

## Executive Summary

Northern New England, comprised of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, has the opportunity to plan carefully and intentionally so that the region is not plagued by problems of segregation and can instead benefit from the impending racial change and increased diversity to create and sustain diverse learning environments. There are no serious problems with segregation in northern New England yet, and those problems that do exist are modest and localized. Therefore, now is the optimal time for the region to reflect on what has occurred in southern New England and the rest of the United States, which were once as racially homogenous as northern New England but have since become more multiracial and more segregated. As northern New England is relatively early in the process of racial change, there are no significant responses to it yet. Without policies to harness racial change to create positive and successful diverse learning environments, segregation is likely to increase. In addition to the importance of planning for the future, children who are currently growing up in northern New England will need skills to navigate the rest of society, which is much more diverse, and should begin learning how to do so now. Thus, a close examination of these three states' educational histories and their patterns of demographic change in schools, along with policy recommendations, is essential to planning for a successful future for an increasingly diverse northern New England.

Although northern New England has long been a predominantly white area of the country, demographic change toward increasing multiracial diversity is underway in each of these three states, particularly in metropolitan areas. In this region, as in the rest of the nation, this trend seems likely to grow over time, creating an even more diverse region in the future. Two factors—increased immigration of nonwhite populations and lower reproductive rates among the white population—suggest that racial diversity will continue to grow in northern New England.<sup>1</sup>

In all three northern New England states, black, Latino, and Asian students are a growing share of student enrollment. Black, Latino, and Asian students tend to be concentrated in urban metropolitan areas and attend schools located in the community where they live. A large share of minority students are concentrated in the southeast corner of New Hampshire, with significant shares of immigrant and refugee students located in Manchester and Nashua. A similar situation exists in Vermont, where greater numbers of immigrants and English Learners (ELs) attend public schools in Burlington.<sup>2</sup> Beginning in the 1990s, refugees from Somali and Sudan as well as immigrants seeking asylum from central Africa have contributed to the increasing racial

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<sup>1</sup> Migration Policy Institute. (2013). *2011 American Community Survey and Census Data on the Foreign Born by State*. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/>; Martin, J.A., Hamilton, B.E., Ventura, S.J., Osterman, M. J. K., & Matthews, T. J. (2013). Births: Final Data for 2011, *National Vital Statistics Reports*, 62(1), 67-68. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

<sup>2</sup> Burlington School District. (2011, October). *Burlington School District recommended strategic plan for diversity, equity and inclusion*. (p. 1). Burlington, VT: Author.

diversity of Portland.<sup>3</sup> Since 2001, the secondary migration of Somalis to Lewiston, Maine has rapidly transformed the area into a significantly more racially diverse community.<sup>4</sup>

In each state, recent efforts have been made to address the needs of the growing numbers of minority students. In Vermont, the efforts are largely local; the state has not created programs or provided funding for specific programs targeted at minority students. However, the Burlington School Board commissioned a task force in 2010 with hopes to bridge the achievement gap between white and minority students and increase college access among those who have traditionally lacked it.<sup>5</sup> The task force plans to provide diversity training to teachers and enhance school climates through diverse staff and curricula. In Maine, the issue of a diverse campus climate surfaced with the Attorney General's development of the Civil Rights Team Project, in which students, staff, and faculty work together to plan programs that educate students, staff, and faculty about different cultures and backgrounds.<sup>6</sup> State efforts, coupled with federal funding, have also enabled New Hampshire to create more robust efforts to reach low-income and minority students. Through the federal College Access Challenge Grant, non-profit and state entities have channelled their efforts into providing college preparation resources, college counseling, and financial aid information to students who lack access to such resources.<sup>7</sup> Because of the state's growing numbers of ELs, the New Hampshire Department of Education plans to increase training for teachers, especially those who teach low-income, EL, and special needs students.<sup>8</sup>

Acknowledging the context in which schooling occurs in northern New England, this report investigates trends in school segregation in northern New England over the last two decades. Major findings in the report include:

### Maine

- The number of students enrolled in Maine's schools decreased over both of the last two decades to 183,427 students in 2010.
- In 2010, the racial composition of schools in Maine was slightly more diverse than it had been in 1989, with white students comprising 93% of student enrollment in 2010 compared to 98% in 1989; black, Latino, and mixed race students each accounted for 2% and Asian students comprised 1% of the total enrollment in 2010.
- In 2010, the typical white student attended a school that most closely reflected the overall racial composition of Maine's student enrollment.
- In 2010, the typical black student, who attended a school with, on average, 77% white classmates, was least exposed to white students.

