Spaces of Inclusion?

Teachers' Perceptions of School Communities with Differing Student Racial & Socioeconomic Contexts

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American demographics are shifting, most notably among our student population (G. Orfield, 2009). The proportion of white student enrollment has steadily decreased since the 1960s, from approximately 80% of students to 56% today (G. Orfield, 2009). In the South and the West – two of the most populous regions in the country – schools report nonwhite majorities (G. Orfield, 2009). This growing diversity brings new opportunities and challenges for educators seeking to create healthy, inclusive learning environments in the 21st century.

The racial transformation of students affects a broad cross-section of schools, with a particular impact on suburban school districts experiencing rapid transition. More Latino, black and Asian families have either migrated to suburban areas from the central city, or have chosen to settle immediately in suburban communities (Pollard & Mather, 2008; Frey, 2001).

Meanwhile, as school enrollments begin to reflect a growing nonwhite population, America's teaching force remains remarkably homogenous—a full 83% of educators are white (Boser, 2011). The juxtaposition between the changing complexion of U.S. educational systems and their predominately white teaching corps may complicate critical relationships between schools, families and the broader community (Pollock, 2008).

Overarching shifting student enrollment patterns, which have in many cases fashioned schools with some degree of racial diversity, is an important distinction. Scholars have long differentiated between desegregation – placing students of different races and ethnicities in contact with one another – and true integration, where those students engage in meaningful, equal status relationships (Allport, 1954; Slavin, 1995; powell, 2005). Today, the rapid pace of racial transition in American schools calls for renewed attention to the structures and dynamics of quality, integrated education.

Research continues to confirm that myriad benefits for students of all races are linked to racially diverse schools—including more advanced critical thinking skills, an enhanced ability to adopt multiple perspectives, higher academic achievement and college attendance rates and more cross-racial friendships (see, e.g. Linn & Welner, 2007; Orfield, Frankenberg & Garces, 2008). All of these outcomes have become increasingly important in the globally linked, 21st century economy. On the other hand, racially and socioeconomically isolated schools continue to be associated with a variety of educational harms. Segregated schools are often linked to high drop-out rates, diminished access to high quality curriculum, and fewer highly qualified teachers (accompanied by rapid teacher turnover that compromises the stability of the school setting) (Balfanz & Letgers, 2004; Ladd & Vigdor, 2008; Orfield, Siegel-Hawley & Kucsera, 2011). Yet despite the highly disparate educational contexts related to school racial and socioeconomic composition—attributes of which are highlighted repeatedly by both white and nonwhite teachers in the following report—policy and law have done little to promote stable, diverse school settings over the past several decades.

Instead, accompanying the profound transition among the school-aged population is a set of policy initiatives that heavily sanction schools and teachers struggling to meet the needs of their students. We are in the midst of a national dialogue that, in many ways, vilifies the teaching force, even as it remains one of our most valuable resources in the continued effort to equalize educational opportunity (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Gándara & Contreras, 2010). Instead of providing support and incentives for teachers who commit to working in hard-to-staff and under-resourced schools, we have adopted punitive measures that may discourage or derail long-term commitments to building inclusive school communities. It has not always been this way, however.

A generation ago Congress passed legislation, known as the Emergency School Aid Act, to help train teachers and administrators to adapt school practices and build community support for newly desegregated schools (G. Orfield, 2007; 1978). Evaluations of the legislation provided evidence of its success (G. Orfield, 2007), but few subsequent comprehensive policy efforts have been focused on understanding issues that confront diverse schools. Now, as districts experience racial transition, teachers and administrators with little training for diversity must make daily choices on matters like outreach to families and communities, school discipline and addressing the academic needs of racially diverse students (Sleeter, 2007; Frankenberg & Siegel-Hawley, 2008). These varied decisions work together to structure students' schooling experience. As such, it is increasingly vital to grasp how differing levels of student diversity and stability are associated with factors that promote inclusive educational environments.

The following report[1] seeks to build on our contemporary understanding of these issues by exploring relationships between school racial and socioeconomic contexts and teachers' perceptions of positive school community indicators.

We examine the following research questions in our study:

- How do teachers perceive the fairness of internal school structures and procedures across different school contexts?
- How do teachers in schools of differing student racial and socioeconomic composition and stability perceive their relationship with school communities and families?
- How do teachers view student interracial outcomes in different racial and socioeconomic contexts, as well as in schools with varying levels of racial stability?
- Do teacher perceptions of internal and external school community indicators vary by race?

We find that the racial diversity and stability of schools is significantly related to the way teachers view many features associated with inclusive school environments. Schools with high percentages of underrepresented students of color and low income students are perceived by

[1] This report is the third in a series that has examined critical issues related to patterns of segregation among American teachers and their preparation for and understanding of racially changing schools and classrooms.

teachers of all races as less likely to have family and community support. By contrast, teachers in diverse schools with a white student majority, along with teachers in stably diverse learning environments, report more positive student relations and school-community relationships.

We also probe whether white and nonwhite teachers view factors related to the health of their school community in different ways. Nonwhite teachers in this sample are more likely than white teachers to perceive significant issues of discrimination on several key internal dimensions, including perceptions of racially disparate discipline practices and assignments to special education tracks. Heightened sensitivity to these critical elements could potentially push schools to reexamine their practices and shift policies towards more equitable communities, underscoring the importance of increasing the share of nonwhite teachers in our school systems.

Further study of the way other key education stakeholders—parents, students, and community members—interpret these external and internal school dynamics is much needed. Still, the findings from this report have important implications for federal, state and local policymakers committed to fostering healthy school-community relationships, training teachers for racially diverse classrooms and designing student assignment policies to promote stable, healthy and diverse school settings.

The first section of this paper describes the scope of the literature regarding the elements of inclusive school communities. It also explores the extent to which research documents the relationship between inclusivity and student body diversity. We then turn to a description of our findings, discussing both internal and external factors associated with inclusive educational environments. We close with a consideration of the implications of these findings for policy and practice.

What is an inclusive school community and why does it matter?

While this study adopts an expansive understanding of school inclusivity, the use of the term "inclusive" to describe educational communities has historical and legal origins in the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). IDEA required schools to provide the "least restrictive environment" to disabled students (Sailor, 2002). The legislation helped promote the practice of mainstreaming, or including students with disabilities in general education courses, thus necessitating an open conversation about strategies to make all students – regardless of their differences - feel welcome in their educational environment.

In a nation experiencing rapidly shifting demographics, a broadened definition of inclusive education is appropriate. Differences in ability--but also by race and ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, and class--are found in classrooms across the nation, and our teaching force must respond accordingly. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) developed a broader, 21st century definition of inclusion, maintaining that, "Inclusive schools are designed to secure children's basic human right to an individually, culturally and developmentally appropriate education and to eliminate social exclusion" (2000; Kugelmass, 2004). Today, inclusion encompasses an array of ideas related to structuring school environments in ways that benefit all students (Miles & Darling-Hammond, 1998).

In 1995, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) published a manual, *Creating an Inclusive School*, which drew upon existent literature to describe an educational environment that provides meaningful learning to all of its students. According to the editors of the revised manual, the structural tenets of inclusive schools include the following: "each student can and will learn and succeed, diversity enriches us all, students at risk can overcome the risk for failure through involvement in a thoughtful and caring community of learners and each student has unique contributions to offer to other learners" (Villa & Thousands, 2005). The manual offered concrete strategies to support teaching and learning in those organizational contexts.

Inclusive, diverse educational environments have been shown to have multiple social and academic benefits for students (Braddock, 2009; Linn & Welner, 2007; Mickelson & Bottia, 2010; Schofield, 1995; Wells & Crain, 1994). Yet simply serving a diverse student population does not guarantee the advantages associated with healthy, integrated schools. Relying on research studying healthy school communities, the National Education Association (NEA) has created "Keys to Excellence (KEYS)" to guide a variety of different types of schools around the country. The KEYS emphasize supportive family and community relationships, collaborative, student-centered and engaging learning activities and a shared to commitment to high goals and standards for all students.[2] Importantly, they envision a healthy school climate as one in which all families and students feel welcome and connected.

Recent studies underscore the critical importance of school climate in an era of racial transformation, asserting that it is associated with increased student learning, healthy development and the degree to which students and teachers feel emotionally and physically safe (Cohen et al., 2009; Freiberg, 1999). A school climate comprises the "patterns of people's experience of school life" and should be "reflective of norms, goals, values, [and] interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures" (National School Climate Council, 2007). Students, teachers and administrators experience the climate of school in a variety of ways, from being assigned to a seat in the back of the classroom to mediating a conflict between students of different backgrounds. Each daily moment in school is influenced by the decisions and actions of an interconnected community that, with appropriate measures, can be designed to serve all members more equitably.

While the relationship with the broader community and students' families is critical (we discuss further in the following section), school personnel have more control over what happens within their building. A considerable amount of research has focused on conditions that enhance learning of all kinds for students. For over fifty years, social scientists have known that benefits accrue most strongly in diverse settings containing structures designed to provide equal status for all groups. In a 2007 chapter synthesizing what social science has discovered about "diverse learning opportunities (DLOs)," Willis Hawley outlined a number of concrete strategies for developing the educational and social advantages embedded in diverse schools. These included ensuring that classroom diversity reflects overall building-level racial diversity, making an effort to group students heterogeneously by race and ability level within classrooms, structuring extracurricular activities in a manner that fosters interracial cooperation, employing a variety of

[2] For more information, see the NEA's "Keys to Excellence for Your Schools" at http://www.keysonline.org/.

teaching methods thought to facilitate learning in diverse environments, and providing strong administrative leadership supportive of diversity with fair discipline (see also Aboud & Levy, 2000; Oakes, 2005; Schofield, 2004).

Indicators of Inclusion

Building on the work described above, we summarize indicators of external and internal components of inclusive schools. We differentiate those indicators outside of school as "external" and those within school as "internal."

Leadership and teaching in diverse schools.

As noted above, one of the conditions for positive intergroup relationships focused on the importance of strong leadership modeling appropriate behavior in diverse settings (Allport, 1954). Designing fair and responsive school organizational structures is a first step; once in place, administrators are responsible for their implementation. Such structures might involve policies for dispersing students heterogeneously in classrooms (i.e. detracking), student discipline, handling perceived discrimination and interracial conflicts, implementing professional development focused on diversity, and taking action to reinforce the idea that working and learning with a diverse group of people is valuable and important (Hawley 2007; Banks et al., 2001). When executing policy, administrators and educators should be aware of the impact of verbal and nonverbal communication related to issues of diversity (Perry, 2008), taking steps to model an evenhanded concern for parties on all sides of a conflict.

Inclusive whole-school structures also extend to the classroom. Teachers play a central role in developing students' academic and social skills. They, like administrators, must serve as role models attuned to the benefits of positive interracial competency (Hawley, 2007). Research has documented the demographic disconnect between the racial/ethnic backgrounds of teachers and administrators, who are overwhelmingly white and female, and their increasingly diverse population of students (Sleeter, 2007; Frankenberg, 2006; Frankenberg & Siegel-Hawley, 2008). Recruiting and retaining a diverse staff can be one way of demonstrating support for the norms of intergroup contact.

Better training for teachers working in racially diverse classrooms is also a widely acknowledged necessity (Pollock, 2008; Au, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1994). In particular, training should include preparation for the academic needs of diverse students. Responsive instruction – teaching that uses the daily experiences of students to bridge the gap between prior knowledge and new content – is often cited as beneficial in diverse classrooms (Moll, 1990; Sailor, 2002). Acknowledging and taking action to further the idea that diversity, equity and excellence are interrelated and vital to the learning process should also be a fundamental premise of teaching in diverse schools (Sailor, 2002).

