

# WHO REALLY LIVES NEXT DOOR?

ETHNIC CHANGE IN QUEENS COMMUNITY BOARD #7

AN OCCASIONAL PAPER FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF URBAN STUDIES  
QUEENS COLLEGE/CUNY

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The following report is based on data retrieved from the INFOSHARE community database. This database was developed by the Office of Community Studies as an outreach tool to share valuable information with the communities that need it.

Often, the very people who most need current facts about specific neighborhoods, districts or community board areas have the least time to study the multitude of tables and charts which are produced by City agencies and departments. The wealth of information in these tables becomes inaccessible to those charged with planning local projects, encouraging development, and improving service delivery.

We hope that this report will assist you in evaluating needs and determining budget priorities. Our analyses are meant to highlight specific situations which may require your attention and to clarify otherwise "hidden" facts about your community.

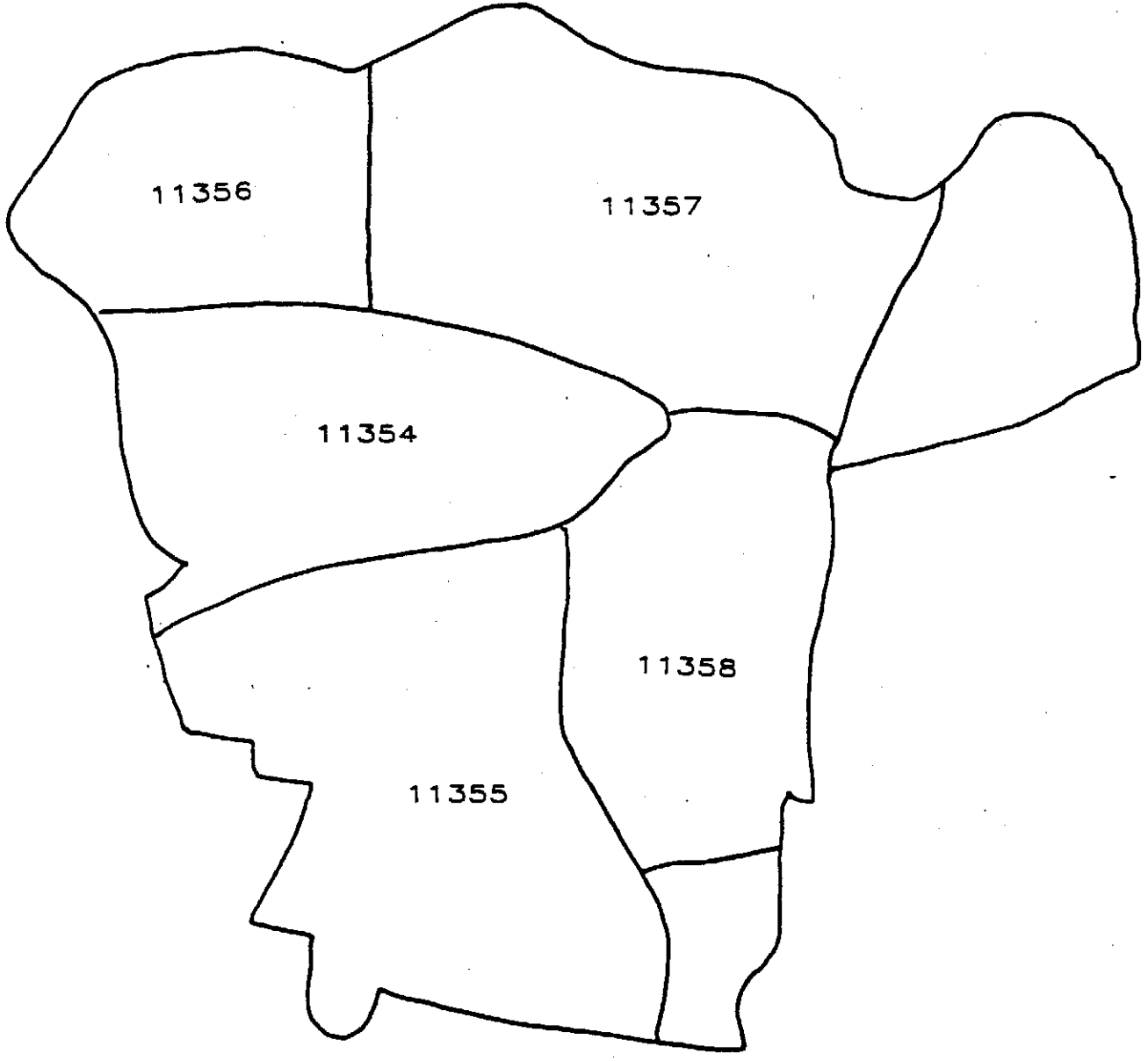
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Community Board #7, the largest board area in Queens county, is bounded on the south by the Long Island Expressway, on the north by the East River, on the west by Flushing Meadows-Corona Park and Flushing Bay, and on the east by Utopia Parkway. Board #7 includes the communities of Bay Terrace, College Point, Beechhurst, Flushing, Malba, Queensborough Hill, and Whitestone. The following map identifies the approximate zip code areas within the board.



