

City of Boston Archives and Records Center

School Committee Secretary Desegregation Files

1963 - 1984; bulk: 1974 - 1976

Boston Public Schools

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Collection Summary

Creator:	Office of the Secretary, Boston School Committee	Abstract:
Title:	School Committee Secretary Desegregation Files (1963 - 1984)	The School Committee Secretary Desegregation Files date from 1963 to 1984. They are comprised of correspondence, meeting minutes, transcripts, student assignment plans, court orders and news clippings collected by Edward J. Winter; Secretary of the Boston School Committee from 1962 to 1984. Items of interest in this collection include letters from the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), Office of Civil Rights; the United States Attorney General; the Boston Police Commissioner; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and School Committee member and President of ROAR, Louise Day Hicks.
Dates:	1963 - 1984	
Physical Description:	6 cubic feet	
Language:	English	
Repository:	City of Boston, Office of the City Clerk, Archives and Records Management Division 201 Rivermoor St. West Roxbury, MA 02132 archives@cityofboston.gov	

Administrative Note

The Secretary to the School Committee (SC) provides administrative and executive secretarial support to the SC. The position reports to the President and members of the SC. Responsibilities of the Secretary include:

Supervising the preparation and distribution of papers, agendas, and agenda items for SC meetings;

Preparing summaries of meetings and placing information requests (from SC members) to the Office of Superintendent;

Transmitting attested copies of votes, orders and resolutions passed by SC;

Distributing minutes of SC meetings and the annual "Proceedings of the School Committee of the City of Boston";

Notifying teachers, administrators, and other employees of their appointment, transfer, dismissal, or leave of absence granted;

Maintaining SC files and policy manual;

Providing information on precedents and maintaining transcripts that are collected at public meetings;

Maintaining the organizational chart of the School Department;

Supervising all matters dealing with certificates and diplomas to be awarded;

Issuing permits for use of accommodations in administrative building and all other school buildings after regular school hours (with the exception of community schools);

Managing staff at Office of the Secretary;

Developing and maintaining electronic data-management file systems;

All other duties as determined by SC;

Source: BPS Personnel Circular, No. 59, 1987 - 1988.

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Biographical Information

Edward J. Winter was born December 22, 1912, in Somerville, Massachusetts. In 1923, his family moved to Charlestown, where he was educated. Winter attended the Prescott Elementary School through eighth grade and went on to graduate from Charlestown High School in 1930. The following November, at the age of seventeen, Edward J. Winter began his distinguished fifty-six year career with the City of Boston as a clerk and stenographer in the Public Works Department. In 1942, he transferred to the School Department and became secretary to School Committee member Michael J. Ward. Then from 1946 to 1956, he worked for the Division of Statistics and Publicity. In 1956, Winter was transferred again and became Assistant Secretary to the School Committee, working under SC Secretary Agnes Reynolds. After Reynolds retired, Winter passed a civil service examination and was promoted to Secretary of the Boston School Committee in 1962. The School Committee officially elected him on September 13, 1962. He served the schools in this capacity for twenty-four more years, until his retirement in 1987.

Winter married Priscilla Nobile in 1941. They had four children.

Winter's career in Boston spanned many social and political changes in the world, the United States and the city of Boston. He worked for the city during the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, the Civil Rights and Women's Liberation movements, to name a few. During his tenure as School Committee Secretary, the Boston Public Schools underwent a drastic transformation. Two pinnacle lawsuits resulted in reformations to the structure of the school system during his career: the Morgan desegregation case, and the Allen special education case (see [Morgan Case and Allen Case Working Files](#) for more information). As Secretary to the School Committee, Edward J. Winter was the contact person for the schools. He corresponded with politicians, parents, citizens, state and school officials, teachers and administrators on behalf of the SC (for other duties performed by Winter, see Administrative note). At the end of his career, Winter was recognized for his outstanding service in two ways. On October 22, 1987, he received the Henry L. Shattuck Public Service Award for "outstanding service and commitment to the City of Boston". Also in 1987, a chamber at the school department headquarters was named in his honor.

Note: for a history of the desegregation of Boston Public Schools, see: [A Selective Timeline of the Boston Public Schools Desegregation Era](#)

Collection Description

The School Committee Secretary Desegregation Files contain correspondence, meeting minutes, transcripts, student assignment plans, court orders and news clippings collected by Edward J. Winter, Secretary of School Committee from 1963 to 1984. Items of interest in this collection include letters from the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), Office of Civil Rights; the United States Attorney General; the Boston Police Commissioner; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and School Committee member and President of ROAR, Louise Day Hicks. A June 1972 letter from Henry Pottinger of the HEW Office of Civil Rights to Superintendent William H. Ohrenberger, states that the BPS remains non compliant with Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and thus all applications for federal assistance will be deferred until compliance is reached. A letter from the US Attorney General, dated July 1974, is a reply to Winter stating that his office has no jurisdiction to intervene in the Morgan case. Letters from both Robert J. diGrazia, the Boston Police Commissioner and John W. Sears, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Metropolitan District Commission, both dated February 1975; state that the officers will remain posted in the Boston Public Schools until the climate has settled and students are safe. Letters to and from Ruth Batson of the NAACP document the initial dialogue between the NAACP and the School Committee, as the group attempted to resolve the issue of racial imbalance in the schools. Also of interest, is a Special Report issued in July of 1975 by the Boston Municipal Research Bureau on the costs of desegregation in the Boston Public Schools.

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Related Material

[Desegregation-era Records Collection](#)

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Arrangement

This series is arranged in its original chronological order.

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Acquisition Information

The School Committee Secretary Desegregation Files were transferred from the School Department to the City Archives in April of 1992.

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Access

The School Committee Secretary's Desegregation Files are open for research.

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Container List

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3	Edward J. Winter Desegregation Files, 1975 - 1976
4	Edward J. Winter Desegregation Files, 1976 - 1977
5	Edward J. Winter Desegregation Files, 1978 - 1983
6	Edward J. Winter Desegregation Files, 1984, 1974

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Written by Sheila R. Spalding.
Encoded by Sheila R. Spalding. February 2005