Family-community-school relationships.

The external context surrounding a school interacts in important ways with the instruction and learning occurring inside. Bringing the community into a school gives students access to

professional and college networks, makes schools and education central to the goals of a larger group of individuals and leads to a blending of home, work and school (Sanders, 2003). A number of studies have focused on the importance of valuing students' home cultures (Moll, 1992; Garcia, 2008; Hidago et al., 2003), finding that doing so extends to interactions with families and community members. Research overwhelmingly indicates that children benefit when their parents or guardians become involved in schooling (Comer, 2009, 1999; Epstein, 2001), ensuring that the "spheres of influence" in a child's life overlap to heighten the process of learning and development (Epstein, 2008). Fruitful interaction with families also provides teachers with an extra window into the lives and cultures of their students, helping educators understand the specific circumstances shaping the educational experiences of their charges.

A separate body of literature is devoted to understanding how to get families involved in education, with mounting evidence suggesting that schools should develop practices that help a diverse range of families feel welcome and comfortable (Epstein, 2008; Swap, 1993). These might involve holding parent-teacher conferences in the evening, providing school information in languages other than English and communicating regularly with families (Garcia, 2008). In inclusive environments, parents and guardians may feel more able to advocate for their children, to include meeting with school leaders regarding discipline, assignment to certain classes or testing issues (Seefeldt, et al., 1998). Given the positive relationship between active family engagement and student academic success (Henrich & Gadaire, 2008; Weiss, Caspe, & Lopez, 2006), it is important for educators to understand and consistently adopt strategies promoting inclusive partnerships between families, schools and communities.

Within a framework of an increasingly diverse student population, persistently high levels of racial isolation and a homogenous teaching force, broad questions of school inclusion continue to surface. This study examines internal and external factors of inclusion that encompass elements of daily life in schools and shape the way students and families experience the educational system. Adding to and expanding upon literature that suggests school climate is of critical importance to the social and academic well-being of students, we examine how climate is related to different levels of racial and socioeconomic diversity.

Data and Methods

In 2005, a group of school desegregation and teacher education experts convened with the goal of devising a survey to investigate teachers' beliefs and practices as they related to racial diversity. A 47-item survey emerged from those meetings, was pilot tested, and minor subsequent changes were made for clarity.

Using a sample list of 25,000 teachers randomly generated from teacher union membership lists, a survey firm carried out the telephone questionnaire. Seventy-seven percent of teachers contacted agreed to participate in the survey, of those, 48% were qualified and completed the survey.[3] Sixty percent of the final sample came from diverse schools, which were

[3] The lower percentage of people completing the survey could be because counselors and administrators are also union members.

oversampled due to the project's focus.[4] The final dataset included confidential responses from 1,002 public school teachers in 48 states. School enrollment figures from the 2005-06 NCES Common Core of Data were merged with teachers' survey responses to obtain information about student demographics. The characteristics of teachers in the sample are roughly similar to those of the national teaching force (see Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of teachers in sample and all public school teachers

	Sample	National
Years as a teacher (average)	16.9	14
Novice teachers (<3 years)	9.8%	17.8%
New at current school (<3 yrs)	24.9%	42.8%
Race[5]: Non-Latino White	85.0%	83.1%
Non-Latino Black	5.7%	7.9%
Latino	4.0%	6.2%
Multiracial	2.3%	0.7%
Asian	1.4%	1.3%
Age (average)	45.6	42.5
Female	79.5%	75%
Bachelors or less was highest degree	40.5%	51.9%
Certification in subject taught	96.2%	87.3%

Source: "Teaching in Multi-Racial Schools" survey questions 1a, 1b, 2, 3, 45, 46, 47a, 47b, & 48; National numbers from 2003-04 Schools and Staffing Survey, NCES 2006-313.

Survey Dimensions and Definitions of School Contexts

In the following section, we describe the survey questions used in order to examine both external and internal indicators associated with inclusive school climates (Aboud & Levy, 2000; Hawley, 2007; Oakes, 2010; Schofield, 2004).

Internal Factors

We defined internal factors as those that relate to leadership, policies, and intergroup relationships within the school. They include the following dimensions.

1. *Administration, teachers and diversity issues:*
    a. Student discipline issues are dealt with in ways that are fair and guard against racial/ethnic discrimination.

[4] A diverse school, for sampling purposes, is one in which African-American and Latino students are between 10 and 90% of the school's enrollment according to teacher estimates.

[5] The racial/ethnic categories in this survey are different from how teachers were categorized by NCES's Schools & Staffing Survey. There were also 6 teachers that identified as Native American, 2 as other, and 8 refused to identify their race or ethnicity. Due to the small numbers of each, when analyzing responses by teacher race, these categories are not included below.

b. When diversity issues arise at school, they are dealt with in an effective way by the school administration.
c. Teachers have the ability to address the academic needs of students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.
d. Racial/ethnic disparities in assignment to special education classes are significant.

2. *Student outcomes:*

a. Students of different racial/ethnic and socio-economic (SES) backgrounds mix together in extracurricular activities.
b. Students choose to socialize primarily with members of their own racial/ethnic or SES background.
c. Tensions between students of different races and cultures are significant.

External Factors

We labeled external factors as those that involve relationships or circumstances beyond the confines of the school building. We examine the following external indicators.

1. *Teacher-family relationships:*

a. Teachers believe families actively participate in their children's education.
b. Teachers believe that family support is important.

2. *Teachers' skills working with families:*

a. Teachers are comfortable working with families of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.
b. Teachers work hard to build trust with families of different racial/ethnic backgrounds and families who don't speak English.

3. *Community context:*

a. Teachers believe that the local community actively supports school.
b. Teachers feel physically safe coming to and from school.

Stable Diversity versus Racial Transition

The racial and socioeconomic composition of school communities varies widely by locale and has implications for both internal and external educational factors. One important dimension of diversity relates to the *stability* of a school's racial/ethnic composition. Racial transition in schools occurs gradually at first, with incoming kindergarten and first graders signaling a shift in enrollment patterns. Some research indicates that white parents have a fairly low threshold for an increasing minority enrollment (Frankenberg, 2009; M. Orfield, 2002), which then triggers an accelerated rate of transition as whites leave the school.

Stably integrated schools are somewhat rare; accounting for about a quarter of schools nationwide (Frankenberg, 2008). Teachers, administrators and students may experience issues of diversity differently in stable environments, compared to students and staff at schools in racial transition. In fact, some research indicates that stable, diverse neighborhoods and learning

environments are associated with more positive indicators, including higher educational and occupational attainment (G. Orfield, 1985). Schools transitioning to minority segregated learning environments, on the other hand, are much more likely to be associated with negative factors like high levels of teacher turnover (Jackson, 2009).

Measures of stability relied on the fluctuations of white students and were structured according to the following definition: rapid racially changing schools were schools in which the decline in the share of white students was more than three times the average rate for the district over a decade, while stably diverse schools were defined as diverse schools with slow or average racial change. In addition to racial composition, we also examined student poverty concentration. We relied upon the percentage of students qualifying for free- and reduced-priced lunch as a rough proxy for relative student poverty. Though research has shown eligibility for free and reduced priced lunch to be somewhat problematic (Harwell & LeBeau, 2010), it is still widely used due to the easy availability of the data.

External and internal school factors were cross-tabulated with measures of student racial and SES composition and demographic stability (see Table 2) in an effort to explore the relationship between indicators of inclusion and different school contexts.

Table 2: Definitions of differing school contexts

Racial Composition	
Racially diverse	Two or more racial groups are at least 10% of enrollment
Multiracial	Three or more racial groups are at least 10% of the enrollment
Biracial	Two or more racial groups are at least 10% of the enrollment
Segregated white	Homogeneous white (90-100% white students)
Segregated non-white	Homogeneous non-white (90-100% non-white students)
Categories of white students	0-25%, 25-50%, 50-75%, 75-100% white students
Poverty Composition	
Categories of students qualifying for free- or reduced-priced lunch (e.g. 0-10%, 10-25%, 25-50%, 50-100% poor students)	
Demographic Stability	
Rapid racial transition	Decline in white percentage of school by at least 18 percentage points in 10 years
Stable and racially diverse	Racially diverse school in which the white percentage of school declined between zero and twelve percentage points in 10 years

Findings

We first examine internal factors related to inclusive school communities, including issues of teaching and leadership, school discipline and tracking. The second portion of the findings section discusses external indicators of school inclusivity, looking specifically at interactions between school personnel, student families and the surrounding community. At the end of both sections, we examine whether teachers' perceptions of internal and external indicators vary by the race of the instructor.

Internal Indicators of Inclusion

Administration, teachers and diversity issues

The atmosphere within a school is shaped by many factors, including discipline policy, how school leaders handle issues that arise with diversity, teaching practices and the perception of ability tracking. Conceivably, if these internal indicators *do* foster inclusiveness, students will be more likely to report cross-racial friendships and demonstrate less of a propensity towards self-segregation (Hawley, 2007; Allport, 1954). Teachers responding to the survey were asked a variety of questions regarding internal school policies and practices, and their responses are cross-tabulated with different school racial and socioeconomic contexts below. Many of the questions in this section were only asked of a subset of teachers who reported that their school was diverse (e.g., between 10 and 90% of students were black and Latino).

Since 1968, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights has collected statistics on suspension and expulsion rates – among other variables – by racial/ethnic group. These survey results persistently document racially disparate discipline practices for students of color around the country (see OCR Civil Rights Compliance Reports, 1968-2004). Many of those trends were replicated in our survey responses.

Teachers in this sample were asked to respond to the question, "Do you think your school administration responds to diversity issues effectively?" According to their answers, teachers in schools with the highest percentages of black and Latino students (where these groups comprised 80-100% of the student population) reported more frequently that the administration only sometimes or rarely dealt effectively with diversity issues (Table 3). For example, more than 11% of teachers in 90-100% minority schools were skeptical of administration's efforts, compared to 2.8% of all teachers who responded "never" or "rarely." While the differences between responses were not significant, they point towards teachers' perceptions of more effective administrations in diverse, majority white schools.

Table 3: Teachers believe administration effectively deals with diversity issues by percentage of black and Latino students

Admin. effectively deals with diversity issues		Deciles of Black & Latino students										Total
		0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-100 %	
Never or rarely	N	3	1	1	2	1	2	4	0	3	2	19
	%	3.4%	.9%	1.0%	2.7%	1.8%	3.7%	10.0 %	.0%	11.1 %	11.8 %	2.8%
Sometimes	N	12	16	10	11	5	6	1	8	5	4	78
	%	13.5 %	14.4 %	10.4 %	15.1 %	8.9%	11.1 %	2.5%	23.5 %	18.5 %	23.5 %	13.1 %
Often	N	28	40	37	21	27	16	15	14	5	1	204
	%	31.5 %	36.0 %	38.5 %	28.8 %	48.2 %	29.6 %	37.5 %	41.2 %	18.5 %	5.9%	34.2 %
Always	N	44	51	47	36	23	28	20	12	13	9	283
	%	49.4 %	45.9 %	49.0 %	49.3 %	41.1 %	51.9 %	50.0 %	35.3 %	48.1 %	52.9 %	47.4 %
Don't Know	N	2	3	1	3	0	2	0	0	1	1	13
	%	2.2%	2.7%	1.0%	4.1%	.0%	3.7%	.0%	.0%	3.7%	5.9%	2.2%
Total	N	89	111	96	73	56	54	40	34	27	17	597
	%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%	100. 0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21f, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, no significant differences.