## Who Really Lives Next Door?

In Queens Community Board 7, no one is really sure. This Board area is one of great ethnic variety, and it celebrates the different populations that call it home. Unfortunately, the very diversity which makes Board 7 an exciting place to live makes it extremely difficult to plan programs and services. The assumption has been, for the last five years, that the vast majority of new immigrants are Asian and have settled in the downtown Flushing area. This report will indicate that this belief may be misleading and will chart current immigration movement in the community board area over the past four years.

Ethnic change in population is one of the easiest changes to observe and the hardest to document. A full census is undertaken every ten years by the Federal Census Bureau; the next one is scheduled for 1990. This means that the demographic information collected for the 1980 census is now 8 years old and, in many cases, invalid. Since a census is a snapshot view of the population at a given moment, it has limited applicability to long-range planning for service delivery or development of programs that must be responsive to current community needs.

The Department of City Planning prepares interim census reports that are more up-to-date, but whose format limits their usefulness. These reports are written for entire community board areas and cannot be applied to specific neighborhoods for local planning purposes. Frequently, we cannot state with any degree of certainty that we know who is living on our block. We do not know how to plan programs, what types of programs to offer, or the scope of need.

#### Measures of Ethnic Change

Queens Community Board 7 has been particularly affected by these changes in ethnicity. Since the 1980 Census, the population of this board area has altered dramatically. The 1980 Census shows an overwhelmingly White community (76%), with small Black (5%), Asian (9%) and Hispanic (10%) clusters of population. This offered little change from the 1970 Census.

It has become apparent that the standard measures of ethnicity by Census data analysis have outlived their usefulness. If we examine the 1980 data by census tract, we discover that the greatest concentration of Asians in Community Board 7 is in Flushing. The various agencies responsible for programs reaching out to the immigrant groups intuitively have been exerting most effort in the downtown Flushing area in order to respond to this need.

Some of this emphasis may be misplaced, due to alterations in local demographics.

In the course of our research, we have isolated a measure of ethnicity which may assist service providers in evaluating their thrust. Rather than try to conduct an interim census, an overwhelming task, we have chosen to look at the people of Community Board 7 through their children. Each year, the Board of Education publishes a compendium of School Profiles that describes each school in the New York City school system through a series of measures such as reading/math scores, attendance rates and percentage of children receiving reduced price lunch. Another of these measures is the federally mandated ethnicity survey, conducted annually by both public and private/parochial schools.

Although Community Boards and Community School Districts are not coterminous, most of the elementary and junior high school age children in Community Board 7 attend public school in Community School District 25 (16,579 in 1986/87). These children account for approximately 85% of the total elementary and junior high school population of the community board area. The balance attend private/parochial schools.

What the latest volume of School Profiles tells us is startling. [See Chart #1] Whereas emphasis has been placed on downtown Flushing (zip code 11354) as the heart of the Asian immigrant population in the community board area,

we now find that the vast majority of Asian children in Community Board 7 attend public school south of 41st Avenue, in the 11355 zip code area south of downtown Flushing. These schools are educating 36% of the whole community board's public school population, 54% of the board area's Asian children and 51% of the board area's Hispanic children.

The 11354 zip code has 2 elementary schools and one junior high school, serving almost 2400 children. Of these children, 18% are Asian, 22% are Hispanic, 12% are Black and 48% are White (figures may not equal 100% due to rounding).