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<sup>3</sup> Bell, T. (2012, April 2). Central Africans become city's fastest-growing immigrant group. *Portland Press Herald*. Retrieved from [http://www.pressherald.com/2012/04/02/for-havens-sake\\_2012-04-02/](http://www.pressherald.com/2012/04/02/for-havens-sake_2012-04-02/)

<sup>4</sup> Ellison, J. (2010, March 13). Lewiston, Maine, revived by Somali immigrants. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/lewiston-maine-revived-somali-immigrants-78475>

<sup>5</sup> Burlington School District, 1.

<sup>6</sup> Office of the Maine Attorney General. (2011). *History and philosophy of the Civil Rights Team Project*. Retrieved from [http://www.maine.gov/ag/civil\\_rights/history.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/ag/civil_rights/history.shtml)

<sup>7</sup> New Hampshire Department of Education (2012). *College access challenge grant*. Concord, NH: Author. Retrieved from [http://www.education.nh.gov/highered/college\\_access.htm](http://www.education.nh.gov/highered/college_access.htm)

<sup>8</sup> New Hampshire Department of Education (2011, September). *New Hampshire's equity plan*. (p. 1). Concord, NH: Author. Retrieved from [http://www.education.nh.gov/nclb/documents/equity\\_plan.pdf](http://www.education.nh.gov/nclb/documents/equity_plan.pdf)

- In 2010, 0.7% of the state's schools were majority minority (enrolling 50-100% minority students); Maine did not have any schools that were intensely segregated (enrolling 90-100% minority students) or apartheid schools (enrolling 99-100% minority students).
- The share of low-income students in Maine increased from 30% in 1999 to 43% in 2010.
- The typical black student had the highest exposure to low-income students and attended schools that were 50.5% low-income in 2010.
- In 2010, Maine's typical low-income student attended a school that was about 50% low-income while the typical middle-class student attended a school that was about 38% low-income; this disparity in exposure to low-income students by socioeconomic status decreased slightly from 1999 to 2010.

### **Portland Metropolitan Area**

- Schools in the Portland metro area were slightly more diverse than Maine's overall state student enrollment in 2010.
- In 2010, metro Portland's student enrollment was still overwhelmingly white with white students accounting for 91% of the total enrollment. The remaining student enrollment was 3% black, 2% Latino, 2% Asian, and 2% mixed.
- From 1989 to 2010, the white share of enrollment decreased in both urban and suburban schools in the Portland metro, but there was a greater decline in urban schools where white students, who comprised 90.5% of urban school enrollment in 1989, accounted for only 73.5% of urban school enrollment in 2010.
- In both urban and suburban schools, the black share of enrollment increased, though to a greater extent in urban schools; black students accounted for 3.1% of urban school enrollment in 1989 and 14.1% of urban school enrollment in 2010.
- The Latino share of enrollment increased in both urban and suburban schools as well. In 2010 Latino students accounted for 4.1% of the enrollment in urban schools and 1.4% in suburban schools.
- In 1989, all of the districts in the Portland metro were predominantly white; however, by 2010, this was no longer the case. Of the nine public school districts in the Portland metropolitan area, one of the districts could be characterized as racially diverse (enrolling 20-60% nonwhite students) in 2010.
- In 2010 in metro Portland, 3.7% of the schools could be categorized as multiracial, indicating they had any three races representing 10% or more of the total student enrollment, and approximately 1.8% of the metro's schools were majority minority, meaning their enrollments were at least 50% minority.
- The racial groups that had the largest share of students enrolled in multiracial schools were blacks and Asians; approximately 29% of each racial group's students were enrolled in the metro's multiracial schools in 2010.
- There were no schools that could be categorized as intensely segregated (90-100% minority) or apartheid (99-100% minority) schools.
- The share of low-income students in metro Portland increased from 22% in 1999 to 32% in 2010.
- In 2010, the typical low-income student attended a school that was 41% low income whereas the typical middle-class student attended a school that was 28% low income; the

gap in exposure to low-income students between the typical low-income and middle-class student decreased slightly over the last decade.