Strong leadership that arbitrates diversity issues in a fair and consistent matter is another important element of school inclusivity. While differences between categories of schools were not significant, much lower percentages of teachers in multiracial schools were likely to think that the administration always dealt effectively with diversity efforts, in comparison to teachers in one-race or two-race schools. Nearly twenty percent of teachers in multiracial schools regarded their administration's efforts as only effective sometimes, or even less frequently (Table 4). These patterns could portend difficulties for schools around the country that are rapidly becoming more diverse.

Table 4: Teachers believe administration effectively deals with diversity issues by level of school diversity

Administration effectively deals with diversity issues		Level of School Diversity			
		One race	Two racial groups	Three or more races	Total
Never or rarely	Number	3	8	8	19
	%	2.9%	2.5%	4.4%	2.8%
Sometimes	Number	17	36	26	79
	%	16.7%	11.4%	14.3%	13.2%
Often	Number	31	102	71	204
	%	30.4%	32.3%	39.0%	34.0%
Always	Number	50	160	74	284
	%	49.0%	50.6%	40.7%	47.3%
Don't Know	Number	1	10	3	14
	%	1.0%	3.2%	1.6%	2.3%
Total	Number	102	316	182	600
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21f, no significant differences, $p<.05$

Teachers in low-poverty schools were mostly likely to agree that discipline was dealt with fairly across racial-ethnic lines. And while there were not many low-poverty, diverse schools, 75% of teachers in those settings perceived discipline as fair. By contrast, around 64% of teachers in schools where 10-50% of students were poor always believed that administrators handled discipline fairly (Table 5). One in nine teachers in high-poverty schools agreed that discipline was fair across racial-ethnic lines "sometimes" or even less frequently. This figure was the highest of teachers in any category of schools, meaning that teachers' perceptions of racial/ethnic disparities in discipline practices occur more commonly in schools of concentrated poverty.

Table 5: Teachers believe discipline issues are dealt with fairly by levels of student poverty

Discipline issues are dealt with in ways that are fair and guard against racial or ethnic discrimination		Categories of student poverty (% FRL)				**Total**
		0-10%	10-25%	25-50%	50-100%	
Never or rarely	Number	0	0	3	4	7
	%	.0%	.0%	1.5%	1.8%	1.2%
Sometimes	Number	1	9	16	21	47
	%	2.5%	7.9%	7.8%	9.6%	8.1%
Often	Number	8	31	51	48	138
	%	20.0%	27.2%	24.9%	22.0%	23.9%
Always	Number	30	72	133	144	379
	%	75.0%	63.2%	64.9%	66.1%	65.7%
Don't Know	Number	1	2	2	1	6
	%	2.5%	1.8%	1.0%	.5%	1.0%
Total	Number	40	114	205	218	577
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21c, no significant differences.

The practice of disparately tracking students of different racial/ethnic groups into higher or lower levels of instruction is widely recognized as a barrier to educational equity (see generally Oakes, 1995). Teachers – who may or may not be privy to school data regarding special education enrollment by race – were asked to report observed patterns within their school. The table below reveals that teachers in majority white schools were most likely to think that disparities in racial/ethnic assignment to special education were not at all significant (Table 6). Diverse schools where white students made up more than a quarter of student body - but less than three-quarters – were perceived by teachers as having the most significant issues with racially disparate special education assignments.

Table 6: Teachers perceive racial disparities in special education assignment by percentage of white students

Racial and ethnic disparities in assignment to special education classes		Categories of students (% white)				
		0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%	Total
Not at all Significant	Number	36	45	49	76	206
	%	38.3%	32.6%	27.8%	40.2%	34.5%
Not too Significant	Number	24	32	58	64	178
	%	25.5%	23.2%	33.0%	33.9%	29.8%
Somewhat Significant	Number	11	26	30	22	89
	%	11.7%	18.8%	17.0%	11.6%	14.9%
Significant	Number	10	15	24	14	63
	%	10.6%	10.9%	13.6%	7.4%	10.6%
Very Significant	Number	5	7	6	5	23
	%	5.3%	5.1%	3.4%	2.6%	3.9%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	8	13	9	8	38
	%	8.5%	9.4%	5.1%	4.2%	6.4%
Total	Number	94	138	176	189	597
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22e, NCES Common Core of Data, no significant differences.

Teachers' perceptions of disparate special education assignments and school poverty levels also appeared inter-related. Educators in high poverty schools were most likely to think that racial-ethnic disparities in special education were very significant, while those in the lowest-poverty schools were most likely to report that special education disparities were not very significant (Table 7). Teachers in schools where 10-25% of students were eligible for FRL frequently adopted a middle ground, viewing special education disparities as either somewhat significant (19.3%) or not too significant (41.2%). Teachers in these majority middle-class schools were, in fact, the least likely to perceive racial/ethnic disparities as significant.

Table 7: Teachers perceive racial disparities in special education assignment by levels of student poverty

Racial and ethnic disparities in assignment to special education classes		Categories of student poverty (% FRL)				
		0-10%	10-25%	25-50%	50-100%	Total
Not at all Significant	Number	13	30	77	77	197
	%	32.5%	26.3%	37.6%	35.3%	34.1%
Not too Significant	Number	16	47	51	59	173
	%	40.0%	41.2%	24.9%	27.1%	30.0%
Somewhat Significant	Number	3	22	31	31	87
	%	7.5%	19.3%	15.1%	14.2%	15.1%
Significant	Number	5	8	25	22	60
	%	12.5%	7.0%	12.2%	10.1%	10.4%
Very Significant	Number	0	3	6	13	22
	%	.0%	2.6%	2.9%	6.0%	3.8%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	3	4	15	16	38
	%	7.5%	3.5%	7.3%	7.3%	6.6%
Total	Number	40	114	205	218	577
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22e, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.05

We examined teachers' perceptions of their fellow faculty members' ability to meet the academic needs of a diverse group of students.[6] The growing nonwhite student population means that many teachers are confronted with racially diverse classrooms for perhaps the first time in the careers. Further, many white educators report few diverse experiences in their own educational experiences (Frankenberg, 2009); leaving them with little prior knowledge to draw upon. Beyond teachers' own assessments of their readiness and preparation to successfully address the needs of a diverse group of students, faculty members were asked to evaluate their peers' performance in this arena. Importantly, teachers in schools with the highest shares of white students were the least likely to report that teachers at their school were "always" able to address the needs of students from racially diverse backgrounds (see Table 8). Fully 27% of teachers in these schools thought other faculty members were only sometimes or rarely able to teach students from all races and ethnicities. By contrast, teachers with the fewest white students were the most likely to report that teachers were able to address the needs of all students. Nearly half of teachers in high minority schools had such confidence in their faculty peers.

[6] For this question, we included the responses of all teachers surveyed, to include those working in non-diverse schools.

Table 8: Teachers believe they can address academic needs of diverse students by percentage of white students

Teachers can address academic needs of students with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds		Categories of students (% white)				
		0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%	Total
Never or rarely	Number	5	1	3	37	46
	%	3.7%	.7%	1.6%	6.9%	4.6%
Sometimes	Number	17	21	29	108	175
	%	12.7%	14.1%	15.9%	20.2%	17.5%
Often	Number	51	68	89	236	444
	%	38.1%	45.6%	48.9%	44.2%	44.4%
Always	Number	61	58	61	144	324
	%	45.5%	38.9%	33.5%	27.0%	32.4%
Don't Know	Number	0	1	0	9	10
	%	.0%	.7%	.0%	1.7%	1.0%
Total	Number	134	149	182	534	999
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21b, NCES Common Core of Data 2005-06, p<.001

Similar but more extreme trends emerged in intensely segregated schools. In settings with highly concentrated white enrollments, 23% of teachers reported fellow faculty members were "always" able to address the needs of diverse students (Table 9). These numbers are concerning: demographic changes indicate that many of these white segregated schools are becoming increasingly diverse (G. Orfield, 2009), even as faculty report they are not prepared to teach children of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. On the other end of the spectrum, nearly half of teachers in intensely segregated minority schools believed that teachers in their school were able to address the needs of students of all races.

Table 9: Teachers believe they can address academic needs of diverse students by level of segregation

Teachers can address academic needs of students with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds		School was white segregated (90-100% white)*			School was minority segregated (0-10% white)**	
		No	Yes	Total	No	Yes
Never or rarely	Number	14	32	46	43	3
	%	2.00%	11.10%	4.60%	4.60%	4.00%
Sometimes	Number	103	72	175	166	9
	%	14.40%	25.10%	17.50%	17.90%	12.00%
Often	Number	337	109	446	420	26
	%	47.10%	38.00%	44.50%	45.30%	34.70%
Always	Number	259	66	325	288	37
	%	36.20%	23.00%	32.40%	31.10%	49.30%
Don't Know	Number	2	8	10	10	0
	%	0.30%	2.80%	1.00%	1.10%	0.00%
Total	Number	715	287	1002	927	75
	%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21b, NCSE Common Core of Data, *p<.05, **p<.001

As seen above, teachers in schools with higher percentages of students of color were more likely to think their peers could address the needs of students from all racial-ethnic backgrounds. Yet, compared to teachers in schools with two racial groups, teachers in multiracial schools were less likely to think that their faculty peers could always address the needs of racially diverse students (see Table 10). Teachers in one-race schools were least likely to believe that their faculty peers could address the needs of students from diverse backgrounds, which may be related to their familiarity—particularly in all-white settings—with teaching an homogenous group of students.

Table 10: Teachers believe they can address academic needs of diverse students by level of school diversity

Teachers can address academic needs of students with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds		School Diversity Levels			
		One race	Two racial groups	Three or more races	Total
Never or rarely	Number	38	5	3	46
	%	8.6%	1.3%	1.6%	4.6%
Sometimes	Number	92	55	28	175
	%	20.9%	14.7%	15.0%	17.5%
Often	Number	179	173	93	445
	%	40.6%	46.4%	49.7%	44.5%
Always	Number	124	139	62	325
	%	28.1%	37.3%	33.2%	32.5%
Don't Know	Number	8	1	1	10
	%	1.8%	.3%	.5%	1.0%
Total	Number	441	373	187	1001
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21b, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.001

We also explored whether or not schools that had been diverse over time were environments where teachers felt more secure that faculty could address the needs of racially diverse students. Notably, teachers in stably diverse schools (racially diverse schools in which the white percentage of school declined between zero and twelve percentage points in 10 years) were more likely to think that their faculty peers could address students from all races and ethnicities. Almost 85% of teachers in stable, diverse schools thought that teachers could often or always educate diverse students (compared to 73% of teachers in all other schools). Further, less than 1% of teachers in stably diverse schools reported that teachers could rarely or never address the needs of diverse students, while 7% of all other teachers perceived a similar lack of ability (see Table 11). This is likely due to the fact that these schools have served diverse populations longer and have therefore given teachers the opportunity to adapt their teaching practices accordingly.