The 11355 zip code, contiguous with 11354 on its southern border, has 4 elementary schools and 2 junior high schools, serving over 6000 children. Of this group of children, 40% are Asian, 25% are Hispanic, 14% are Black and 20% are White.

Zip code area 11357, which abuts 11354 on the east, has 4 elementary schools and one junior high school, serving 3100 children (15% Asian, 10% Hispanic, 7% Black and 68% White).

Zip code area 11358, which shares its western border with 11355, serves 3000 children in 2 elementary schools and one junior high school (25% Asian, 10% Hispanic, 6% Black and 60% White).

### Busing

These data call for cautious analysis. There are additional factors affecting the raw numbers that must be taken into account. Children are bused from one zip code area to another, and often large apartment buildings are situated at the edge of a zip code line; services to residents are provided in the adjoining area.

We are aware of the movement of children from one school zone to another. For example, in School District 25, over 500 kindergarteners are bused, mostly from the 11355 zip code area. All kindergarten children are bused from three schools in the 11355 area to other schools in District 25, but not in Community Board 7. These children have been counted as part of their own local schools for the purposes of this study; they do not actually attend kindergarten within the 11355 area. However, the reader should be aware that almost all of these children come from, and will return to, schools which are at least 41% Asian.

Less than 70 kindergarteners from District 25 are bused to a new kindergarten program at PS 130, which is outside CB #7 and has not been included in this discussion. Older children are bused as well, from areas of extreme congestion at the 11354/55 line, to other, less crowded communities. These are long-standing movements, and do not affect large numbers of children.



### A Human Wave

Tracking the movement of groups is a challenging task. Often, it involves more guesswork than scientific inquiry. In this instance, however, we have the benefit of hard data regarding large groups of children in a limited geographic area. What we see is a wave extending outward from the heart of Flushing to the north, east and south of the community board area. This human wave has affected all ethnic groups in the community board.

From 1983 to 1986, several trends have become apparent. The student population in the public schools has increased by almost three percent. [Chart #2] The loss which has occurred in the junior high and intermediate schools (590 students) has been more than offset by the increase in the elementary school population (1060 students). Five elementary schools in the 11355 zip code area and one school each in 11356 and 11358 are at or above 100% utilization.

We should be aware of the implications of decreased junior high population coupled with increased elementary population. The largest increase is presently in the 5th grade; we can anticipate seeing this group fill out the junior highs in two years. Serious planning should begin now for services to this large group of pre-teens. This community's extensive youth programs will have to be expanded and will require greater budget allocations to maintain the current level of service provision. The balance of the elementary grades show minimal growth. This

demographic "bump" can result in a variety of temporary service delivery problems that must be addressed, but which should not detract from the regular district services based on overall population growth and change.

Over the four year period, the movement of ethnic groups has been surprisingly rapid. The 11354 area experienced 45% increase in Asian and 38% increase in Hispanic populations, and a concomitant loss of 13% Black and 14% White population. 11355 showed a 15% gain of Asians, 7% gain of Blacks and a 24% gain of Hispanics, coupled with a 20% decrease in White population. Although 11356 (College Point) shows an overall increase of less than 1% in the total enrollment, Asians have increased by 26% and Hispanics by 32% in the public elementary schools. Increased housing development in the College Point community will ultimately account for a population gain, but it has not yet become evident.

It is difficult to account for the 67% Asian increase and 64% Hispanic increase in 11357 after discounting the busing of children from downtown Flushing; the junior high school in this zip area lost population in all ethnic groups (-8% Asian, -19% Hispanic, -47% Black and -22% White), while almost all the elementary schools gained. We are beginning to discern a trend of ethnic dispersion to the north, south and east of the Community Board area. This movement should be tracked to determine if the locus of service provision should change. The 11358 cluster of schools had a 32% Asian

increase, 23% Hispanic increase, 35% Black decrease and 10% White decrease. The two remaining schools in zip code areas 11360 and 11365 are too small to be analyzed individually but are included in the totals which follow. [Charts #3,4,5]

