



# **Why Segregation Matters: Poverty and Educational Inequality**

*By*

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## Introduction

Much of the discussion about school reform in the U.S. in the past two decades has been about racial inequality. President Bush has promised that the No Child Left Behind Act and the forthcoming expansion of high stakes testing to high schools can end the “soft racism of low expectations.” Yet a disproportionate number of the schools being officially labeled as persistent failures and facing sanctions under this program are segregated minority schools. Large city school systems are engaged in massive efforts to break large segregated high poverty high schools into small schools, hoping that it will create a setting better able to reduce inequality, while others claim that market forces operating through charter schools and private schools could end racial inequalities even though both of these are even more segregated than public schools and there is no convincing evidence for either of these claims. More and more of the still standing court orders and plans for desegregated schools are being terminated or challenged in court, and the leaders of the small number of high achieving segregated schools in each big city or state are celebrated. The existence of these schools is being used to claim that we can have general educational success within the existing context of deepening segregation.<sup>1</sup> Clearly the basic assumption is that separate schools can be made equal and that we need not worry about the abandonment of the movement for integration whose history was celebrated so extensively last year on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Brown* decision even as the schools continued to re-segregate. There has been a continuous pattern of deepening segregation for black and Latino students now since the 1980s.

What if this basic assumption is wrong? What if the Supreme Court was correct a half century ago in its conclusion that segregated schools were “inherently unequal”? What if Martin Luther King’s many statements about how segregation harms both the segregator and the segregated, drastically limits opportunity, and does not provide the basis for building a successful interracial society are correct? What if the Supreme Court’s sweeping conclusion in the 2003 University of Michigan case that there is compelling evidence that diversity improves the education of all students is true and applies with even greater force to public schools?

If, however, it is wrong to assume that segregation is irrelevant and policies that ignore that fact simply punish the victims of segregation because they fail to take into account many of the causes of the inequality, then current policy is being built on a foundation that it cannot produce the desired results and may even compound the existing inequalities. We believe this to be true. Segregated schools are unequal and there is very little evidence of any success in creating “separate but equal” outcomes on a large scale.

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<sup>1</sup> Thernstrom, A. and Thernstrom, S. (2003). *No excuses: Closing the racial gap in learning*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

One of the common misconceptions over the issue of resegregation of schools is that many people treat it as simply a change in the skin color of the students in a school. If skin color were not systematically linked to other forms of inequality, it would, of course, be of little significance for educational policy. Unfortunately that is not and never has been the nature of our society. Socioeconomic segregation is a stubborn, multidimensional and deeply important cause of educational inequality. U.S. schools are now 41 percent nonwhite and the great majority of the nonwhite students attend schools which now show substantial segregation. Levels of segregation for black and Latino students have been steadily increasing since the 1980s, as we have shown in a series of reports.<sup>2</sup> Achievement scores are strongly linked to school racial composition and so is the presence of highly qualified and experienced teachers.<sup>3</sup> The nation's shockingly high dropout problem is squarely concentrated in heavily minority high schools in big cities.<sup>4</sup> The high level of poverty among children, together with many housing policies and practices which exclude poor people from most communities, mean that students in inner city schools face isolation not only from the white community but also from middle class schools. Minority children are far more likely than whites to grow up in persistent poverty. Since few whites have direct experience with concentrated poverty schools, it is very important to examine research about its effects.

### **Evidence of the Multidimensional Nature of Segregation in Education**

Race is deeply and systematically linked to many forms of inequality in background, treatment, expectations and opportunities. From an educational perspective, perhaps the most important of those linkages is with the level of concentrated poverty in a school. These differences start at an early age. A comprehensive federal study of children across the country entering kindergarten shows very large differences in the acquisition of skills invaluable for school success long before the children ever enter a schoolhouse.<sup>5</sup> Schools where almost all of the students come with these problems obviously face very different challenges than schools where some of the kindergarteners come better prepared.

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<sup>2</sup> The most recent is Orfield, G. and Lee, C. (2004). *Brown at 50: King's dream or Plessy's nightmare?* Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

<sup>3</sup> Natriello, G., McDill, E.L. & Pallas, A.M. (1990). *Schooling disadvantaged children: Racing against catastrophe*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press; Schellenberg, S. (1999). Concentration of poverty and the ongoing need for Title I. In G. Orfield and E.DeBray, (Eds.), *Hard Work for Good Schools*(pp.130-146). Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University; Lee, C. (2004). *Racial segregation and educational outcomes in metropolitan Boston*. Cambridge: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

<sup>4</sup> Balfanz, R. and Legter, N. (January, 2001). *How many central city high schools have a severe dropout problem, where are they located, and who attends them?* Paper presented at Dropouts in America Conference, Cambridge, MA.