Table 11: Teachers believe they can address academic needs of diverse students by racial stability of school

		Teachers can address academic needs of students with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds						
		Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't Know	Total
School is not stably diverse	Number	7	34	115	257	183	9	605
	%	1.2%	5.6%	19.0%	42.5%	30.2%	1.5%	100.0%
School is stably diverse	Number	0	3	53	174	131	1	362
	%	0%	0.8%	14.6%	48.1%	36.2%	0.3%	100.0%
Total	Number	7	37	168	431	314	10	967
	%	0.7%	3.8%	17.4%	44.6%	32.5%	1.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21b, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06 p<.001

Inter-racial contact among students

The internal school indicators described in this section help reveal the overall school climate. Contact between students of different racial groups is likely influenced by the degree of community and inclusivity within that climate. As such, the following section examines students' friendships and tensions in diverse educational settings.

Early studies of school desegregation noted that extracurricular activities provided students with important opportunities for the formation of cross racial friendships (Hawley, 2007). We see that teachers in racially diverse, majority white schools are most likely to report that students mix together in extra-curricular activities (Table 12). Though a majority of teachers reported inter-group contact, higher shares of teachers perceiving that students only rarely or sometimes interacted in extracurricular activities worked in schools where more than 50% of the students were from underrepresented racial backgrounds.

Table 12: Teachers believe students of different racial or socioeconomic backgrounds mix together in extracurricular activities by percentage of white students

Students of different racial, ethnic, or socio-economic groups mix together in extra-curricular activities		Categories of students (% white)				
		0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%	Total
Never or rarely	N	4	7	3	3	17
	%	4.3%	5.1%	1.7%	1.6%	2.8%
Sometimes	N	12	21	23	21	77
	%	12.8%	15.2%	13.1%	11.1%	12.9%
Often	N	26	39	57	65	187
	%	27.7%	28.3%	32.4%	34.4%	31.3%
Always	N	49	69	91	95	304
	%	52.1%	50.0%	51.7%	50.3%	50.9%
Don't Know	N	3	2	2	5	12
	%	3.2%	1.4%	1.1%	2.6%	2.0%
Total	N	94	138	176	189	597
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21d, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.10

Teacher reports of the propensity for students to mix together also varied by school poverty levels. Educators in schools of moderate to high levels of poverty (where more than 25% of students were eligible for free and reduced lunch prices) were most likely to say that students rarely or sometimes mixed. By contrast, teachers in low-poverty schools were the most likely to say that students always interacted in extracurricular activities (see Table 13). This may be due to a larger number of extracurricular offerings at low-poverty schools.

Table 13: Teachers believe students of different racial or socioeconomic backgrounds mix together in extracurricular activities by levels of student poverty

Students of different racial, ethnic, or socio-economic groups mix together in extra-curricular activities		Categories of student poverty (% FRL)				
		0-10%	10-25%	25-50%	50-100%	Total
Never or rarely	Number	0	2	6	9	17
	%	.0%	1.8%	2.9%	4.1%	2.9%
Sometimes	Number	2	10	26	36	74
	%	5.0%	8.8%	12.7%	16.5%	12.8%
Often	Number	13	40	72	53	178
	%	32.5%	35.1%	35.1%	24.3%	30.8%
Always	Number	24	60	95	117	296
	%	60.0%	52.6%	46.3%	53.7%	51.3%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	1	2	6	3	12
	%	2.5%	1.8%	2.9%	1.4%	2.1%
Total	Number	40	114	205	218	577
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21d, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, no significant differences.

Opposing patterns emerge when examining teachers' perceptions of student self-segregation, or the extent to which students chose to associate with members of their own racial or socioeconomic group. Here we see lower percentages of teachers perceiving that students often self-segregate in schools with higher percentages of low-income students (Table 14). Interestingly, teachers in high poverty schools (where more than half of the student body was FRL-eligible) were most likely to think that students always self-segregated, but teachers in these same schools were also most likely to say that students never or rarely did so. Differing school climate characteristics - like the experience and stability of staff or funding levels in the district - in high poverty schools may account for this less than clear pattern.

Table 14: Teachers perceive that students choose to socialize with members of own racial or socioeconomic group by levels of student poverty

Students choose to socialize with members of their own racial, ethnic, or socio-economic group		Categories of student poverty (% FRL)				
		0-10%	10-25%	25-50%	50-100%	Total
Never or rarely	Number	4	11	31	30	76
	%	10.0%	9.6%	15.1%	13.8%	13.2%
Sometimes	Number	13	48	71	87	219
	%	32.5%	42.1%	34.6%	39.9%	38.0%
Often	Number	22	51	92	79	244
	%	55.0%	44.7%	44.9%	36.2%	42.3%
Always	Number	1	3	9	21	34
	%	2.5%	2.6%	4.4%	9.6%	5.9%
Don't Know	Number	0	1	2	1	4
	%	.0%	.9%	1.0%	.5%	.7%
Total	Number	40	114	205	218	577
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21e, NCES Common Core of Data, no significant differences.

As noted above, stable racially diverse and middle-class schools were associated with positive indicators of inclusion—like teachers' perceptions that administrators were capable of dealing with diversity issues effectively, that discipline practices were fair and that tracking was not a critical issue. Teachers in racially stable diverse environments were also significantly more likely to say that students rarely self-segregated (Table 15). Nearly 14% of teachers in stably diverse schools said students rarely self-segregated, compared to about 7% of teachers in a non-stable environment. Simultaneously, these teachers were less likely to perceive self-segregation as a frequent problem.

Table 15: Teachers perceive that students choose to socialize with members of own racial or socioeconomic group by racial stability of school

Students choose to socialize with members of their own racial, ethnic, or socio-economic group		Stable Racially Diverse School		
		No	Yes	Total
Never	Number	8	4	12
	%	2.6%	1.5%	2.1%
Rarely	Number	22	38	60
	%	7.2%	13.8%	10.4%
Sometimes	Number	125	98	223
	%	41.1%	35.6%	38.5%
Often	Number	124	121	245
	%	40.8%	44.0%	42.3%
Always	Number	23	12	35
	%	7.6%	4.4%	6.0%
Don't Know	Number	2	2	4
	%	.7%	.7%	.7%
Total	Number	304	275	579
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21e, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.05

Tension between different racial/ethnic groups

Counter to intergroup contact and friendship is the possibility of tension between different racial and socioeconomic groups (though initial tension may eventually give way to positive contact as students from different backgrounds learn more about one another). Seventeen percent of teachers working in schools where less than a quarter of students identified as white perceived tension as significant or very significant, twice the share of teachers in schools with higher percentages of white students. Conversely, in schools with a student body that was more than three-quarters white, one in three teachers said that tension was not at all significant (see Table 16). Again, we see patterns indicating that diverse, predominately white schools are associated with inclusive elements.

Table 16: Teachers perceive tension between students of different races and cultures by percentage of white students

Tensions between students of different races and cultures		Categories of student (% white)				Total
		0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%	
Not at all Significant	Number	29	37	47	63	176
	%	30.9%	26.8%	26.7%	33.3%	29.5%
Not too Significant	Number	33	65	82	85	265
	%	35.1%	47.1%	46.6%	45.0%	44.4%
Somewhat Significant	Number	14	24	35	31	104
	%	14.9%	17.4%	19.9%	16.4%	17.4%
Significant or very significant	Number	16	11	11	10	48
	%	17.0%	8.0%	6.3%	5.3%	8.0%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	2	1	1	0	4
	%	2.1%	.7%	.6%	.0%	.7%
Total	Number	94	138	176	189	597
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22c, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.10

In minority segregated settings in this sample, tension between different racial/ethnic groups is much more likely. Twenty-three percent of teachers in schools hypersegregated minority schools report significant or very significant tensions, compared to just 7% of teachers in other educational contexts (See Table 1 in Appendix).

Teachers working in stable and diverse schools were half as likely as their counterparts in transitioning schools to say tensions between students of different racial and ethnic groups were significant. Schools experiencing rapid racial change were perceived as having more significant tensions between different groups of students (Table 17). Rapid racial change (measured by the decline in white percentage of school by at least 18 percentage points in 10 years) is occurring in schools around the country. This analysis underscores the difficulty many schools have with this transition: just over 20% of teachers in schools experiencing racial change say that tensions are not at all significant, compared to nearly 33% of teachers working in schools that are not rapidly changing.

Table 17: Teachers perceive tension between students of different races and cultures by racial stability of school

Tensions between students of different races and cultures		Stable racially diverse school			School is experiencing rapid change	
		No	Yes	Total	No	Yes
Not at all Significant	Number	91	78	169	136	33
	%	29.9%	28.4%	29.2%	31.9%	21.7%
Not too Significant	Number	129	131	260	184	76
	%	42.4%	47.6%	44.9%	43.1%	50.0%
Somewhat Significant	Number	47	52	99	74	25
	%	15.5%	18.9%	17.1%	17.3%	16.4%
Significant or very significant	Number	33	14	47	31	16
	%	10.9%	5.1%	8.1%	7.3%	10.5%
Don't Know	Number	4		4	2	2
	%	1.3%	0.0%	0.7%	0.5%	1.3%
Total	Number	304	275	579	427	152
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22c, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.10

Faculties' perceptions of internal school climate vary by race of teacher

Teachers' perceptions of within-school community indicators were influenced by their own racial identity, in addition to the student racial and socioeconomic contexts explored above. Significant differences emerged between white and nonwhite teachers' views of discipline issues and racial disparities in assignment to special education, as well as between observations of interactions between students of different races. And in some cases, these variations became significant when the student demographic context was considered in conjunction with the race of the teacher.

In terms of discipline issues, nonwhite teachers were significantly more likely to say that the school only rarely or sometimes dealt with student disciplinary infractions in ways that guarded against racial/ethnic discrimination (Table 18). Nearly 15% of nonwhite teachers felt as such, compared to just 7% of white teachers. In keeping with that trend, nonwhite teachers were less likely to think that discipline issues were always handled fairly (55.6%) than white teachers (68.1%). These differences were particularly evident in multiracial school contexts. In these environments, just 40% of nonwhite teachers thought that disciplines issues were always handled in ways that guarded against discrimination, compared to 71% of white teachers (see Table 2A in Appendix). In multiracial contexts, where the school community is likely navigating a number of issues related to diversity on an on-going basis, it appears that nonwhite teachers are

substantially more critical of the way discipline is meted out among different racial groups. Their observations, if voiced, could potentially put important pressure on fellow faculty members and administrators to arbitrate more fairly.

Table 18: Teachers believe discipline issues are dealt with fairly by teacher race

Discipline issues are dealt with in ways that are fair and guard against racial or ethnic discrimination		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	Total
Never	Number	0	1	1
	%	.0%	.2%	.2%
Rarely	Number	1	6	7
	%	.9%	1.2%	1.2%
Sometimes	Number	15	33	48
	%	13.9%	6.7%	8.0%
Often	Number	31	112	143
	%	28.7%	22.8%	23.8%
Always	Number	60	335	395
	%	55.6%	68.1%	65.8%
Don't Know	Number	1	5	6
	%	.9%	1.0%	1.0%
Total	Number	108	492	600
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21c, p<.10

In addition to perceiving a heightened possibility of racially discriminatory discipline practices, nonwhite teacher respondents also sensed more serious issues around racial disparities in special education assignments (Table 19). Just over a quarter of nonwhite teachers reported that racial disparities in special education assignment decisions were "not at all significant," compared to more than a third of white teachers. By contrast, almost 17% of nonwhite teachers thought that there were significant special education disparities by race, versus roughly 9% of white teachers.

