

The State of Boston

A mayoral election special

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In the 2009 Boston mayoral election, the top two challengers from the preliminary election—Michael Flaherty and Sam Yoon—teamed up to face a four-term incumbent, Mayor Thomas Menino. The election was touted as a race between “old Boston,” especially older whites, and “new Boston,” with Flaherty and Yoon courting minority voters. The main issues were corruption in city government, crime rates, performance of the school system, and minority hiring and promotion. A surprising coalition of black and Hispanic voters provided strong support for the old guard, and Menino took the race by a 15-point margin.

The candidates

| | Menino | Flaherty/ Yoon | Undecided |
|-----------------|--------|-------------------|-----------|
| WHITE | 46 | 46 | 8 |
| ASIAN | 47 | 45 | 8 |
| BLACK | 65 | 24 | 11 |
| HISPANIC | 61 | 30 | 9 |

The issues

Should the city do more to promote and hire minorities in the Fire and Police Departments?

| | Do more | Stay the same | Do less |
|-----------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| ALL | 66 | 27 | 7 |
| WHITE | 47 | 38 | 16 |
| ASIAN | 66 | 26 | 8 |
| BLACK | 76 | 21 | 3 |
| HISPANIC | 73 | 23 | 4 |

Over the past four years, have public schools improved, stayed about the same, or worsened?

| | Improved | Stayed the same | Worsened |
|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------|
| ALL | 35 | 35 | 30 |
| WHITE | 35 | 36 | 29 |
| ASIAN | 27 | 49 | 24 |
| BLACK | 45 | 28 | 27 |
| HISPANIC | 28 | 28 | 43 |

How much corruption is there in city government?

| | A lot | Some | Little/none | Not sure |
|-----------------|-------|------|-------------|----------|
| ALL | 26 | 44 | 19 | 11 |
| WHITE | 21 | 46 | 26 | 7 |
| ASIAN | 34 | 39 | 19 | 9 |
| BLACK | 27 | 50 | 9 | 14 |
| HISPANIC | 22 | 40 | 24 | 13 |

All numbers expressed in percentages. Some rows do not add up to 100, due to rounding error.

Source: **Survey of Likely Voters in Boston**. Poll of 600 respondents, one week before the November 2009 general election.

Conducted by Suffolk University for Stephen Ansolabehere, James Greiner, and Rachel Cobb.