<sup>5</sup> Rathbun, A., West, J., and Germino Hausken, E. (2004). *From kindergarten through third grade: Children's beginning school experiences*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Our study of metro Boston shows a strong relationship between segregation by race and poverty and teacher quality, test scores and dropout rates.<sup>6</sup> In the entire metro region, 97 percent of the schools with less than a tenth white students face concentrated poverty compared to 1 percent of the schools with less than a tenth minority students. These differences were strongly related to the results on the high stakes MCAS state examinations.

The nation's dropout problem is concentrated in segregated high poverty schools. In our new book, *Dropouts in America*, we report that half of the nation's African American and Latino students are dropping out of high school. The most severe problems are in segregated high poverty schools. For the high school class of 2002 almost a third of the high schools that were more than 50 percent minority graduated less than half of their class. Among schools that were 90 percent or more white, only one school in fifty had this kind of record. Half of the majority-minority schools had dropout rates over 40 percent as did two-thirds of the schools with less than a tenth white students.<sup>7</sup> Nationally the gap in graduation rates between districts with high and low proportions of low income students was 18.4 percent in 2001, even higher than the gap between majority white and majority-minority districts.<sup>8</sup>

Richard Rothstein's important 2004 book, *Class and Schools*, reviews a wide array of studies that have shown for decades strong links between individual poverty, school poverty, race and educational inequality. Studies show that poverty is strongly related to everything from the child's physical development to the family's ability to stay in a neighborhood long enough so that a school might have an effect on the student. His analysis suggests that we tend to provide weaker education in highly impoverished schools and that the major claims about successful reforms in these schools are wrong. He argues that it is unrealistic to expect to change schools in any deep way without dealing with some of the issues that arise with poverty.<sup>9</sup>

Further, a major 2005 report from the University of North Carolina explored the increasing concentration of poverty in metropolitan Charlotte following the end of desegregation.<sup>10</sup> By the 2004-2005 school year, more than a fifth of the metropolitan

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<sup>6</sup>Lee, C. (2004). *Racial segregation and educational outcomes in metropolitan Boston*. Cambridge: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

<sup>7</sup> Balfanz, R. and Legters, N. (2004). Locating the dropout crisis: Which high schools produce the nation's dropouts. In Gary Orfield, (Ed.), *Dropouts in America: Confronting the graduation rate crisis*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, p. 63.

<sup>8</sup> Swanson, C. (2004). Sketching a portrait of public high school graduation: Who graduates? Who doesn't? In Gary Orfield, (Ed.), *Dropouts in America: Confronting the graduation rate crisis*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, p. 29.

<sup>9</sup> Rothstein, R. (2004). *Class and schools: Using social, economic, and educational reform to close the black-white achievement gap*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

<sup>10</sup> Boger, C. (2005). *The socioeconomic composition of the public schools: A crucial consideration in student assignment policy*. Chapel Hill, NC: Center for Civil Rights.

district's schools had poverty levels over 75 percent. Many studies over four decades have found a strong relationship between concentrated school poverty and low achievement. The study found that between 2003 and 2004 the largest achievement test score gains were reported by low income students attending middle income schools. These students gained 10 points on the test compared to just 4 points for similarly low income students in high poverty schools; 82 percent of poor children in middle class schools were at grade level compared to 64 percent of poor children in concentrated poverty schools. The high poverty schools were performing much worse than schools in nearby Wake County (metro Raleigh) which had socio-economic desegregation to end poverty concentrations.

High poverty schools also tend to have a less stable and less qualified teaching staff. A 2004 U.S. Department of Education report showed that in schools where “at least 75 percent of the students were low-income, there were three times as many uncertified or out-of-field teachers in both English and science...”<sup>11</sup> Teachers tend to become more effective with experience, and building an effective team in a school takes years of collaboration. In Charlotte's highest poverty schools, almost a third of the teachers left each year. The North Carolina study recommended that the school district limit the concentration of low-income families in any school and use districting and choice policies to create economically diverse schools.<sup>12</sup>

