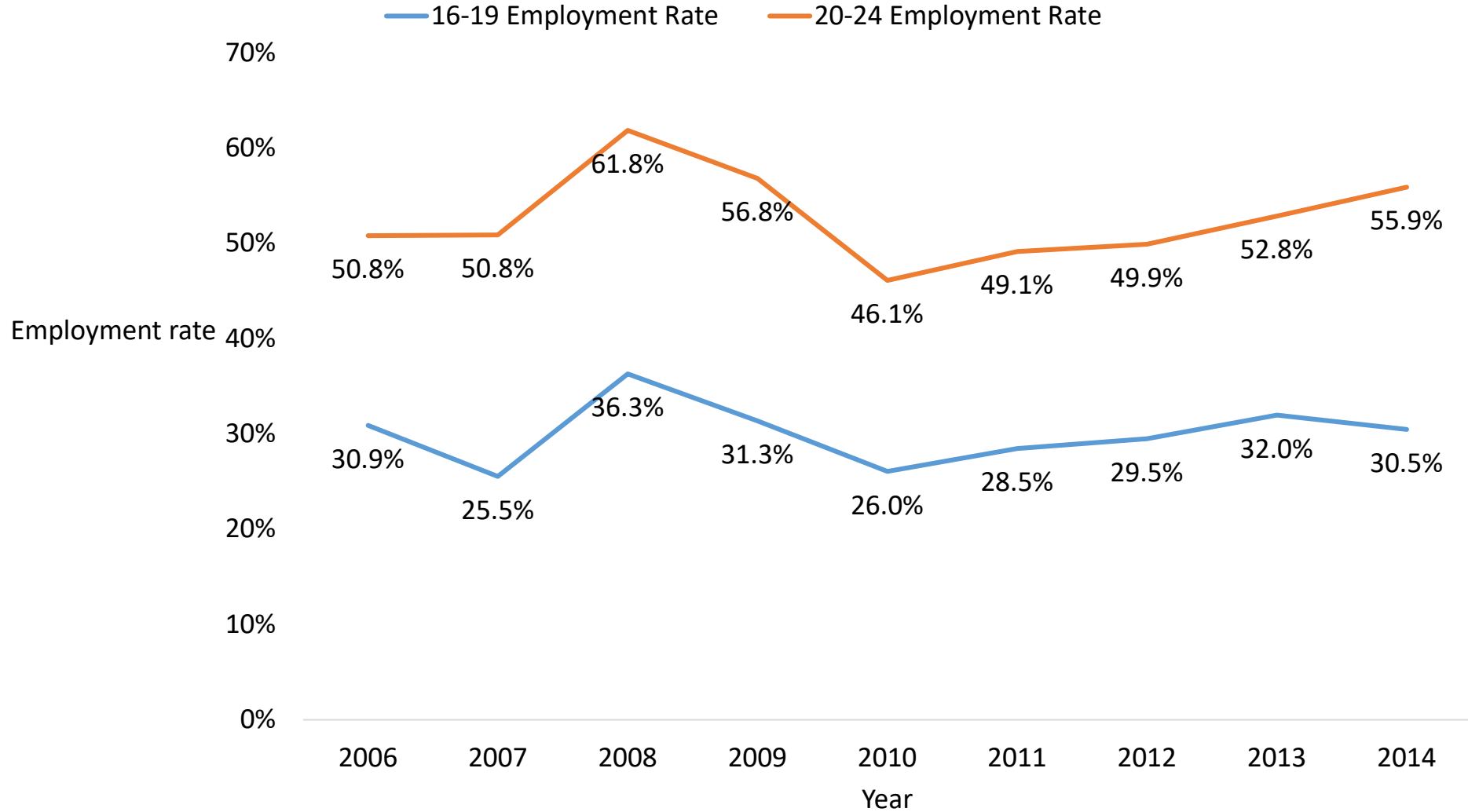


*Groups consist of people who identified solely with that racial or ethnic group and did not select multiple options