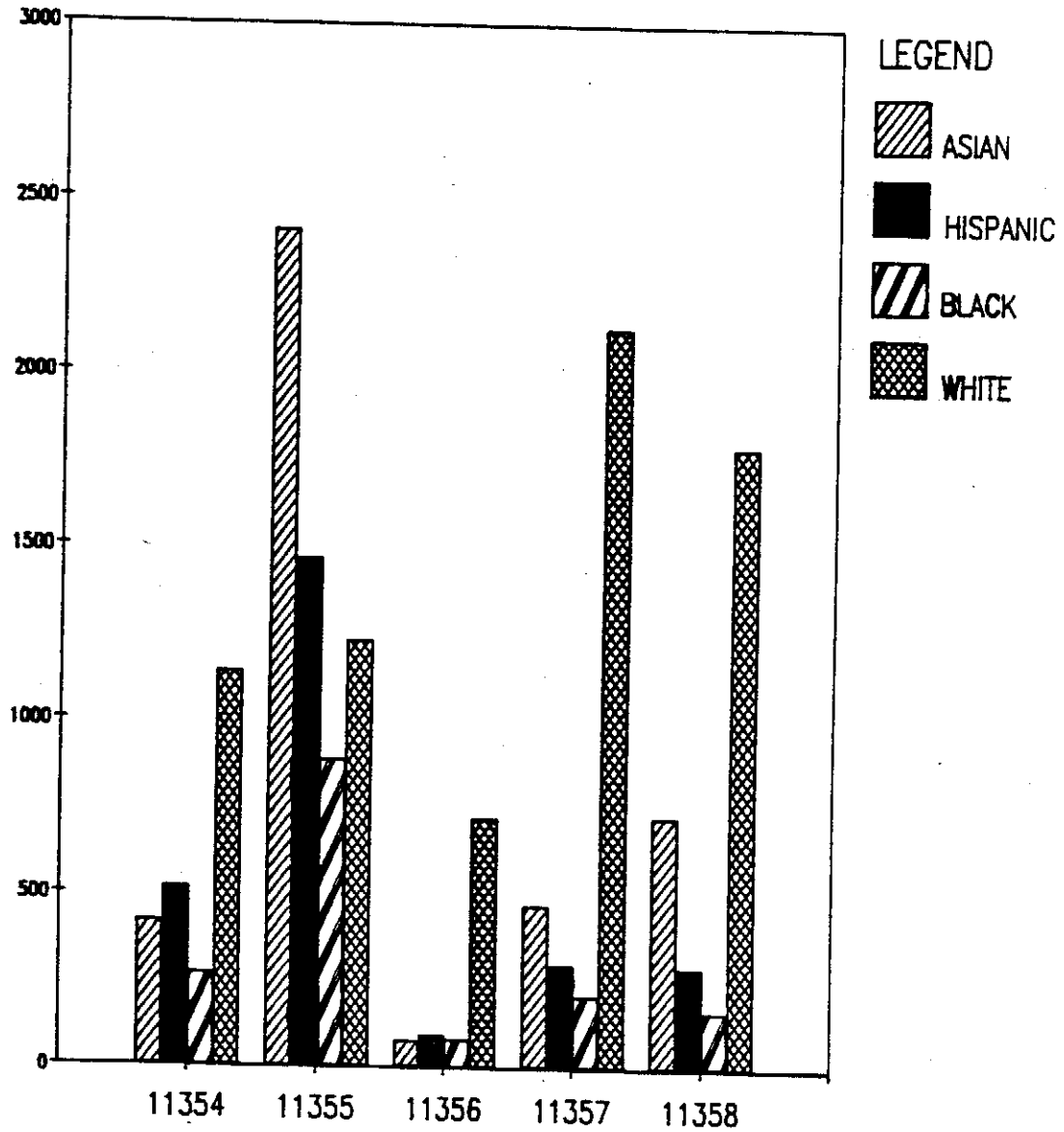
### Policy Implications

In all, over the four year period examined, the public schools evidenced a 26% increase in Asian population, 29% increase in Hispanic population, 8% decrease in Black and 11% decrease in White population. It is clear that increased immigration of Hispanics may change some of the priorities of the planning groups in the Community Board area. Bilingual service providers may want to reconsider the languages in which they offer counselling and other services. Activities designed to attract teenagers may have to be culturally adapted to ensure that full advantage is taken of these programs. This change in patterns should be noted.

It is essential that planners continually be up-dated regarding these population trends, both in ethnicity and other demographic measures, in order to better perform long- and short-term planning for service delivery and to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs. Annual school census data are more up-to-date than the ten year census-related materials, and increased use and application of these data should be explored.