A 2004 study by researchers at the University of Miami and the University of South Florida explored the relationship between segregation, integration and success of students in passing the state's demanding high stakes tests. Florida is one of the states that achieved the greatest increase in desegregation in the 1970s and has been losing those gains ever since. After controlling for other possible factors such as expenditures, poverty levels, teaching quality, class size, and mobility of students, the study showed that segregation was clearly related to lower pass rates on the state test for black students in racially isolated schools and that black students in integrated schools did about as well as the rare black students in overwhelmingly white schools. The authors concluded that segregated schools can be viewed as institutions of concentrated disadvantage and that policies “that attempt to resolve the achievement gap by funding equity or classroom size changes” would probably fail if the segregation issue were not addressed.<sup>13</sup>

These and many other inequalities do not mean that racial or socioeconomic integration is a magic bullet that can cure all the inequalities rooted in the broader society, but they clearly suggest that it is foolish to ignore the damage of segregation and to accept policy

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<sup>11</sup> Educate, Jan. 3, 2005, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Boger, C. (2005). *The socioeconomic composition of the public schools: A crucial consideration in student assignment policy*. Chapel Hill, NC: Center for Civil Rights.

<sup>13</sup> Borman, et al. (2004). Accountability in a postdesegregation era: The continuing significance of racial segregation in Florida's schools,” *American Educational Research Journal*, v41, n3, p. 605.

changes that may make it worse. Those who argue that because there are segregated schools that succeed we need not worry about segregation are engaged in a fallacy of using exceptions to the rule to prove a relationship.

Martin Luther King understood the nature of racial inequality and campaigned against segregation, discrimination and poverty. Dr. King died more than a third of a century ago and with his death the civil rights movement lost its central voice and focus and faced a strengthening movement toward preservation of the status quo. With the passage of time and changing political leadership we have seen sweeping policy reversals, rising segregation, especially in the South and West, and a loss of understanding of the reasons for Dr. King's crusades against racial separation. Certainly there was nothing about Dr. King that held that black institutions were bad—he was the proud pastor of an overwhelmingly black church of great influence and power and a proud graduate of the preeminent black college for men, Morehouse in Atlanta. Segregation was evil in his mind not because of skin color but because it almost always led to unequal opportunities, given the realities of American society, and because it produced both ignorance and damaging racial stereotypes in the minds of both the segregated and the segregators. Segregation was a basic structure that subordinated and limited opportunities for nonwhite children. Dr. King advocated not only plans that brought minority children into previously segregated white schools but much deeper transformations in which segregated schools became truly integrated with equal treatment and respect for all groups of students.

Segregation was never just a black-white problem, never just a Southern problem, and never just a racial problem, but in the initial struggle in the South of the mid-twentieth century that was clearly the focus. By the time Dr. King organized his last movement, the Poor Peoples Campaign, his approach was clearly multiracial, with a deepening emphasis on poverty as well as racial discrimination. Speaking ten days before he died, King spoke of his conviction that it was “absolutely necessary now to deal massively and militantly with the economic problem.... So the grave problem facing us is the problem of economic deprivation, with the syndrome of bad housing and poor education and improper health facilities all surrounding this basic problem.”<sup>14</sup> Had he not been assassinated shortly before that movement came to Washington, perhaps the link between racial and economic isolation would be better understood as would the profound impact of double segregation (often triple segregation for immigrant children who are also isolated by language in their schools.)

The civil rights movement was never about sitting next to whites, it was about equalizing opportunity. If high poverty schools are systematically unequal and segregated minority schools are almost always high poverty schools, it is much easier to understand both the

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<sup>14</sup> Washington, J. ed. (1986). *Testament of hope: The essential writings and speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, p. 672.

consequences of segregation and the conditions that create the possibility of substantial gains in desegregated classes. At a time when the racial achievement gaps remain substantial and desegregation orders are being challenged, it is particularly important to understand the pattern that is developing and to think seriously about how to address it.

This report examines the changing nature of segregation and integration in a society that has now become far more profoundly multiracial than it was in the past and explores some of the connections between segregation by race, segregation by poverty, and unequal opportunity. It has several basic goals—to help people understand some of the mechanisms of educational inequality by looking at segregation of schools and students by poverty, discussing the massive research literature showing the ways in which high poverty schools are systematically unequal, and then exploring the racial consequences of the fact that concentrated poverty schools have a vastly larger impact on black and Latino students than on their white and Asian counterparts. Another basic goal of the paper is to show how different relationships between race and poverty in differing parts of a nation in rapid demographic transition challenge the traditional black-white description of segregation. Unlike our earlier studies, this one gives central attention to the issue of segregation by poverty and shows how it relates to racial inequality.