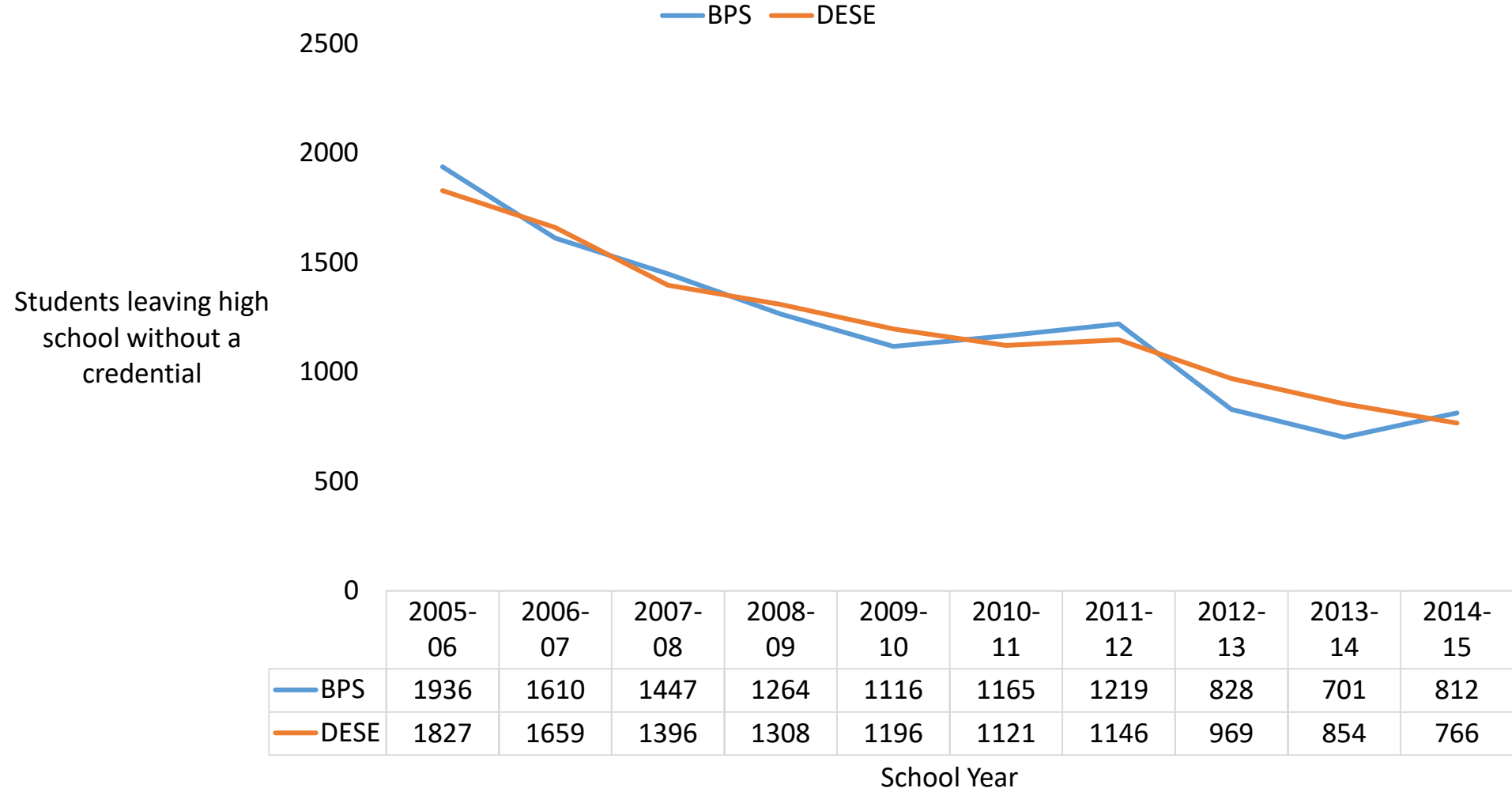
Total Opportunity Youth in Boston by Age and Educational Attainment, Comparison of 3-Year Averages