# STATE OF THE COMMUNITY CHART #1

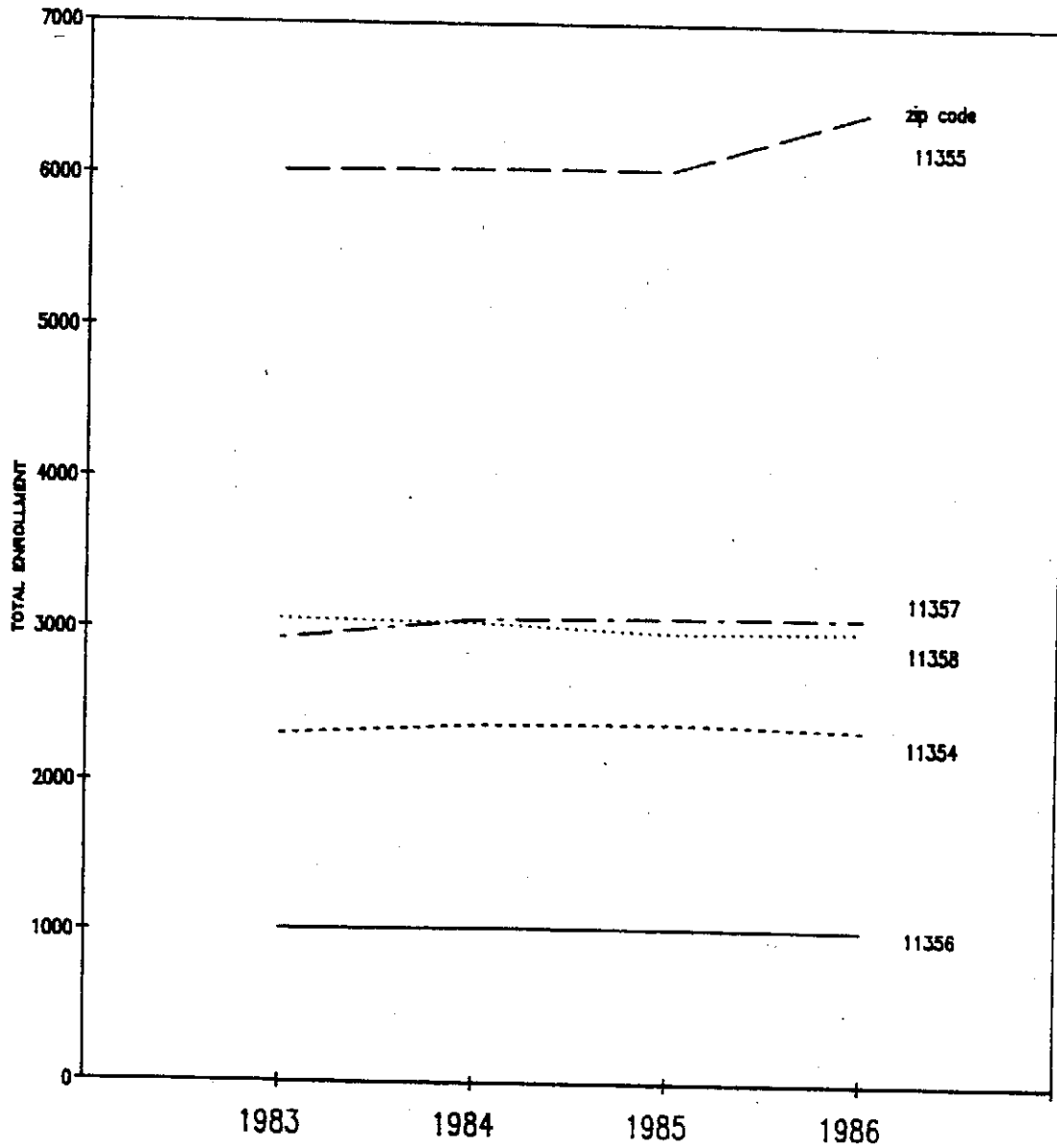
ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION BY ZIP CODE - 1986/87  
 COMMUNITY BOARD #7/SCHOOL DISTRICT #25