Data from this report are computed from the Common Core of Data of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for 2002-3 and previous years.<sup>15</sup> For each of the regions,<sup>16</sup> we use the exposure index to measure the level of segregation students experience in schools with varying levels of poverty.<sup>17</sup> We use the Cumulative Promotion Index to calculate graduation rates, a measure of student promotion through successive school years designed to offset some of the limitations of official dropout data.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Unless otherwise specified, the data in tables and figures in this report were computed from 2002-3 NCES Common Core of Data.

<sup>16</sup> Our definition of the regions is as follows: **South:** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia; **Border:** Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Oklahoma, and West Virginia; **Northeast:** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont; **Midwest:** Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; **West:** Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Note: Hawaii and Alaska, which have very distinctive populations are treated separately and the District of Columbia is treated as a city rather than a state.

<sup>17</sup> For an explanation of the exposure index, see Massy, D.S. and Denton, N.A. (1988). The dimensions of racial segregation. *Social Forces*, 67:281-315; Orfield, G., Bachmeier, M., James, D., and Eitle, T. (1997). *Deepening segregation in American public schools*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Project on School Desegregation.

<sup>18</sup> Developed by Christopher Swanson at The Urban Institute, the CPI tracks three grade-to-grade promotion transitions and the ultimate graduation event over two successive years instead of following particular students over time. For a more detailed explanation of the CPI index, see Appendix A.

### **Poverty Segregation and Racial Inequality**

In the South of Dr. King's time, the world was largely black and white, apart from sections of Texas and Florida. The civil rights movement was largely understood at its peak as a movement to end discrimination against blacks. The black student enrollment of the country was many times larger than the Latino enrollment, and the Asian enrollment was still almost insignificant.

Immigration has transformed American schools as the number of black students grew slowly, the number of Latinos and Asian students exploded, and white enrollment continuously declined as a proportion of the total. Enrollment statistics for the 2002-3 school year show the multiracial nature of our nation's public schools: Latinos are now the largest minority group at 18 percent, closely followed by black students at 17 percent. Together, these two groups are now more than a third of the total student population. In the West and South, the two most populous regions, with 54 percent of the nation's public school students, blacks and Latinos comprise at least 30 percent of the student population in most of the states. In many areas, Latinos and Asians are making their presence felt in previously biracial environments. Asians now outnumber black students in the Western region, stretching from the Rockies to the Pacific coast. In the Northeast, the share of Latino students rivals the share of black students. In these two regions, students have greater potential to attend multiracial schools than do their peers in the Midwest and Border states, where whites comprise 70 percent or more of the public school population.

White shares of enrollment have been shrinking and Latino shares rapidly climbing for a third of a century,<sup>19</sup> and both birth and immigration statistics strongly suggest that they will continue. Thus, the importance of understanding the conditions affecting nonwhite children becomes more important every year. These changes will also require us to think about race and racial/ethnic isolation in a much richer multiracial context.

The national enrollment statistics show the continuation of the historic concentration of Latinos in the West, where they make up 35 percent of all students, and blacks in the South, where they account for 27 percent of total enrollment (Table 1). In the West there are five times as many Latino as black students and slightly more Asians than blacks. In the other regions there are more blacks than Latinos but the numbers are changing. Almost one-fifth of the students in the South are now Latino as are one eighth of the students in the Northeast. There is now clear evidence of large secondary Latino migrations into areas where the minority population has historically been overwhelmingly black, such as Georgia and North Carolina.

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<sup>19</sup> See Orfield, G. and Lee, C. (2004). *Brown at 50: King's dream or Plessy's nightmare?* Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

**Table 1**  
**Public School Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity and Region, 2002-03**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>%White</b>	<b>%Black</b>	<b>%Latino</b>	<b>%Asian</b>	<b>%Native American</b>
West	11,086,700	48	7	35	8	2
Border	3,518,342	70	21	4	2	3
Midwest	9,850,818	75	15	7	3	1
South	13,880,097	51	27	19	2	0
Northeast	8,296,140	66	16	13	5	0
Alaska	134,364	59	5	4	6	26
Hawaii	183,829	20	2	5	72	1
Bureau of Indian Affairs	46,126	0	0	0	0	100
<b>US Total</b>	<b>46,996,416</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

The nine states with the highest Latino enrollment are spread through the South, Northeast, West, and Midwest (Table 2). Increasingly, Latinos comprise a greater share of enrollment in states such as California and Texas--together these two states enroll about 5 million Latino students. Since 1970, Florida has had the highest rate of Latino growth (719 percent). Latino enrollment in Florida has increased by 15 percent in just the last three years. The widespread growth of Latinos across distant states suggests a phenomenon that is more particular to specific states than to particular regions.