Boston's Youth Employment Rates, 2006-2014

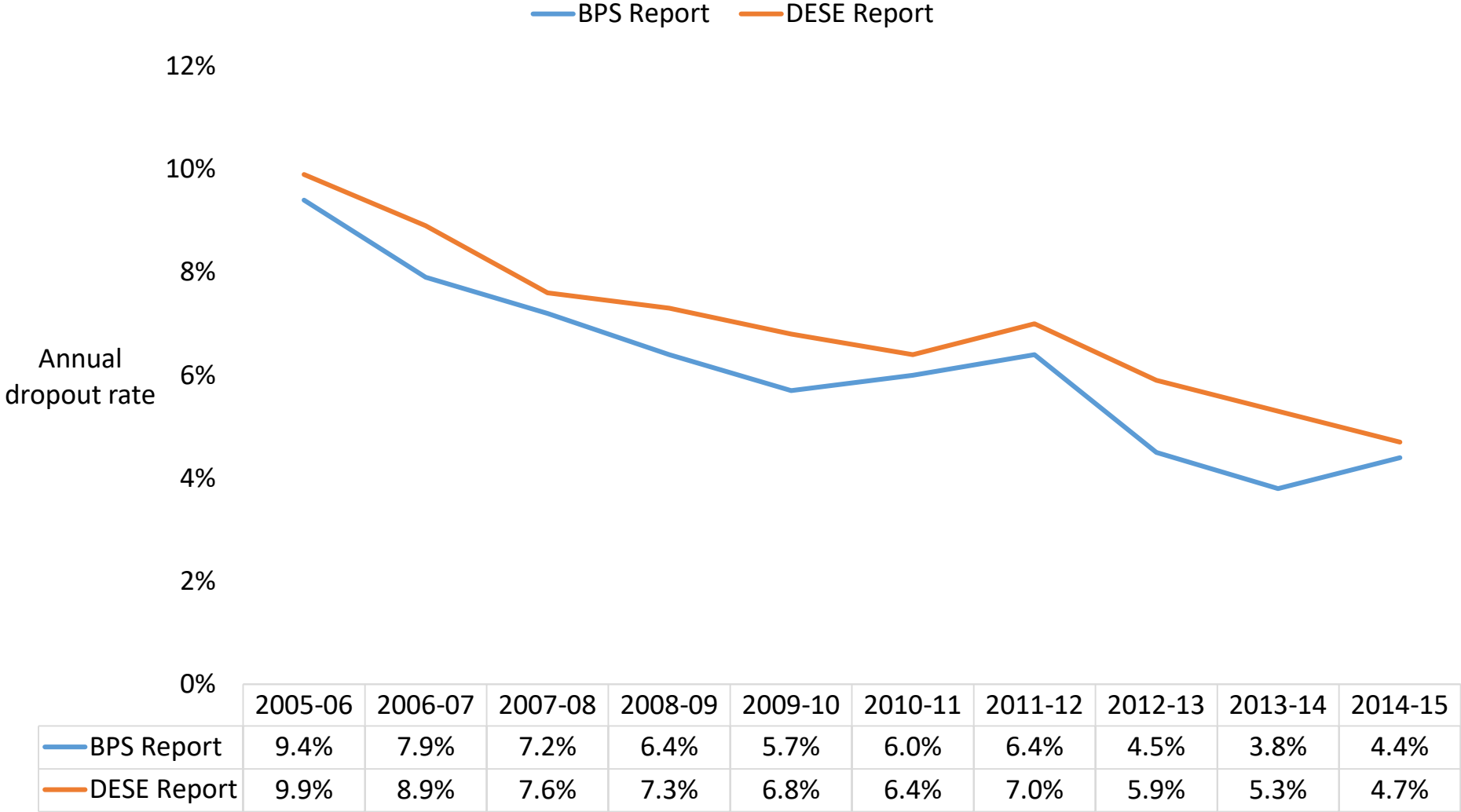


Boston Public Schools Dropout Totals, 2006-2015



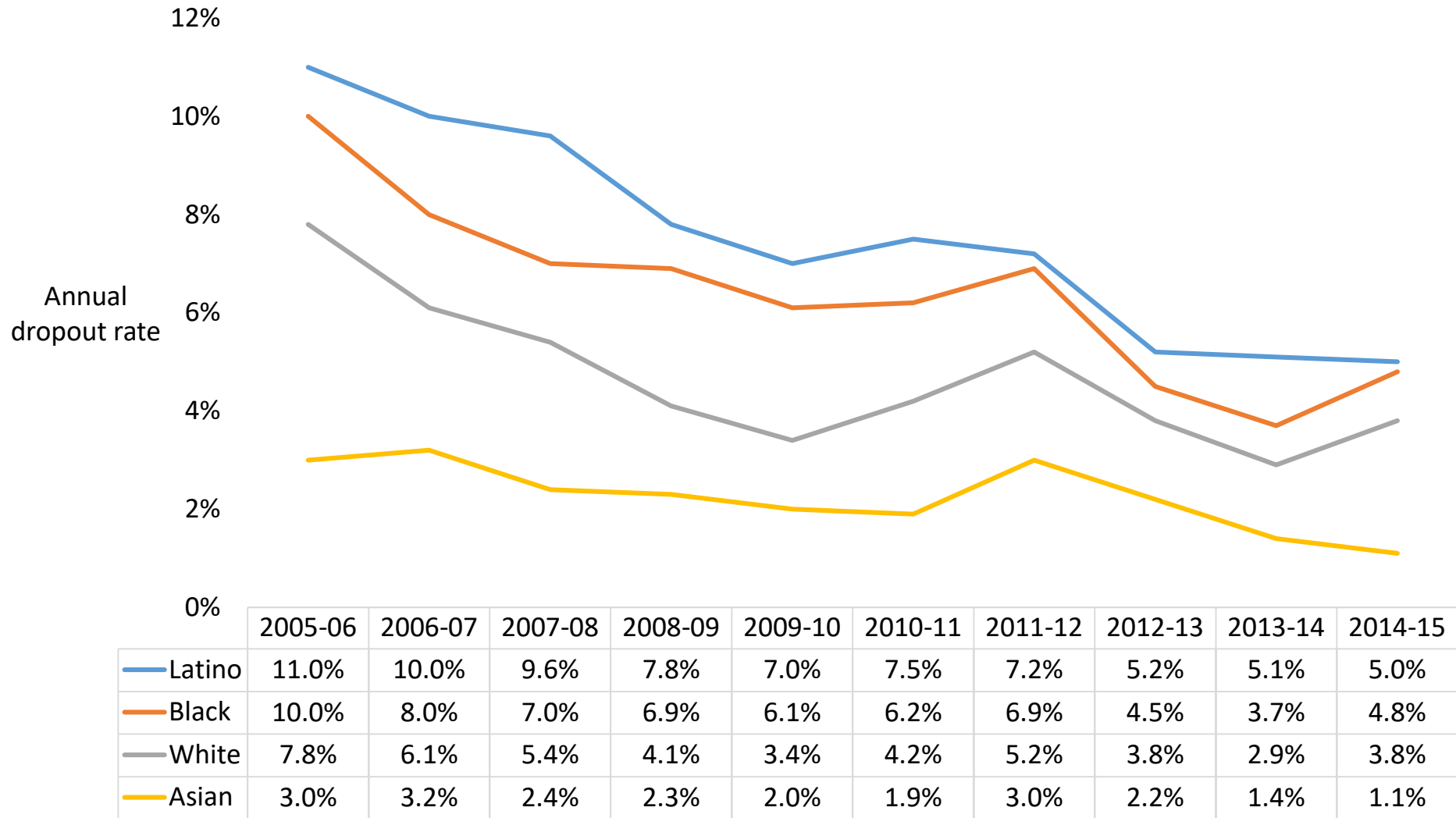
Sources: Boston Public Schools, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Boston Public Schools Annual Dropout Rates, 2006-2015