Nonwhite teachers also reported more severe disparities in special education assignment across most school demographic contexts (see Table 3A in Appendix). While no white teachers working in school settings where 0-25% of the student body identified as white thought racial disparities in special education were significant, over 13% of nonwhite teachers did. In schools where 25-50% of the students were white, nonwhite teachers were nearly twice as likely as white teachers to feel that disparities in special education assignments were somewhat significant or significant. No significant differences by teacher race were in evidence for schools that were 50-75% white, but emerged again in school contexts where more than 75% of the students were white. (It is worth remembering that due to faculty segregation patterns; there are few nonwhite teachers in the latter category of schools.) In these predominately white settings, nearly 40% of

nonwhite teachers felt disparities in special education assignments were significant, compared to just 6% of white teachers. These differences in teachers' perceptions by race across two majority white school contexts—one where white students might make up a slim majority (50-75%) versus one where whites could comprise an overwhelming majority (75-100%)—suggest that overwhelmingly white schools may struggle more than majority white schools in guarding against discriminatory practices.

Table 19: Teachers perceive racial disparities in special education assignment by teacher race

Racial and ethnic disparities in assignment to Special Ed classes		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	Total
Not at all Significant	Number	29	178	207
	%	26.9%	36.2%	34.5%
Not too Significant	Number	22	157	179
	%	20.4%	31.9%	29.8%
Somewhat Significant	Number	23	66	89
	%	21.3%	13.4%	14.8%
Significant	Number	18	45	63
	%	16.7%	9.1%	10.5%
Very Significant	Number	6	18	24
	%	5.6%	3.7%	4.0%
Don't Know	Number	10	22	32
	%	9.3%	4.5%	5.3%
Refused	Number	0	6	6
	%	.0%	1.2%	1.0%
Total	Number	108	492	600
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22e, p<.005

It appears, then, that nonwhite teachers in this sample were more substantially more sensitive to racially disparate discipline and special education practices than their white counterparts. Such disparities are, of course, well-documented in school districts across the country (see, e.g. OCR Civil Rights Data Collection, 1968-2004 and Losen & G. Orfield, 2002). These divergent perceptions indicate a heightened awareness—and potentially more attentiveness—on the part of nonwhite teachers around discriminatory practices that harmfully impact school inclusivity. Significant differences between white and nonwhite teachers were not present, however, on other indicators related to the internal school leadership climate (such as feeling that teachers could address the needs of diverse learners or that the administration could deal effectively with issues of diversity) (See Appendix, Tables 4A and 5A). It may be that while nonwhite teachers were comfortable reporting more negative perceptions around structural issues like tracking or discipline, they were unwilling to criticize their peers on a more personal level.

When it came to observations of student interactions and behaviors, though, nonwhite and white teachers parted ways once again. Nonwhite teachers were more likely to say that students from different backgrounds rarely mixed together (6.5%) than white teachers (1.4%), even if the share of teachers who noted that trend remained very small overall (Table 20).

Table 20: Teachers believe students of different racial or socioeconomic backgrounds mix together in extracurricular activities by teacher race

Students of different racial, ethnic, or socio-economic groups mix together in extra-curricular activities		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	**Total**
Never	Number	1	2	3
	%	.9%	.4%	.5%
Rarely	Number	7	7	14
	%	6.5%	1.4%	2.3%
Sometimes	Number	12	65	77
	%	11.1%	13.2%	12.8%
Often	Number	35	154	189
	%	32.4%	31.3%	31.5%
Always	Number	52	253	305
	%	48.1%	51.4%	50.8%
Don't Know	Number	1	9	10
	%	.9%	1.8%	1.7%
Refused	Number	0	2	2
	%	.0%	.4%	.3%
Total	Number	108	492	600
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21d, p<.10

A similarly divergent trend occurred around perceptions of tension between students of different races and cultures. Nonwhite teachers were substantially more likely to think that tension was present across races and cultures. Fourteen percent of nonwhite teachers reported that tension was a significant problem, versus just 5% of white teachers (Table 21). This development may be related to more keenly observed interactions by teachers of color, or an increased student willingness to discuss tension with nonwhite teachers. Still, the large majority of teachers of all races reported that tension was either not at all significant or not too significant.

Table 21: Teachers perceive tension between students of different races and cultures by teacher race

Tensions between students of different races and cultures		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	**Total**
Not at all Significant	Number	33	143	176
	%	30.6%	29.1%	29.3%
Not too Significant	Number	38	229	267
	%	35.2%	46.5%	44.5%
Somewhat Significant	Number	17	87	104
	%	15.7%	17.7%	17.3%
Significant	Number	15	25	40
	%	13.9%	5.1%	6.7%
Very Significant	Number	3	6	9
	%	2.8%	1.2%	1.5%
Don't Know	Number	2	1	3
	%	1.9%	.2%	.5%
Refused	Number	0	1	1
	%	.0%	.2%	.2%
Total	Number	108	492	600
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22c, p<.005

In sum, teacher perceptions of internal school climate factors varied by both the racial and socioeconomic makeup of schools and the race of the teacher answering the question. Nonwhite teachers were more likely to observe racial disparities in school structures, and also more likely to perceive tension between students of different races and backgrounds. In general, teachers working at stably diverse schools were more likely to report positive trends related to inclusive school climates than teachers working at rapidly transitioning or segregated nonwhite schools.

External Indicators of Inclusion

The following section delves into teachers' perceptions of the world beyond their school, looking specifically at interactions between teachers, families and the broader community.

Teacher-family relationships

The vast majority of teachers in schools of differing racial and economic composition view family involvement as an important ingredient for students' academic success (see Table 6A in Appendix). This finding is not surprising given the literature discussed earlier documenting the importance of building relationships with students' families.

However, teachers' perceptions of the level of family participation varied by the school demographic context. We found that teachers working in predominantly minority schools were most likely to report that families rarely participated in their children's education. Approximately 18% of teachers in schools with a majority of nonwhite students said families never or rarely participated, compared to less than 6% in schools where three quarters or more of the students were white (see Table 22). On the other end of the spectrum, more than three-fifths of teachers in white majority schools report that families are often or always involved in their child's education. Teachers reporting that families "often" participated were grouped at two ends of the continuum of racial composition, perhaps suggesting that some types of families participated and others did not (which may be related to socioeconomic status). Given these differences, further research should also probe whether certain families in diverse schools are more likely to participate.

Table 22: Teachers believe families participate in education by percentage of white students

Families participate in education		Categories of students (% white)				
		0-25% white students	25-50% white students	50-75% white students	75-100% white students	Total
Never or Rarely	Number	25	33	23	31	112
	%	18.7%	22.1%	12.6%	5.8%	11.2%
Sometimes	Number	73	71	77	172	393
	%	54.5%	47.7%	42.3%	32.2%	39.3%
Often	Number	25	37	69	277	408
	%	18.7%	24.8%	37.9%	51.9%	40.8%
Always	Number	9	7	13	53	82
	%	6.7%	4.7%	7.1%	9.9%	8.2%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	2	1	0	1	4
	%	1.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%
Total	Number	134	149	182	534	999
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21a, NCES Common Core of Data 2005-06, p<.000

Like race, school poverty levels relate to teachers' perceptions of family involvement. Teachers report higher levels of family involvement in low-poverty schools (see Table 23). For example, in educational environments where less than one-tenth of students are from families living near the poverty line, one-fourth of teachers report that families *always* participate. Another 50% of teachers in low-poverty schools say that families often participate. High rates of family participation give these schools further educational advantages, and conversely, disadvantage schools of concentrated poverty. Only 3% of teachers in schools where a majority of students were poor reported that families always participated, and only about one-fourth reported often or always having family participation. These patterns reinforce the inequities associated with high poverty schools: families less likely to participate in the educational setting may be less able to advocate on behalf of their children, present a coherent link between home

and school, or donate time or other resources to the school community. In stark contrast to these trends, two recent studies highlight the tremendous resources available to very low poverty schools, or "public private schools," to include staggering coffers to subsidize public school funding (Wells et al., 2009; Fordham Foundation, 2010).

Table 23: Teachers believe families participate in education by levels of student poverty

Families participate in education		Categories of student poverty (% FRL)				
		0-10% poor	10-25% poor	25-50% poor	50-100% poor	Total
Never or Rarely	Number	6	10	37	53	106
	%	4.8%	4.4%	12.0%	19.0%	10.7%
Sometimes	Number	24	63	135	151	373
	%	19.0%	27.8%	43.8%	54.1%	39.7%
Often	Number	65	129	120	65	379
	%	51.6%	56.8%	39.0%	23.3%	40.3%
Always	Number	29	24	16	9	78
	%	23.0%	10.6%	5.2%	3.2%	8.3%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	2	1	0	1	4
	%	1.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
Total	Number	126	227	308	279	940
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21a, NCES Common Core of Data 2005-06, p<.001

As schools become increasingly multiracial, often serving three or more racial or ethnic groups, it becomes important to examine patterns by the level of diversity within a school. Here we see similar patterns as above for one-race schools, but new findings emerge for biracial and multiracial schools (where two or more racial groups comprise at least 10% of the enrollment) (Table 24). Thirty-five percent of teachers in multiracial schools report that families are often or always participating, and 44% of teachers in biracial schools report the same. Teachers in multiracial schools are the most likely to say that families rarely or never participate in schools (17.1%), suggesting that in at least some of these diverse environments, educators are struggling to include all families.

Table 24: Teachers believe families participate in education by levels of school racial diversity

Families participate in education		Level of School Diversity			Total
		One-race	Two racial groups	Three or more races	
Never or Rarely	Number	28	53	32	113
	%	6.3%	14.2%	17.1%	11.3%
Sometimes	Number	151	153	88	392
	%	34.2%	41.0%	47.1%	39.2%
Often	Number	216	139	55	410
	%	49.0%	37.3%	29.4%	41.0%
Always	Number	46	25	11	82
	%	10.4%	6.7%	5.9%	8.2%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	0	3	1	4
	%	.0%	.8%	.5%	.4%
Total	Number	441	373	187	1001
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21a, NCES Common Core of Data 2005-06, p<.001

The racial composition of schools in which teachers reported extensive family involvement differed substantially from schools in which teachers said there was little to no involvement. In schools where teachers always felt that families participated in education, the average percentage of white students enrolled in the school was roughly 72% (see Table 25). For nonwhite students, the patterns varied by racial group. Teachers in schools that were, on average, approximately 15-20% African American or Latino were most likely to report that families never, rarely or sometimes participated. For Asian students, two extremes emerged. Teachers in schools with relatively high percentages of Asian students were most likely to say that parents either never or rarely participated or always participated. Asian students are sometimes referred to as a bimodal minority group, related to the fact that many different nationalities are represented under the umbrella term "Asian." These varied groups have experienced different histories of immigration, which in turn has been associated with differing levels of socioeconomic status and education. The variation in teachers' responses in this survey may reflect this bimodal nature of the Asian American population.

Table 25: Teachers believe families participate in education by average school racial composition

Families participate in education		Average percentage of students who are:					
		White	Black	Latino	Asian	American Indian	Total
Rarely or never	Mean	48.7	20.8	23.5	5.0	2.0	100.0
	N	113	113	113	113	113	113
Sometimes	Mean	59.0	16.1	19.1	3.9	1.87	99.97
	N	393	393	393	393	393	393
Often	Mean	74.7	9.6	10.0	4.4	1.2794	99.9794
	N	410	410	410	410	410	410
Always	Mean	71.8	8.8	10.3	8.5	0.58	99.98
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82
Total	Mean	65.2	13.3	15.2	4.6	1.7	100
	N	1002	1002	1002	1002	82	82

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21a, NCES Common Core of Data 2005-06, p<.001

Viewed together, the findings described above suggest a significant pattern: teachers working in schools that serve large majorities of students of color and low-income students are less likely to think that families participate in the educational process.