**Table 2**  
**Growth of Latino Enrollments, 1970-2002**

<b>State</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Enrollment Change (1970-2002)</b>	<b>Percent Change (1970-2002)</b>	<b>Percent Change (2000-2002)</b>
Arizona	85,500	297,703	338,820	253,320	296	14
California	706,900	2,613,480	2,819,504	2,112,604	299	8
Colorado	84,281	159,547	182,593	98,312	117	14
Florida	65,700	469,362	537,882	472,182	719	15
Illinois	78,100	315,446	352,665	274,565	352	12
New Jersey	59,100	201,509	227,154	168,054	284	13
New Mexico	109,300	160,708	165,451	56,151	51	3
New York	316,600	533,631	547,857	231,257	73	3
Texas	565,900	1,646,508	1,819,063	1,253,163	221	10

*Source: DBS Corp, 1982; 2000; 2002-3 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe*

Due to the severe white residential isolation in outlying suburbs, white students are the least likely group to attend truly multiracial schools (Table 3).<sup>20</sup> In contrast, although black and Latino students attend schools with a majority of students from their own groups, the average black and Latino students attend more diverse schools than do their white peers. The average black student attends a school where one-eighth of the students are Latino, and the average Latino student is in a school with a similar fraction of blacks. Black and Latino students attend schools, on average, that are 30 percent or less white. The contrast in terms of contact with their own groups are most extreme for whites and Asians. Whites are most isolated within their own racial group--attending schools where almost four-fifths of the students are white. In contrast, Asians are least isolated within their own racial group--with only about one-fifth Asian classmates. Asians attend the most diverse schools of all, with 45 percent white, 12 percent black, and 20 percent Latino students.

**Table 3`  
Racial Composition of Schools Attended by the Average Student  
of Each Race, 2002-03**

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:</b>				
	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	78	30	28	45	44
%Black	9	54	12	12	7
%Latino	8	13	54	20	11
%Asian	3	3	5	22	2
%Native American	1	1	1	1	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Enrollment in Predominantly Minority, Intensely Segregated Minority and  
Extremely Segregated Minority Schools<sup>21</sup>**

Because of the severe isolation of students in their own racial groups, particularly of white students, black and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools in disproportionate numbers. Twice as many black and Latino students as white students attend predominantly minority (>50% minority) schools and three times as many attend intensely segregated schools (>90-100% minority). About 1.4 million black students and

<sup>20</sup> Multiracial schools are schools where there are at least three groups with 10 percent or more representation in the student population.

<sup>21</sup> Predominantly minority schools are schools that are over 50% minority, intensely segregated minority schools are more than 90% minority schools, and extremely segregated minority schools enroll over 99% minority students. These terms are also used for segregated white schools: predominantly white (>50% white), intensely segregated white (>90% white), and extremely segregated white (>99%white) schools.

close to a million Latino students attend schools that are almost all minority (99-100% minority) compared to less than ten thousand white students. While it is true that, by definition, the majority of students in these intensely segregated and extremely segregated minority schools (90% and 99% minority respectively) would be minority students, it is also clear that there are many more black and Latino students attending these schools than overall enrollment numbers should suggest. To get a better sense of how segregated the public schools are, we must examine the percentages of each group attending schools with different racial compositions.

More than three quarters (77%) of Latino students attend majority minority schools, closely followed by black students at 73 percent (Table 4). Asian and Native American students attend these schools in substantial numbers. Despite the fact that these two groups *together* comprise just five percent of total public school enrollment, *more than half* of each group attend majority minority schools. In contrast, less than 12 percent of white students attend these majority-minority schools, and less than one percent white students attend overwhelmingly minority schools (90-100% and 99-100% minority schools). More than a third of all black and Latino students attend 90-100% schools, closely followed by Native American students at 27 percent. More than ten percent of each group attend 99-100% minority schools. Overall, black students experience even more segregation than do their Native American peers.

**Table 4**  
**Percent of Students from Each Racial Group**  
**in 50-100%, 90-100%, and 99-100% Minority Schools,**  
**2002-3**

Race	Type of School		
	50-100% Minority Schools	90-100% Minority Schools	99-100% Minority Schools
Black	73	38	18
Latino	77	38	11
White	12	1	0
Asian	56	15	1
Native American	52	27	16

**Enrollment in Predominantly, Intensely Segregated, and Extremely Segregated White Schools**

Close to 90 percent of white students attend schools that are at least half white (Table 5). Given the racial composition of our nation’s public schools--where close to 60 percent of the students are white--this is to be expected. However, 2 out of every 5 white students attend schools that are 90-100% white. This reflects substantial concentration of white

students in certain areas, such as the suburbs of our nation. In contrast, only about two percent black and Latino students, six percent Asian, and eight percent Native American students attend these overwhelmingly white schools.