SOURCE: SCHOOL PROFILES, 1986/87

# STATE OF THE COMMUNITY CHART #2

PATTERNS OF ENROLLMENT 1983-86  
COMMUNITY BOARD #7/SCHOOL DISTRICT #25

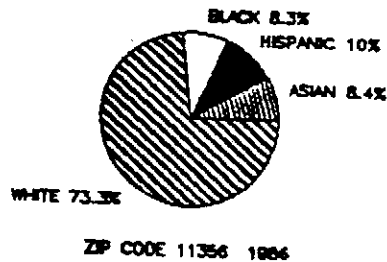
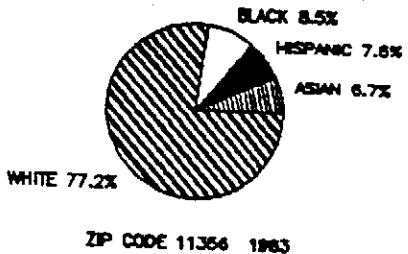
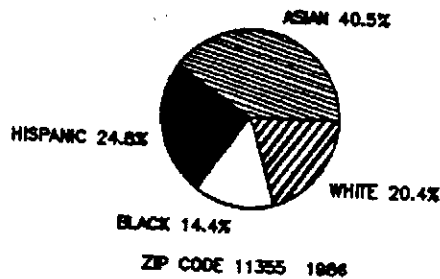
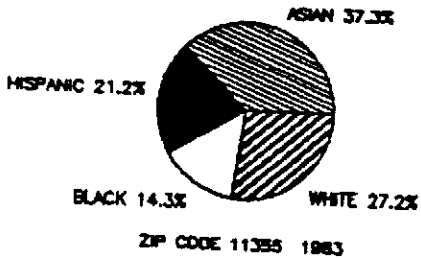
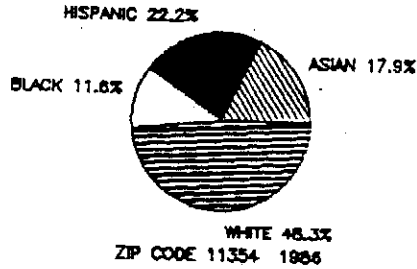
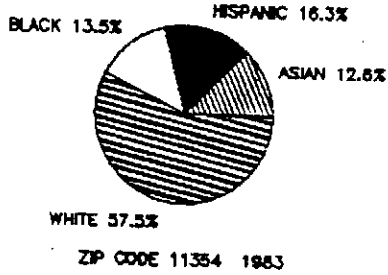


SOURCE: SCHOOL PROFILES, 1983-87

# STATE OF THE COMMUNITY CHART #3

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## ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION - 1983 - 1986 PUBLIC SCHOOLS ZIP CODES 11354, 11355, 11356

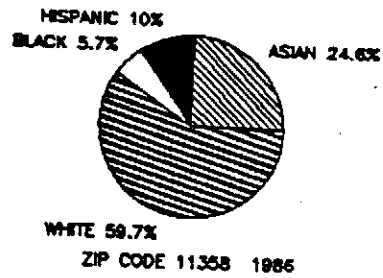
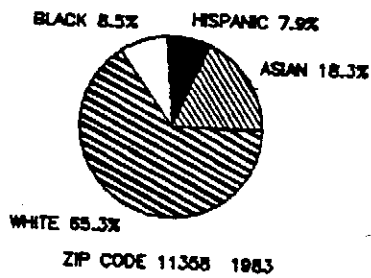
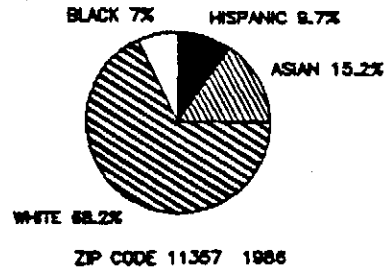
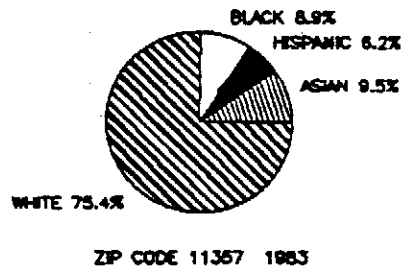