Teachers' ability to work with families

A second dimension of parent involvement relates to how comfortable teachers feel working with the families of their students. Perceptions of involvement and the ability to work with families are likely connected: the more contact teachers have with families, the more at ease teachers may feel working with them. In some instances though, the opposite may be true, when teachers feel overly pressured by "helicopter parents" (Hayden, 2007). Regardless, the level of comfort teachers feel with the families of their students would presumably impact the nature and quality of the rapport between the two parties.

Majority nonwhite schools had the highest share of teachers who were not comfortable working with the families of their students (even though the overall share of teachers feeling this way remained small) (see Table 26 and Table 7A in Appendix). In these majority nonwhite schools, roughly 11% of teachers said they did not feel comfortable working with families, compared to approximately 3-4% of teachers in majority white schools. Furthermore, just over 50% of teachers strongly agreed that they were comfortable working with families in schools with the lowest percentage of whites; whereas over 70% of teachers reported high levels of comfort in schools where white students are most concentrated. Overall, two-thirds of respondents strongly agree that they are comfortable working with families, though we have do not have data on how *parents* perceive these interactions and their reciprocal comfort working

with teachers and schools. It would also be informative to explore whether and why teachers feel comfortable working with certain families and not others.

In understanding these trends, it is important to remember that schools with lower percentages of white students have less experienced and stable faculties. It would stand to reason, then, that the same shared and longstanding experiences with families would not exist in these schools—the kinds of relationships that may lead teachers in other settings to indicate more comfort working with students' families. Minority segregated schools are also more likely to be under pressure to increase standardized testing outcomes and improving relationships with families may be viewed as secondary to test preparation.

Table 26: Teachers feel comfortable working with families by percentage of white students

Comfortable working with families		Categories of students (% white)				
		0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%	Total
Disagree Strongly or Somewhat	Number	7	8	2	5	22
	%	5.2%	5.4%	1.1%	.9%	2.2%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	8	3	4	14	29
	%	6.0%	2.0%	2.2%	2.6%	2.9%
Agree Somewhat	Number	47	46	53	135	281
	%	35.1%	30.9%	29.1%	25.3%	28.1%
Agree Strongly	Number	71	91	122	380	664
	%	53.0%	61.1%	67.0%	71.2%	66.5%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	1	1	1	0	3
	%	.7%	.7%	.5%	.0%	.3%
Total	Number	134	149	182	534	999
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 13b, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.001

Just as the majority of teachers rated high levels of comfort working with families, two-thirds of all teachers agreed strongly that other faculty built trusting relationships with students' families (see Table 27). Yet, similar to trends noted above, just over half of teachers at schools with the lowest percentages of white students agreed strongly that teachers worked hard to build trusting relationships with families. On the other hand, almost three-quarters of teachers in schools with the highest concentrations of white students felt that they and their peers worked to build trusting relationships with families.

Table 27: Teachers build trusting relationships with families by percentage of white students

At your school, teachers work hard to build trusting relationships with families of students		Categories of students (% white)				
		0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%	Total
Disagree Strongly or Somewhat	Number	8	8	2	9	27
	%	6.0%	5.4%	1.1%	1.7%	2.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	3	9	6	8	26
	%	2.2%	6.0%	3.3%	1.5%	2.6%
Agree Somewhat	Number	52	46	61	132	291
	%	38.8%	30.9%	33.5%	24.7%	29.1%
Agree Strongly	Number	70	86	113	384	653
	%	52.2%	57.7%	62.1%	71.9%	65.4%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	1	0	0	1	2
	%	.7%	.0%	.0%	.2%	.2%
Total	Number	134	149	182	534	999
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 27c, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.001

In diverse schools serving two or more racial groups, lower percentages of teachers agreed strongly with the statement that teachers worked hard to build trusting relationships. When we look within the category of diverse schools, teachers in multiracial schools were less likely to strongly agree that their colleagues worked hard to build relationships with students' families (see Table 28). Teachers in biracial or multiracial schools were less likely to believe that they could build trusting relationships with families than teachers in one-race schools, the vast majority of which in this sample were homogeneous white schools. In general, at least as far homogenous white schools were concerned, these patterns indicate that teachers, many of whom are white themselves, feel more comfortable working and building trust with families of white students. These patterns also suggest the importance in studying further whether the numbers and/or identity of racial groups in diverse schools may relate to teachers' relationships with families.

Table 28: Teachers build trusting relationships with families by levels of school diversity

Teachers work hard to build trusting relationships with families of students		Level of School Diversity			
		One-race	Two racial groups	Three or more races	Total
Disagree Strongly or Somewhat	Number	9	12	6	27
	%	2.0%	3.2%	3.2%	2.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	5	12	9	26
	%	1.1%	3.2%	4.8%	2.6%
Agree Somewhat	Number	120	103	69	292
	%	27.2%	27.6%	36.9%	29.2%
Agree Strongly	Number	306	245	103	654
	%	69.4%	65.7%	55.1%	65.3%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	1	1	0	2
	%	.2%	.3%	.0%	.2%
Total	Number	441	373	187	1001
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 27c, NCES Common Core of Data 2005-06, p<.10

A cycle emerges from these survey responses regarding teacher-family relationships. Teachers in predominately nonwhite schools perceive less family involvement in education, which may in turn render them less comfortable working with the families of their students and less likely to work to build trusting relationships. We know from literature described above that the support of families is crucial to educational development – and, indeed, nearly all teachers in this sample believe this to be true – yet, according to this analysis, weak relationships between school personnel and parents tend to characterize minority segregated environments. This trend highlights a critical disadvantage, on top of the myriad of previously well-documented harms, of racially isolated schooling (Linn & Welner, 2007; Mickelson & Bottia, 2009).

Schools and community context

Public schools arose out of a desire to educate children in preparation for work and citizenship. In the U.S., schools have a strong tradition of local control and support in the form of taxation. In the same way the participation of students' families broadens exposure to other people and groups through schools, the involvement of the larger community can bring together a cross-section of residents. A number of studies have underlined the importance of inviting the larger community to participate in education (Sanders, 2003). Indeed, a movement has arisen touting the significance of making schools the center of community life.[7]

[7] See, for example, *Communities in Schools*, a dropout prevention organization connecting community resource—leaders, volunteers, donations—to schools.

We found striking differences in teachers' perceptions of local community support[8] that were related to the share of low-income students enrolled in the school. More than twice as many teachers in low-poverty schools (where less than one in ten students were from low-income families) strongly agreed that the local community supported the school (see Table 29). In contrast, just over one-third of teachers in schools of concentrated poverty strongly perceived community support for their school—or, less than half the percentage of teachers in low-poverty schools who responded similarly. Further, over 95% of teachers in low-poverty schools somewhat agreed that their school had community support, but only 82% of teachers in the highest-poverty schools had similar convictions. In other words, fewer teachers in schools of concentrated poverty—schools that research has shown tend to lack a number of resources important for educating students—felt strongly that they had the support of their local community. Perhaps even more importantly, one in eight teachers in high-poverty schools disagreed with the idea that the community supported their schools, which was considerably higher than the percentage of teachers in schools with lower levels of student poverty.

Table 29: Teachers believe local community supports school by levels of student poverty

Local community supports school		Categories of student poverty (% FRL)				Total
		0-10%	10-25%	25-50%	50-100%	
Disagree Strongly	Number	2	0	8	14	24
	%	1.6%	.0%	2.6%	5.0%	2.6%
Disagree Somewhat	Number	1	11	20	20	52
	%	.8%	4.8%	6.5%	7.2%	5.5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	3	8	15	17	43
	%	2.4%	3.5%	4.9%	6.1%	4.6%
Agree Somewhat	Number	28	64	105	130	327
	%	22.2%	28.2%	34.1%	46.6%	34.8%
Agree Strongly	Number	92	144	159	98	493
	%	73.0%	63.4%	51.6%	35.1%	52.4%
Don't Know	Number	0	0	1	0	1
	%	.0%	.0%	.3%	.0%	.1%
Total	Number	126	227	308	279	940
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 13e, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.001

Similarly stark patterns of community support emerged in racially isolated schools. Less than 30% of teachers in segregated minority settings felt strongly that their school was supported by the community (Table 30). This is significantly the 56% of all teachers in this sample who believed that the community is strongly supportive. In addition, 14.6% of teachers in segregated minority schools felt a lack of local community support for their school. When we separately examined segregated *white* schools, more than 60% of teachers in such schools agreed strongly

[8] The survey did not allow us to understand how teachers' defined "community support," lending some ambiguity to these patterns.

that they had community support, or more than twice the share of teachers in segregated minority schools.

Table 30: Teachers believe local community supports school by level of segregation

Local community supports school		School is 0-10% white*	School is 90-100% white**	Total
Disagree Strongly	Number	4	3	7
	%	5.3%	1.0%	1.9%
Disagree Somewhat	Number	7	8	15
	%	9.3%	2.8%	4.1%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	4	8	12
	%	5.3%	2.8%	3.3%
Agree Somewhat	Number	38	88	126
	%	50.7%	30.7%	34.8%
Agree Strongly	Number	22	180	202
	%	29.3%	62.7%	55.8%
Total	Number	75	287	362
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 13e, NCES Common Core of Data, *p<.05, **p<.001(comparison group are schools that are 11-100% white, not shown).

Particularly for teachers not living in the community in which they teach, physical comfort in and around their school may relate strongly to perceptions of support from the community and families. Nearly 90% of all teachers in this sample strongly agreed that they felt safe coming to school. Yet even here we notice differences based on school racial contexts. Specifically, when we examine the stability of the composition of diverse schools, there are differences in teachers' perceptions of safety. Lower percentages of teachers in rapidly changing schools felt safe. By contrast, teachers in stably diverse schools were more likely to report that they felt safe (see Table 31). This pattern suggests that policies reinforcing stable educational environments may promote feelings of school safety for teachers. Additionally, schools experiencing rapid transition may need to conduct outreach so that teachers understand the community around them, which in turn may lead to feelings of safety.

Table 31: Teachers feel safe coming to and from work by racial stability of school

You feel safe coming to and from school		School is rapidly changing*	Stable racially diverse school**	Total
Disagree Strongly or somewhat	Number	4	5	9
	%	2.5%	1.4%	1.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	3	2	5
	%	1.9%	0.6%	1.0%
Agree Somewhat	Number	26	24	50
	%	16.0%	6.6%	9.5%
Agree Strongly	Number	129	331	460
	%	79.6%	91.4%	87.8%
Total	Number	162	362	524
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 27b, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, *p<.001, **no significant differences.

Faculties' perceptions of external school climate vary slightly by race of teacher

Teacher attitudes towards external indicators of school community were less varied by race than their perceptions of internal factors. In both instances where significant differences cropped up, white teachers were more likely than nonwhite teachers to feel positive about their experiences with situations beyond school walls, even taking into account varying school racial and socioeconomic contexts.