**Table 5**  
**Percent of Students from Each Racial Group**  
**in 50-100%, 90-100%, and 99-100% White Schools,**  
**2002-3**

Race	Type of School		
	50-100% White Schools	90-100% White Schools	99-100% White Schools
Black	28	2	0
Latino	23	2	0
White	88	41	5
Asian	45	6	0
Native American	49	8	0

### **THE POVERTY DIMENSION IN SEGREGATION**

Many who belittle the desegregation movement tend to assume that integrationists are too preoccupied by issues of race and that it is absurd to suppose that changing the color of a student's classmates would make any real difference. Desegregation, they claim, is not only virtually irrelevant to school reform but it is also insulting to suggest that there is something wrong about an all-black or all-Latino school. Many cite as examples minority schools that despite all odds were able to provide quality education to the students. The implication is that the civil rights leaders had an incorrect, simplistic and even racially paternalistic theory that does not work and detracts attention from more important goals.

Segregation has never just been by race: segregation by race is systematically linked to other forms of segregation, including segregation by socioeconomic status, by residential location, and increasingly by language. Since the 1970s, there has been a gradual decline of white families in large metropolitan centers as they moved to suburbs or small cities, leaving a large concentration of black and Latino students in central cities.<sup>22</sup> The share of black students living in households headed by women increased from 38 percent to 54 percent from 1973 to 1994. For Latinos, the share doubled from 20 percent to 39

<sup>22</sup> Hauser, R., Simmons, S. and Pager, D. (2004). High school dropout, race/ethnicity, and social background from the 1970s to the 1990s. In G. Orfield, (Ed.). *Dropouts in America: Confronting the graduation rate crisis*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

percent.<sup>23</sup> Their communities usually reflect conditions of distress—housing inadequacy and decay, weak and failing infrastructure, and critical lack of mentors and shortage of jobs—all of which adversely affect inner city children’s educational success.<sup>24</sup> Isolated in the inner cities, high poverty schools must also struggle with the challenges posed by enrolling a student body lacking health and proper nutrition, violence in the form of crime and gangs, and unstable home environments.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, the stigma experienced by people living in these communities often feeds back into a vicious cycle of stagnation and unequal opportunity.<sup>26</sup> Middle class, and even many low income whites can expect their children to attend low poverty schools. In contrast, even middle income minority families often end up in neighborhoods and schools with high poverty concentrations because of housing discrimination and other forces that perpetuate and exacerbate segregated residential patterns.<sup>27</sup>

The simplification of segregation into purely a racial issue ignores the fact that schools tend to reflect and intensify the racial stratification in society. Desegregation efforts aim at breaking the pernicious link between the two by taking a black and Latino student from a high poverty school to a middle class school that often has better resources, more qualified teachers, tougher academic competition, and access to more developed social networks. The famous 1966 federal report on the first large national study of segregated and desegregated education, the Coleman Report, found peer influence to be stronger than any other factor other than family background. Subsequent research has tended to confirm these findings. A 2003 study of the schools of the South reported that a major negative impact on academic achievement, related to attending a high poverty school, was the absence of a strong positive peer influence.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 94. In another study, Bluestone and colleagues found that growing up in single-parent households adversely affects employment opportunities and future earnings. See Bluestone, B. and Stevenson, M. (2000). *The Boston renaissance: Race, space and economic change in an American metropolis*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

<sup>24</sup> Rothstein, R. (2004). *Class and schools: Using social, economic, and educational reform to close the black-white achievement gap*. Washington: Economic Policy Institute.

<sup>25</sup> Knapp, M. S. et al. (1995). *Teaching for meaning in high-poverty classrooms*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press; Metz, M. (1990). How social class differences shape teachers’ work. In M.W. McLaughlin, J.E. Talbert, and N. Bascia (Eds.), *The contexts of teaching in secondary schools*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press; Puma, M. et al., (1995). *Prospectives: Final report on student outcomes*. In Knapp et al, *Teaching for meaning in high-poverty classrooms*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

<sup>26</sup> Mcardle, N. (2004). *Racial equity and opportunity in metro Boston job markets*. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

<sup>27</sup> Harris, D., and Mcardle, N. (2004). *More than money: The spatial mismatch between where minorities can afford to live and where they actually reside*. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University; Bradford, C. (2002). *Risk or race? Racial disparities and the subprime refinance market*. Washington, DC: Center for Community Change; Yinger, J. (1995). *Closed doors, opportunities lost: The continuing costs of housing discrimination*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

<sup>28</sup> Rumberger, R.W. (2003). The causes and consequences of student mobility. *Journal of Negro Education*, 72, 6-21.