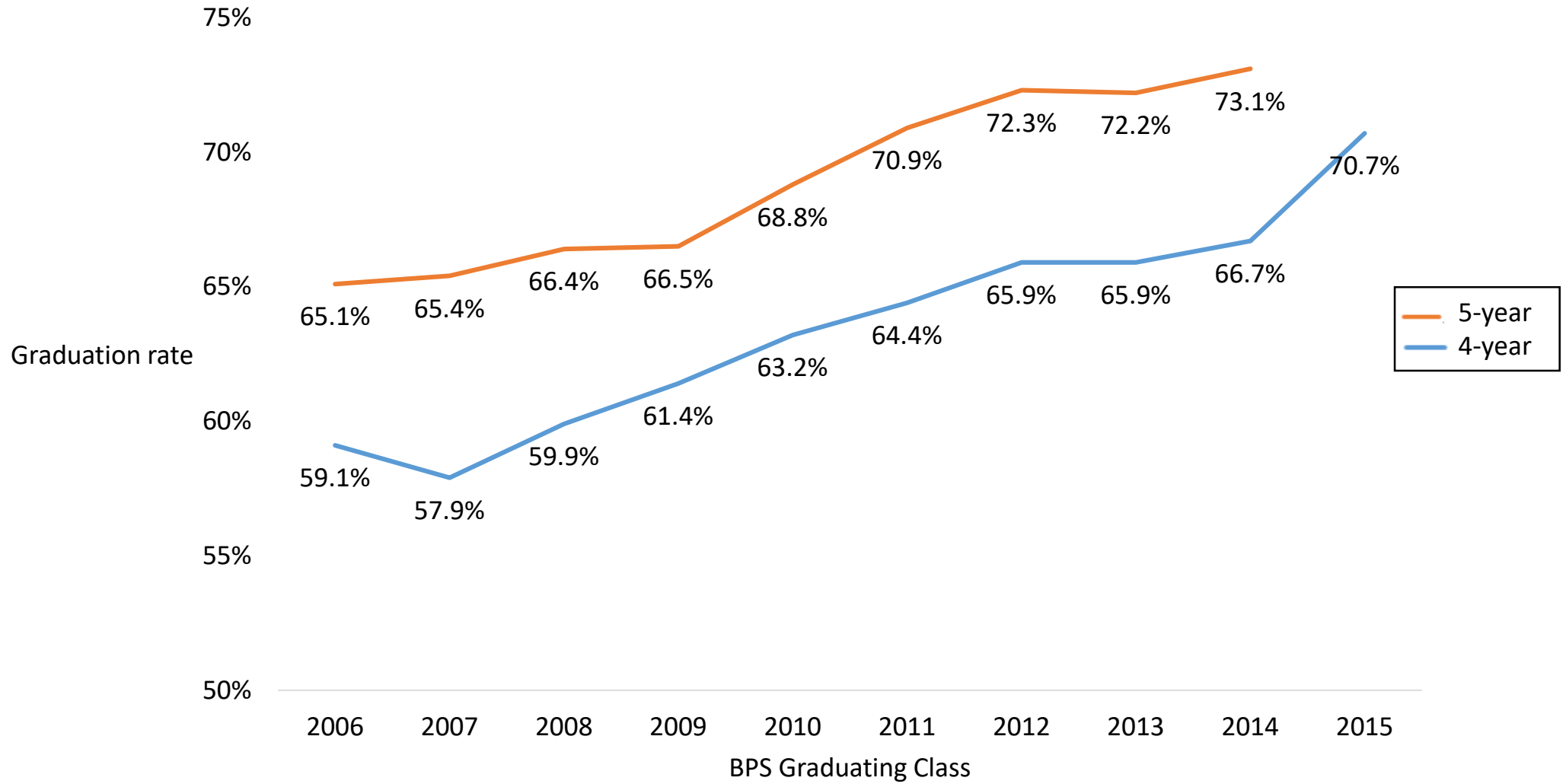
Source: Boston Public Schools, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Boston Public Schools Dropout Rates by Race & Ethnicity, 2006-2015