White teachers were significantly more likely to report that they felt comfortable working with the families of their students. Nearly 70% of white instructors indicated that they strongly agreed with the statement, "You feel comfortable working with families," compared to roughly 57% of nonwhite teachers (Table 32). These differences persisted in schools with differing shares of white students. In settings where white students comprised less than a quarter of the student population, 40% of white teachers said they felt at least somewhat comfortable working with families, compared to just under 30% of nonwhite teachers[9] (see Table 8A in Appendix). The divergent views on this dimension could be related to white teachers' ambivalence around admitting difficulty in working with the families of students who are different from them. Interestingly, nonwhite teachers were also much less likely to feel strong levels of comfort working with families (52.2%) than white teachers (72.0%) in schools where white students made up more than 75% of the population.

[9] However, roughly the same share of white and nonwhite teachers--about 50%--reported strong feelings of comfort working with families in these settings (see Table 8A in Appendix).

Table 32: Teachers feel comfortable working with families by teacher race

Comfortable working with families		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	**Total**
Disagree Strongly	Number	3	3	6
	%	2.0%	.4%	.6%
Disagree Somewhat	Number	9	7	16
	%	6.0%	.8%	1.6%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	11	18	29
	%	7.3%	2.1%	2.9%
Agree Somewhat	Number	41	240	281
	%	27.3%	28.2%	28.0%
Agree Strongly	Number	85	582	667
	%	56.7%	68.3%	66.6%
Don't Know	Number	1	1	2
	%	.7%	.1%	.2%
Refused	Number	0	1	1
	%	.0%	.1%	.1%
Total	Number	150	852	1002
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 13b, p<.001

Significant differences between teachers of different races were also evident in perceptions of community support for schools. Nonwhite teachers were less likely to feel community support than white instructors across a variety of different school socioeconomic contexts (Table 9A in Appendix). For example, nonwhite teachers were far less likely to feel supported by the local community in very low poverty schools (places of learning where less than 10% of the students are considered poor), though the overall number of respondents in this category was very low. Just over 40% of nonwhite teachers strongly agreed that the local community supported their school in low poverty contexts, compared to approximately 75% of white teachers. At the other end of the spectrum, nonwhite teachers were also less likely to feel strongly that the local community was supportive in high poverty schools—just 28% of nonwhite teachers said as much, versus 37% of white teachers. These differences may be related to different perceptions between white and nonwhite instructors of what local community support for schools looks like. For example, does local support mean volunteers coming in to the school from the community? Or does it mean a generally welcoming reception from neighbors in the area immediately surrounding the school?

White and nonwhite teachers reported similar differences when it came to feeling safe going to and from work (Table 33). White instructors were more likely to indicate strong feelings of safety around their arrival and departure from school (roughly 90% said as much), compared to about 80% of nonwhite teachers. Though teachers of all races reporting strong feelings of

safety remained high, racially disparate responses on this dimension could again be related to white respondents' reluctance to speak forthrightly about the communities in which they work.

Table 33: Teachers feel safe coming to and from work by teacher race

You feel safe coming to and from school		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	**Total**
Disagree Strongly	Number	1	3	4
	%	.7%	.4%	.4%
Disagree Somewhat	Number	6	9	15
	%	4.0%	1.1%	1.5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	3	9	12
	%	2.0%	1.1%	1.2%
Agree Somewhat	Number	20	70	90
	%	13.3%	8.2%	9.0%
Agree Strongly	Number	120	761	881
	%	80.0%	89.3%	87.9%
Total	Number	150	852	1002
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 27b, p<.01

Despite the differences by teacher race on feeling comfortable working with families and issues of safety going to and from work, responses related to other external factors explored here did not vary significantly according to the race of the survey participants. It may be that, by and large, teachers of all races viewed their external environments with a similar mindset, even while their perceptions of internal school factors were somewhat more varied.

External indicators of inclusion – including healthy teacher-family relationships and community involvement – are associated with the racial and socioeconomic composition of schools in important ways, according to teachers in this survey. Teachers working in high poverty and/or high minority schools reported less family participation, less effort in working to build trust with families and less community support. Together these indicators point to weaker and less inclusive relationships with families and communities in minority segregated schools.

Conclusions

This paper is the third in a series of analyses based on a 2005 survey of over a thousand teachers nationwide. The first, "The Segregation of American Teachers," documented serious patterns of racial isolation among the faculties of U.S. K-12 schools.[10] The second part, "Are

[10] Report is available at: http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/the-segregation-of-american-teachers/?searchterm=The%20Segregation%20of%20American%20Teachers.

Teachers Prepared for Racially Changing Schools,"[11] analyzed the preparation and teaching practices employed by educators across different grade levels, finding a dearth of focused training for racial diversity. Finally, this last study focused on teachers' perceptions of the climate in and around schools of different racial and socioeconomic student composition.

In the broadest sense, the national dialogue surrounding schools has significant implications for education stakeholders. The country – particularly the school-aged population – rapidly grows more diverse (G. Orfield, 2009). Simultaneously, questions about what race means in the 21st century continue to surface. The nation is four years removed from a Supreme Court decision limiting the use of race in student assignment policies via a colorblind rationale (*Parents Involved*, 2007), and several years beyond intense speculation over whether the election of Barack Obama as president heralded a new, "post-racial" society. Yet we know, despite recent legal and political rhetoric to the contrary, that ignoring race in schools is damaging to students on a number of different levels. Educators who sidestep race may depress opportunities for culturally relevant teaching and learning, and unwittingly exacerbate stereotypes and opportunity gaps (Pollock, 2008).[12] This may be particularly likely for white teachers isolated in schools and communities with very little diversity. Teachers in these areas may hold attitudes reflective of whites in our society who profess more colorblind attitudes and less concern about racial disparities (Frankenberg, forthcoming). Thus, teachers' understanding of school climate at the micro-level is informed by on-going and contradictory macro forces.

We found, on average, that survey respondents were more likely to report inclusive internal policies in stable, majority white and low poverty schools. Teachers in these schools reported more frequently that the administration was able to effectively deal with diversity issues. Teachers in low poverty schools were also most likely to agree that discipline was dealt with fairly across racial-ethnic lines and that students always interacted in extracurricular activities. Perhaps these trends are the result of a variety of pressures high poverty, high minority schools may experience – high rates of teacher and staff turnover, to name one (Jackson, 2009) – leaving less time and resources for diversity and discipline issues.

Teachers' ability to address the needs of students from racially diverse backgrounds varied widely according to the racial and socioeconomic context of schools. Teachers in schools with the highest percentage of white students were the least likely to report that teachers at their school were "always" able to address the needs of students from racially diverse backgrounds. Conversely, teachers in schools with higher percentages of students of color were more likely to think their peers could address the needs of students from all racial-ethnic backgrounds. Yet, compared to teachers in schools with two racial groups, teachers in *multiracial* schools were less likely to think that their faculty peers could always address the needs of racially diverse students. Finally – and importantly – teachers working in stable, diverse schools were more likely to think that their faculty peers could address students from all races and ethnicities.

[11] Report is available at: http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/are-teachers-prepared-for-racially-changing-schools/?searchterm=Are%20Teachers%20Prepared%20for%20Racially%20Changing%20Schools.

[12] See also the Teaching Diverse Students Initiative at http://www.tolerance.org/tdsi/.

Teachers in racially stable and diverse environments were also significantly more likely to say that students did not self-segregate. Though white and nonwhite teachers perceived the level of tension somewhat differently, survey respondents reported that tension between racial groups was lowest in schools with stable enrollments, and much higher in rapidly changing schools. These findings corroborate results from the second report in this series (see Frankenberg & Siegel-Hawley, 2008) and strongly suggest the need for policies to increase teacher training for racial diversity and to promote stable school enrollments. In the future, it would be helpful to study stable, diverse schools to understand whether there are particular policies, training, or other support mechanisms that produce positive school climate.

Survey results show that teachers of all races working in minority segregated and high poverty schools were less likely to believe that families participated in education. By extension, both white and nonwhite teachers surveyed were less likely to perceive that families in high poverty, high minority schools were involved in their children's education. They were also not as inclined to think that fellow teachers build trusting relationships with families, or that local communities support minority segregated school environments. Finally, teachers working in these school contexts were less likely to feel safe coming to work. These results suggest that a cycle of disengagement occurs: teachers in high poverty, racially isolated schools believe that families do not value education, in turn making teachers less inclined to work to build trusting relationships, which then reinforces a lack of participation from families and the community.

In reviewing the internal and external indicators of racial inclusion in schools, it should be noted that teachers' perceptions of patterns inside the school may have been constrained by proximity to the issues, while their view of external factors may not have had the same limitations. In short, teachers might be more likely – or willing – to describe problems outside of the school than recognize similar issues from within. This tendency may partly explain the clear story emerging from responses to external questions, and the more varied accounts of inclusivity within schools. Tracking and other internal sorting practices (e.g. special education assignments) may also have distorted teachers' perceptions of the internal school climate.

To summarize: the survey yielded a clear description from teachers of the troubling family-community-school disconnection associated with educational settings containing high concentrations of low income students and students of color. Teachers' responses to various questions related to internal factors (again, though there were some variations in responses according to the race of the teacher) also suggested that diverse, majority white schools fared better when it came to discipline practices, administrative leadership on issues of diversity, integrated extra-curricular activities and positive cross-racial relationships.[13]

Together, these results have important implications for state, district and school-level policies. We are currently nearly a decade into a system of sanctioning schools and labeling them and their staff as failures. For the lowest performing schools, current policy options include

[13] These internal findings have also been corroborated by studies of diverse high schools in Louisville, Kentucky and Cambridge and Lynn, Massachusetts. See, for example, Cole, R. (2007). Fostering an Inclusive, Multiracial Society: How Attorneys, Social Scientists and Educators Made the Case for School Integration in Lynn, Massachusetts. In Frankenberg, E. & Orfield, G., Eds. *Lessons in Integration: Realizing the Promise of Racial Diversity in American Schools*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press.

reconstitution, which eliminates existing faculty and requires a re-staffing of the school. Additionally, measures that would assess teachers and hold them accountable for student learning are at the forefront of current education policy debates. These developments, considered in conjunction with swiftly changing demographics, rising school segregation and the associated unequal educational opportunities, mean we should not necessarily be surprised at some of the differences in teachers' responses reported here. Current accountability policies are exacerbating the problems, not solving them, by holding all teachers to the same standards while ignoring the vast inequalities in resources for learning that schools and students face.

Not surprisingly, as our earlier reports indicated, high minority and high poverty schools are more stressful working environments; places that, given the option, many teachers choose to leave at high rates. Policies that encourage, not demonize, teachers who stay and invest in creating a supportive internal climate and who work to build positive external relationships with communities are sorely needed. Federal policy can help foster productive external relationships by providing incentives for family engagement through the school assessment process. Further, a more holistic approach to holding schools accountable would be to create a committee of building staff and community members to set goals and assess annual progress.[14] Such an approach would necessitate the types of community and family relationships that teachers' value but that, for want of time, may not have had the opportunity to build under the current accountability measures.

Preparation and technical support from local, state, and federal agencies can also help to address some of the concerning trends documented here. Colleges of education and other types of preparation programs should ensure that teachers enter the profession understanding how to build relationships with families and communities, especially in diverse settings. Training for teachers and administrators must also focus on how to create healthy school environments in which fairness and inclusiveness for students and families of all backgrounds is a central feature. This support and technical assistance should be on-going, particularly in schools experiencing rapid transition. Incentives for teachers and administrators to engage in this crucial work within and outside the school building should also be part of any annual school merit review.