Several empirical studies have found that attending a middle class school exposes minority students to higher expectations and more educational and career options.<sup>29</sup> In their study of voluntary transfer policies in metropolitan St. Louis, Wells and Crain observed that minority students who attend middle- and upper-class schools had higher educational achievement and college attendance rates than their peers in concentrated poverty schools.<sup>30</sup> Eaton documents the finding that scores of Boston students who attended suburban public schools had access to knowledge and networks that their peers in inner city Boston lacked and that this experience increased their educational and professional opportunities.<sup>31</sup> Other researchers have found that “the best guarantee that a school will have what various individual reforms seek to achieve—high standards, qualified teachers, less crowded classes, and so on—is the presence of a critical mass of middle-class families who will ensure that these things happen.”<sup>32</sup>

These studies are consistent with analyses of the relationship between poverty and segregated schools in previous research. Studies have shown that there is a strong relationship between percent poor and percent minority in a school; specifically, the share of schools that are high poverty increases as the minority population in a school increases. Similarly, as white enrollment increases, the share of schools that are high poverty schools correspondingly decreases. For example, 88 percent of high minority schools (more than 90 percent minority) are high poverty schools (more than 50 percent of the students are on free and reduced lunch). The corresponding share of low minority schools (less than 10 percent) that are also high poverty schools is 15 percent.<sup>33</sup> The reality of segregation by race and poverty means that, while the majority of white students attend middle class schools, minority students in racially segregated schools are very likely attending a school of concentrated poverty. These patterns are not limited to cities; increasingly, suburban rings with increasing minority enrollment also experience segregation by poverty and race.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Schofield, J. W. (1995). “Review of research on school desegregation’s impact on elementary and secondary school students,” in J.A. Banks & C.A. M. Banks (Eds.) *Handbook of research on multicultural education*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Macmillan; Anyon, J. (1997). *Ghetto schooling: A political economy of urban educational reform*. New York, NY: Teachers College Record; Dawkins, M. P. and Braddock J.H. (1994). The continuing significance of desegregation: School racial composition and African American inclusion in American society. *Journal of Negro Education*. 63(3):394-405; Natriello, G., McDill, E.L. and Pallas, A.M. (1990). *Schooling disadvantaged children: Racing against catastrophe*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

<sup>30</sup> Wells, A. & Crain, R. (1997). *Stepping over the color line: African-American students in white suburban schools*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

<sup>31</sup> Eaton, S. (2001). *The other Boston busing story: What’s won and lost across the boundary line*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

<sup>32</sup> Kahlenberg, R.D. (2001). *All together now*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> Orfield, G. and Lee, C. (2004). *Brown at 50: King’s dream or Plessy’s nightmare?* Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

<sup>34</sup> Stuart, G. (200). *Segregation in the Boston metropolitan area at the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

Aside from challenges posed by students' background, high poverty schools tend to struggle with attracting and retaining good teachers. For example, California schools with high concentrations of minority enrollments are less likely to have credentialed math or science teachers.<sup>35</sup> A national study conducted by Monk and Haller found a correlation between the average socioeconomic status of the student body and academic credits that were offered: schools with higher concentrations of low-income students had a less vigorous curriculum.<sup>36</sup> The inequality in educational resources is compounded by students' limited access to basic math courses such as algebra, which is often a prerequisite to higher level math courses.<sup>37</sup> Other studies show that students attending high minority/high poverty schools also face higher teacher turnover as well as lower educational aspirations and career options than students in more desegregated settings.<sup>38</sup> In Georgia, Freeman, Scafidi, and Sjoquist found that teachers who transferred tended to move toward low poverty schools with higher student achievement and fewer minority students. Since the quality and experience of the teacher have a major impact on education, these are very serious problems.