SOURCE: SCHOOL PROFILES, 1983-1986

# STATE OF THE COMMUNITY CHART #4

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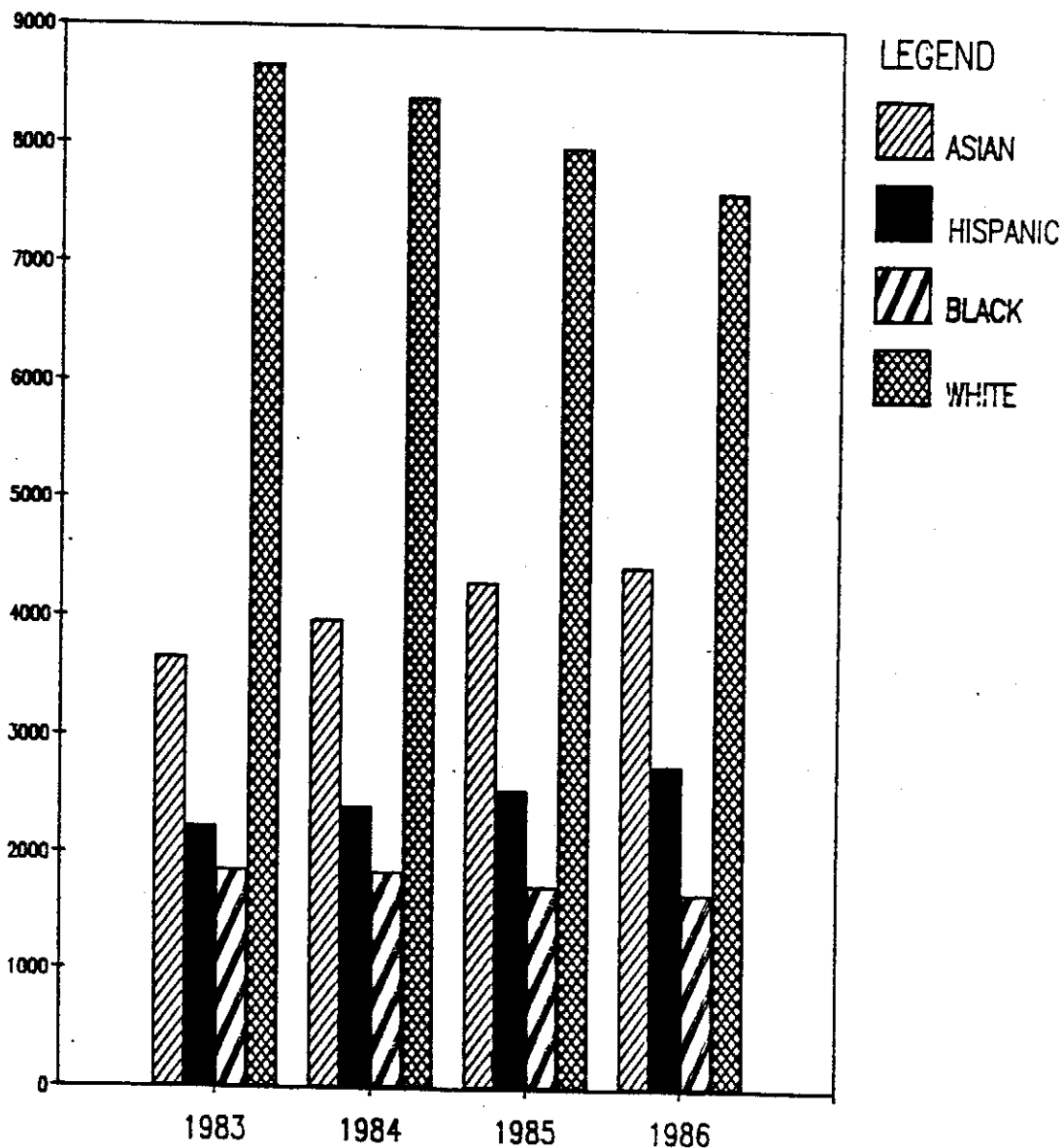
## ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION - 1983 - 1986 PUBLIC SCHOOLS ZIP CODES 11357, 11358



SOURCE: SCHOOL PROFILES, 1983-1986

# STATE OF THE COMMUNITY CHART #5

OVERALL ENROLLMENT BY ETHNICITY 1983-86  
 COMMUNITY BOARD #7/SCHOOL DISTRICT #25



SOURCE: SCHOOL PROFILES, 1983-1986