Finally, the importance of student assignment policies (as well as housing policies) that create stable and diverse schools cannot be underestimated. The positive responses from teachers in such schools add to our understanding of how stably diverse schools can benefit students that attend them. Local school boards should heed these findings and craft policies to create diverse schools. The federal government should also provide guidance and technical assistance to districts trying to understand how to pursue integration in an effective, legal manner in the midst of our changing and complex demographic environment.

[14] http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/legal-developments/policy-papers/informing-the-debate-bringing-civil-rights-research-to-bear-on-the-reauthorization-of-the-esea/crp-accountability-dc-brief-2011.pdf

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Appendix

Table 1A: Teachers perceive tension between students of different races and cultures by minority segregated school setting

Tensions between students of different races and cultures		School was minority segregated (0-10% white)		
		No	Yes	Total
Not at all Significant	Number	166	10	176
	%	29.6%	25.6%	29.3%
Not too Significant	Number	256	11	267
	%	45.6%	28.2%	44.5%
Somewhat Significant	Number	96	8	104
	%	17.1%	20.5%	17.3%
Significant or very significant	Number	40	9	49
	%	7.1%	23.1%	8.2%
Don't Know/Refused	Number	3	1	4
	%	.5%	2.6%	.7%
Total	Number	561	39	600
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22c, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.05

Table 2A: Teachers believe discipline issues are dealt with fairly by teacher race by school diversity levels

	Discipline issues are dealt with fairly in ways that guard against racial/ethnic discrimination			Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	Total
School Diversity Levels	One race**	Rarely	Number	0	2	2
			%	.0%	2.3%	2.0%
		Sometimes	Number	1	7	8
			%	7.1%	8.0%	7.8%
		Often	Number	4	21	25
			%	28.6%	23.9%	24.5%
		Always	Number	9	57	66
			%	64.3%	64.8%	64.7%
		Don't Know	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	1.1%	1.0%
		Total	Number	14	88	102
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Two racial groups**	Never	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	.4%	.3%
		Rarely	Number	1	3	4
			%	1.7%	1.2%	1.3%
		Sometimes	Number	6	17	23
			N%	10.3%	6.6%	7.3%
		Often	Number	13	59	72
			%	22.4%	22.9%	22.8%
		Always	Number	37	174	211
			%	63.8%	67.4%	66.8%
		Don't Know	Number	1	4	5
			%	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%
		Total	Number	58	258	316
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Three or more racial groups*	Rarely	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	.7%	.5%
		Sometimes	Number	8	9	17
			%	22.2%	6.2%	9.3%
		Often	Number	14	32	46
			%	38.9%	21.9%	25.3%
		Always	Number	14	104	118
			%	38.9%	71.2%	64.8%
		Total	Number	36	146	182
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3A: Teachers perceive racial disparities in special education assignment by teacher race by school diversity levels

	Racial and ethnic disparities in assignment to Special Ed classes			Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	Total
Categories of white students (% white)	0-25%*	Not at all Significant	Number	10	26	36
			%	27.0%	45.6%	38.3%
		Not too Significant	Number	10	14	24
			%	27.0%	24.6%	25.5%
		Somewhat Significant	Number	6	5	11
			%	16.2%	8.8%	11.7%
		Significant	Number	3	7	10
			%	8.1%	12.3%	10.6%
		Very Significant	Number	5	0	5
			%	13.5%	0.0%	5.3%
		Don't Know	Number	3	5	8
			%	8.1%	8.8%	8.5%
		Total	Number	37	57	94
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	25-50% *	Not at all Significant	Number	8	37	45
			%	23.5%	35.6%	32.6%
		Not too Significant	Number	3	29	32
			%	8.8%	27.9%	23.2%
		Somewhat Significant	Number	11	15	26
			%	32.4%	14.4%	18.8%
		Significant	Number	6	9	15
			%	17.6%	8.7%	10.9%
		Very Significant	Number	0	7	7
			%	0.0%	6.7%	5.1%
		Don't Know	Number	6	7	13
			%	17.6%	6.7%	9.4%
		Total	Number	34	104	138
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	50-75%**	Not at all Significant	Number	8	41	49
			%	27.6%	27.9%	27.8%
		Not too Significant	Number	8	50	58
			%	27.6%	34.0%	33.0%
		Somewhat Significant	Number	6	24	30
			%	20.7%	16.3%	17.0%
		Significant	Number	6	18	24
			%	20.7%	12.2%	13.6%
		Very Significant	Number	1	5	6
			%	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
		Don't Know	Number	0	9	9
			%	0.0%	6.1%	5.4%
		Total	Number	29	147	176
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	75-100%*	Not at all Significant	Number	3	73	76
			%	37.5%	40.3%	40.2%
		Not too Significant	Number	1	63	64
			%	12.5%	34.8%	33.9%

			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

*Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 22e, *p<.10; **no significant differences.*

Table 4A: Teachers believe they can address academic needs of diverse students by level of school diversity by teacher race

Teachers can address academic needs of students with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	**Total**
Never	Number	1	7	8
	%	.7%	.8%	.8%
Rarely	Number	6	32	38
	%	4.0%	3.8%	3.8%
Sometimes	Number	32	143	175
	%	21.3%	16.8%	17.5%
Often	Number	52	394	446
	%	34.7%	46.2%	44.5%
Always	Number	58	267	325
	%	38.7%	31.3%	32.4%
Don't Know	Number	1	9	10
	%	.7%	1.1%	1.0%
Total	Number	150	852	1002
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21b, no significant differences.

Table 5A: Teachers believe administration effectively deals with diversity issues by level of school diversity by teacher race

Administration effectively deals with diversity issues		Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	Total
Never	Number	1	1	2
	%	.9%	.2%	.3%
Rarely	Number	4	13	17
	%	3.7%	2.6%	2.8%
Sometimes	Number	22	57	79
	%	20.4%	11.6%	13.2%
Often	Number	31	173	204
	%	28.7%	35.2%	34.0%
Always	Number	48	236	284
	%	44.4%	48.0%	47.3%
Don't Know	Number	2	12	14
	%	1.9%	2.4%	2.3%
Total	Number	108	492	600
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 21f, no significant differences.

Table 6A: Teachers' perceptions of the salience of family support by levels of student poverty

Family support is an important reason why students perform well in school		Deciles of Black and Latino Students										Total
		0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-100%	
Disagree Strongly or Somewhat	Number	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	2	5
	%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.8%	.0%	.0%	2.9%	2.9%	4.4%	.5%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	6
	%	.2%	.7%	1.0%	1.4%	1.8%	1.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.6%
Agree Somewhat	Number	37	19	6	4	6	8	5	4	2	5	96
	%	8.7%	13.9%	6.2%	5.4%	10.7%	14.3%	11.9%	11.4%	5.9%	11.1%	9.6%
Agree Strongly	Number	385	117	90	69	48	47	37	30	31	38	892
	%	91.0%	85.4%	92.8%	93.2%	85.7%	83.9%	88.1%	85.7%	91.2%	84.4%	89.3%
Total	Number	423	137	97	74	56	56	42	35	34	45	999
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 15b, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.05

Table 7A: Teachers feel comfortable working with families by percentage of white students

Comfortable working with families		School was 0-10% white*	School was 90-100% white**	Total
Disagree Strongly or Somewhat	Number	4	2	6
	%	5.3%	0.7%	1.6%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	5	7	12
	%	6.7%	2.4%	3.3%
Agree Somewhat	Number	28	72	100
	%	37.3%	25.1%	27.4%
Agree Strongly	Number	38	206	244
	%	50.7%	71.8%	66.8%
Don't Know or refused	Number	0	0	3
	%	0%	0%	0.8%
Total	Number	75	287	365
	%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Teaching in Multiracial Schools question 13b, NCES Common Core of Data, 2005-06, p<.001
* p<.05; **No significant differences (comparison group are schools that are 11-100% white, not shown).

Table 8A: Teachers feel comfortable working with families by percentage of white students by teacher race

	You feel comfortable working with families			Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is White	Total
Categories of white students (% white)	0-25%**	Disagree Strongly	Number	1	0	1
			%	1.7%	.0%	.7%
		Disagree Somewhat	Number	4	2	6
			%	6.7%	2.7%	4.5%
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	7	1	8
			%	11.7%	1.4%	6.0%
		Agree Somewhat	Number	17	30	47
			%	28.3%	40.5%	35.1%
		Agree Strongly	Number	31	40	71
			%	51.7%	54.1%	53.0%
		Don't Know	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	1.4%	.7%
		Total	Number	60	74	134
			N%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	25-50%**	Disagree Strongly	Number	1	2	3
			%	2.7%	1.8%	2.0%
		Disagree Somewhat	Number	3	2	5
			%	8.1%	1.8%	3.4%
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	1	2	3
			%	2.7%	1.8%	2.0%
		Agree Somewhat	Number	8	38	46
			%	21.6%	33.9%	30.9%
		Agree Strongly	Number	24	67	91
			%	64.9%	59.8%	61.1%
		Don't Know	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	.9%	.7%
		Total	Number	37	112	149
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	50-75%*	Disagree Strongly	Number	1	0	1
			%	3.3%	.0%	.5%
		Disagree Somewhat	Number	1	0	1
			%	3.3%	.0%	.5%
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	1	3	4
			%	3.3%	2.0%	2.2%
		Agree Somewhat	Number	8	45	53
			%	26.7%	29.6%	29.1%
		Agree Strongly	Number	18	104	122
			%	60.0%	68.4%	67.0%
		Don't Know	Number	1	0	1
			%	3.3%	.0%	.5%
		Total	Number	30	152	182
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Disagree Strongly	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	.2%	.2%
		Disagree Somewhat	Number	1	3	4
			%	4.3%	.6%	.7%

Table 9A: Teachers believe local community supports school by levels of student poverty by teacher race

	Local community supports school			Teacher is Nonwhite	Teacher is Nonwhite	Total
Categories of student poverty	0-10%*	Disagree Strongly	Number	1	1	2
			%	14.3%	.8%	1.6%
		Disagree Somewhat	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	.8%	.8%
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	1	2	3
			%	14.3%	1.7%	2.4%
		Agree Somewhat	Number	2	26	28
			%	28.6%	21.8%	22.2%
		Agree Strongly	Number	3	89	92
			%	42.9%	74.8%	73.0%
		Total	Number	7	119	126
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	10-25%**	Disagree Somewhat	Number	3	8	11
			%	12.5%	3.9%	4.8%
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	1	7	8
			%	4.2%	3.4%	3.5%
		Agree Somewhat	Number	6	58	64
			%	25.0%	28.6%	28.2%
		Agree Strongly	Number	14	130	144
			%	58.3%	64.0%	63.4%
		Total	Number	24	203	227
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	25-50%**	Disagree Strongly	Number	1	7	8
			%	2.3%	2.7%	2.6%
		Disagree Somewhat	Number	3	17	20
			%	6.8%	6.4%	6.5%
		Neither Agree nor Disagree	Number	0	15	15
			%	.0%	5.7%	4.9%
		Agree Somewhat	Number	18	87	105
			%	40.9%	33.0%	34.1%
		Agree Strongly	Number	22	137	159
			%	50.0%	51.9%	51.6%
		Don't Know	Number	0	1	1
			%	.0%	.4%	.3%
		Total	Number	44	264	308
			%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		Disagree Strongly	Number	4	10	14
			%	6.1%	4.7%	5.0%
		Disagree Somewhat	Number	3	17	20
			%	4.5%	8.0%	7.2%
		Neither	Number	1	16	17