- The share of low-income students in multiracial schools, at 54.2%, was higher than the overall share of low-income students in the metro in 2010.
- The share of low-income students enrolled in majority minority schools was more than double that of the overall metro, reaching 75.8% in Portland's majority minority schools in 2010.

### **New Hampshire**

- New Hampshire's student enrollment increased from 1989 to 1999 but then decreased in the following decade from 1999 to 2010 to reach 194,001 students in 2010.
- In 2010, the racial composition of schools in New Hampshire was slightly more racially diverse than it had been in 1989. The state's 2010 student enrollment was 90% white, 4% Latino, 3% Asian, 2% black, and 1% mixed.
- In 2010, the typical white student attended a school that most closely reflected the overall racial composition of New Hampshire's student enrollment while the typical black, Latino, and Asian students attended schools with larger shares of same-race peers.
- In 2010, of all racial groups, the typical Latino student was exposed to the smallest share of white students, 75.9%.
- The share of low-income students in New Hampshire increased from 16% in 1999 to 25% in 2010.
- The typical Latino student was exposed to the highest share of low-income students, attending a school with an average 39% low-income students in 2010.
- In 2010, New Hampshire's typical low-income student attended a school with over one-third low-income students while the typical middle-class student attended a school that was about one-fifth low-income; this disparity has grown slightly larger over the last decade.

### **Manchester-Nashua Region**

- Schools in the Manchester-Nashua region were slightly more diverse than New Hampshire's overall state student enrollment in 2010.
- In 2010, student enrollment in the region was still overwhelmingly white at 88% of the total enrollment; the remaining enrollment was 5% Latino, 3% Asian, 2% black, and 2% mixed.
- From 1989 to 2010, the white share of enrollment decreased in both urban and suburban schools but there was a greater decline in urban schools; white students accounted for 69.7% of urban schools and 91.6% of suburban schools in 2010.
- In both urban and suburban schools, the Latino share of enrollment increased though to a greater extent in urban schools; Latino students accounted for 15.1% of urban school enrollment and 2.5% of suburban school enrollment in the region. The same pattern is true for the black share of enrollment; black students accounted for 6.2% of urban schools and 1.4% of suburban schools in 2010.
- In 1989, all of the districts in the Manchester-Nashua region were predominantly white; however, by 2010, 2 of 53 districts—or 3.8% of Manchester-Nashua's districts—could be

categorized as diverse, indicating the districts enroll between 20% and 60% nonwhite students.

- In 2010 in the Manchester-Nashua region, 3.8% of the region's schools could be categorized as multiracial, indicating they have any three races representing 10% or more of the total student enrollment, and 1.7% of the metro's schools are majority minority, meaning their enrollments are at least 50% minority.
- In 2010, the racial groups with the largest shares of students attending multiracial schools were black students (16.0%) and Latino students (12.7%).
- None of the region's schools could be categorized as intensely segregated (90-100% minority) or apartheid (99-100% minority) schools.
- The share of low-income students in the Manchester-Nashua region increased from 14% in 1999 to 23% in 2010.
- In 2010, the typical low-income student attended a school with over one-third low-income students while the typical middle-class student attended a school that was about one-fifth low-income; this gap has expanded slightly over the last decade.
- The share of low-income students in multiracial schools (61.1%) was almost triple that of the metro's overall share of low-income students; the share of low-income students in majority minority schools (84.9%) was even greater, reaching a level almost four times as high as that of the overall region.

### **Vermont**

- The size of Vermont's student enrollment increased from 1989 to 1999 but then decreased in the following decade from 1999 to 2010 to reach a two-decade low of 85,131.
- In 2010, the racial composition of schools in Vermont was slightly more diverse than it had been in 1989.
- White students comprised the majority of Vermont's student enrollment at 93%, followed by black, Asian, and mixed students each with 2% of the total enrollment and Latino students accounting for 1% of the state's enrollment.
- In 2010, Vermont's typical white student attended a school that most closely reflected the overall racial composition of the state's student enrollment while the typical black, Asian, and Latino students attended schools with larger shares of same-race peers.
- In 2010, black students in Vermont were the racial group that was least exposed to white students, attending schools, on average, with 81.8% white students.
- The share of low-income students in Vermont increased from 23% in 1999 to 37% in 2010.
- In 2010, Vermont's black students tended to have the highest exposure to low-income students, attending schools, on average, with 45% low-income students.
- In 2010, Vermont's typical low-income student attended a school with about 44% low-income students while the state's typical middle-class student attended a school that was about 32% low-income; this gap has grown slightly larger over the last decade.