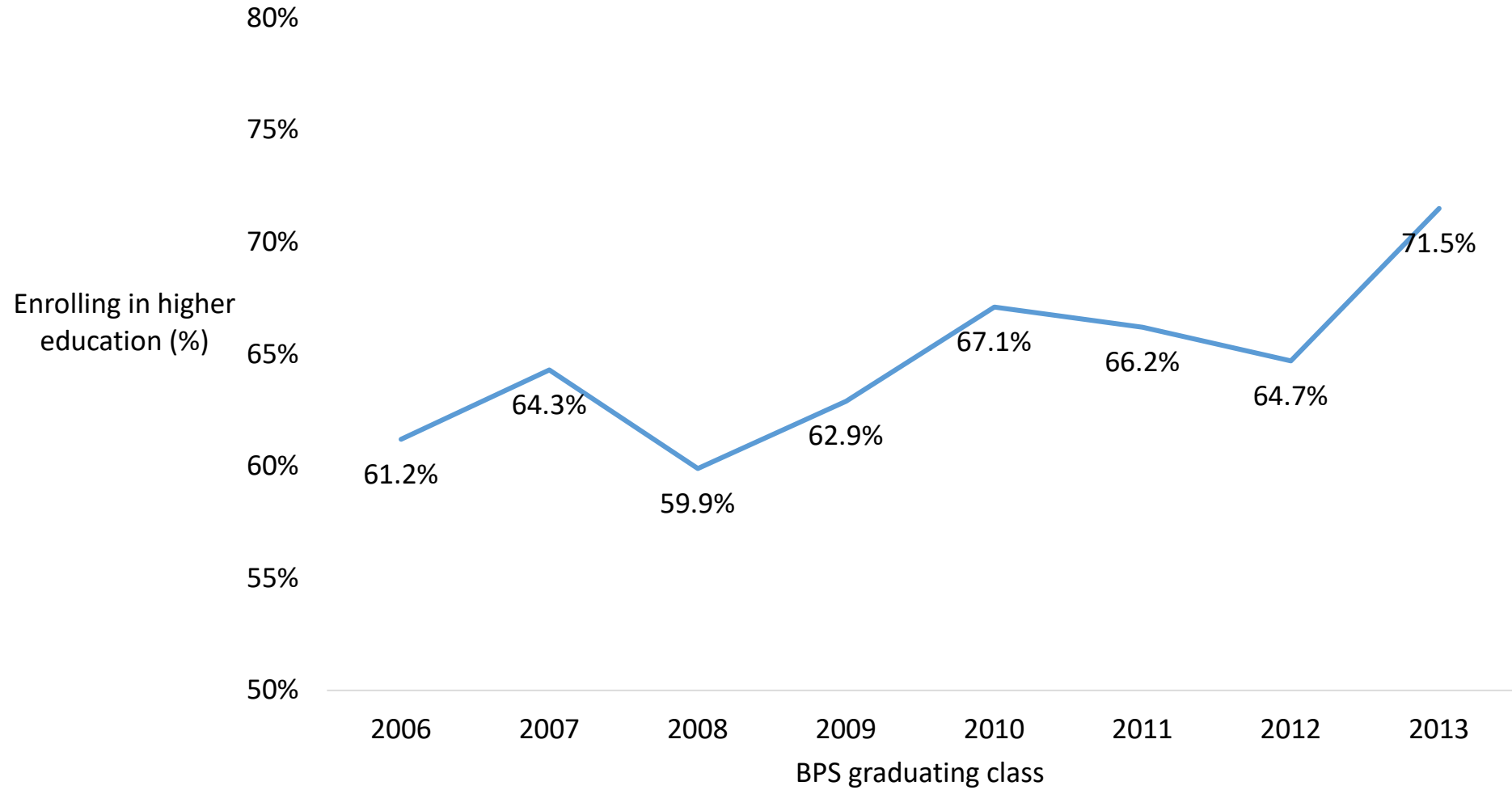


Source: Boston Public Schools

Boston Public Schools 4-year & 5-year graduation rates, 2006-2015



Attending institutions of higher education within 16 months of graduating high school, Graduating classes of 2006-2013



Data Sources

- **Employment:** American Community Survey (ACS) estimates for each year of the percentage of employed civilians in Boston, ages 16 to 19 and ages 20 to 24. The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Surveys (ACS) is the primary source for population statistics at the local level. The ACS is a large-scale, national household survey. ACS interviews are conducted monthly on an on-going basis. The 3-year and 5-year averages of these monthly interviews can be used for analysis at the city and sub-city levels.
- **High school diploma:** Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) tracks the percentage of students who graduate with a regular high school diploma within 4 or 5 years. This is defined by the number of students in a cohort who graduate in 4 or 5 years or less dividing by the number of first time students entering 9th grade 4 years earlier – transfers out + transfers in.
- **Postsecondary education:** DESE reports the enrollment of public high school graduates into institutions of higher education within 16 months of graduating high school, including private two-year, private four-year, public two-year, and public four year institutions.

Data Sources

- **American Community Survey**
<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>
- **Boston Public Schools Data and Reports**
<http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/Page/693>
- **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)**
http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/dropout.aspx

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