### **Burlington Metropolitan Area**

- In 2010, Burlington metro area schools were slightly more diverse than the overall student enrollment in Vermont.
- Student enrollment in the Burlington metro was still overwhelmingly white in 2010 with white students accounting for around 88% of the total enrollment; the rest of the enrollment is 4% mixed, 3% black, 3% Asian, and 1% Latino.
- From 1989 to 2010, the white share of enrollment decreased in both urban and suburban schools but there was a greater decline in urban schools.
- In both urban and suburban schools, the black share of enrollment increased though to a greater extent in urban schools.
- The Latino and Asian shares of enrollment increased in both urban and suburban schools as well.
- In 1989, all of the school districts in metro Burlington were predominantly white; however, by 2010, 2 of the metro's 17 school districts could be categorized as diverse, indicating an enrollment of 20-60% nonwhite students.
- In 2010, 5.5% of the region's schools were multiracial and none of the the region's schools could be categorized as majority minority (50-100% minority), intensely segregated (90-100% minority), or apartheid (99-100% minority) schools.
- The racial groups that have the most significant share of students enrolled in multiracial schools are black and Asian students; approximately one in three black students and one in four Asian students attended a multiracial school in 2010.
- The share of low-income students in metro Burlington increased from 18% in 1999 to 30% in 2010.
- In 2010, the typical low-income student attended a school with about 42% low-income students while the typical middle-class student attended a school that was about 25% low-income; this disparity has become slightly larger over the last decade.
- The share of low-income students in multiracial schools was more than double (64.5%) that of the metro's overall share of low-income students (30%).

This report provides multiple recommendations for those who are seeking to address racial change and the potential for racial integration in northern New England's schools:

### **State Education Policies**

- State-level policies should provide guidance regarding ways districts can create student assignment policies that foster diverse schools.
- State-level policies should provide a framework for developing and supporting inter-district programs in the form of city-suburban transfers and regional magnet schools, and states should play a role in setting up such schools.
- In Maine and Vermont, town-tuitioning policies should include civil rights standards, such as providing transportation to all students, no admissions requirements, making information accessible to parents, and including diversity goals.
- States should require that districts report to the state on diversity-related matters for both traditional public and charter schools in Maine and New Hampshire.
- Charter schools should be authorized only if they adopt civil rights standards, and state and local officials should work to promote diversity in charter school enrollments, in part

by encouraging extensive outreach to diverse communities, facilitating interdistrict enrollment, and providing free transportation.

- Policies should also consider how to recruit a diverse teaching staff and states should set credentialing standards for training a more diverse teaching force.
- New teachers should be prepared through training and professional development for working with more diverse student populations, including English Learners.

### **State and Local Housing Policies**

- Fair housing agencies and state and local housing officials need to regularly audit discrimination in housing markets and bring prosecutions for violations.
- Housing officials need to strengthen and enforce site selection policies for projects receiving direct federal funding or tax credit subsidies so that they support integrated schools rather than foster segregation.

### **School Districts**

- To avoid segregation, districts should develop policies that consider race among other factors in creating diverse schools.
- Magnet schools and transfer programs within district borders can be used to promote more racially integrated schools.
- New Hampshire should build diversity goals into magnet school policies, and Burlington School District, which opened its first two magnet schools in 2009 and included diversity goals, should expand upon this early success.
- Gathering data about the experiences of students who are attending increasingly diverse schools and their schools' climate is essential, as is underway in Portland, Maine (this process is described later in the report); this information should be used to inform appropriate policies at the school and district levels.

### **Local Organizations and Individuals**

- Civil rights organizations and community organizations should study the existing trends and observe and participate in political and community processes and action related to boundary changes, school siting decisions, and other key policies that make schools more segregated or more integrated.
- Community institutions and churches need to facilitate conversations about the values of diverse education and help raise community awareness about its benefits.
- Local educational organizations and neighborhood associations should vigorously promote diverse communities and schools as highly desirable places to live and learn.
- Local journalists should investigate and report on the relationships between segregation and unequal educational outcomes and the emergence of high quality, diverse schools.
- Institutions of higher education can also influence the development of more diverse K-12 schools by informing students and families that their institutions are diverse and that students who have not been in diverse K-12 educational settings might be unprepared for the experiences they will encounter at such institutions of higher education.