Furthermore, high poverty schools often have large percentages of students with limited English proficiency. The average Latino English Language Learner attends a school where over three-fifths of the students are Latino. The average Asian English Language Learner attends a school that is 25 percent Asian.<sup>39</sup> A recent report showed that the average Latino and Asian English Language Learner is more than three times as isolated in their schools as their English Speaker peers.<sup>40</sup>

### **National Trends**

The racial differences in exposure to poverty are striking (Table 6). The average white and Asian student attends schools with the lowest shares of poor students. The average black and Latino student attends schools in which close to half the students are poor,

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<sup>35</sup> Linda Darling-Hammond found that in California schools, the share of unqualified teachers is 6.75 times higher in high-minority schools (more than 90 percent) than in low-minority schools (less than 30 percent minority). See Darling-Hammond, L. (2001). *Apartheid in American education: How opportunity is rationed to children of color in the United States*.

<sup>36</sup> Monk, D. and Haller, E. (1993). Predictors of high school academic course offerings: The role of school size. *American Educational Research Journal* v30, n1, 3-21.

<sup>37</sup> Oakes, J. (1990). *Multiplying inequalities*. Santa Monica: RAND.

<sup>38</sup> See Freeman, C., Scafidi, B., and Sjoquist, D.L. (2002). *Racial segregation in Georgia public schools, 1994-2001: Trends, causes, and impacts on teacher quality*. Paper presented at Resegregation of Southern Schools Conference, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Anyon, J. (1997). *Ghetto schooling: A political economy of urban educational reform*. New York, NY: Teachers College Record; M.P. Dawkins, M.P. and Braddock, J.H. (1994). "The Continuing Significance of Desegregation: School Racial Composition and African American Inclusion in American Society." *Journal of Negro Education*. 63(3): 394-405.

<sup>39</sup> Horn, C. (2002) *The intersection of race, class and English Learner status*. Working Paper. Prepared for National Research Council.

<sup>40</sup> Lee, C. (2004). *Racial segregation and educational outcomes in metropolitan Boston*. Cambridge: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.

more than twice the exposure of whites to poor students. The average Native American student experienced the biggest increase in exposure to poor students, from 31 percent to 38 percent in 2002.

**Table 6**  
**Percent Poor\* in Schools Attended by the Average Student,**  
**by Race and Year**

<b>Percent Poor</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
1996-7	19	43	46	29	31
1998-9	20	39	44	26	35
2000-1	19	45	44	26	31
2002-3	23	49	48	27	39

\* These numbers include both students eligible for and receiving free and reduced lunch. Unlike the Census Bureau's poverty measure, it does not include low income students not receiving subsidized lunches; thus it is likely to underestimate the level of exposure to poor students.

*Source: 1996-7; 1998-9; 2000-1; 2002-3 NCEs Common Core of Data Public School Universe*

More than 60 percent of black and Latino students attend high poverty schools (>50% poor), compared to 30 percent of Asians and 18 percent of whites (Table 7).<sup>41</sup> A majority of white and Asian students attend schools that are less than 30 percent poor. At the other end of the spectrum, only 1 percent white students attend extreme poverty schools (>90% poor), compared to 12 percent of black and Latino students and four percent of Asians. As Table 7 shows, black and Latino students are more than three times as likely whites to be in high poverty schools and 12 times as likely to be in schools where almost everyone is poor. These are major consequences of residential and educational segregation.

<sup>41</sup> The terms low poverty schools, high poverty schools, and extreme poverty schools will be used interchangeably with schools that are 0-10% poor, 50-100% poor, and 90-100% poor respectively.

**Table 7**  
**Distribution of Public School Students by Poverty, 2002-3**

<b>Cumulative Percent of Each Race in Schools</b>					
<b>Percent Poor</b>	<b>%White</b>	<b>% Black</b>	<b>% Latino</b>	<b>% Asian</b>	<b>%Native American</b>
0-10%	23	5	6	23	9
0-20%	42	11	12	38	18
0-30%	59	19	19	51	29
0-40%	72	29	27	61	40
0-50%	82	39	36	70	51
0-60%	90	50	46	78	62
0-70%	94	63	58	85	75
0-80%	97	75	70	91	84
0-90%	99	88	86	96	94
0-100%	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Total (in Millions)</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.5</b>

Nationwide, whites make up about four out of every five students in schools with ten percent or less poor students (Table 8). In the Northeast and Midwest, close to nine out of every 10 white students attend such low poverty schools. The great majority of whites have a conception of a normal neighborhood school that is solidly middle class, and many families do not realize how different these middle class schools are from those serving the families and communities of segregated barrio or ghetto communities. Across the nation, less than 10 percent of black, Latino, Asian, and Native American students attend the low poverty schools that a huge majority of whites attend. Even in regions where there are relatively larger shares of black, Latino, and Asian students attending these very low poverty schools, the shares of minority students attending do not exceed 14 percent.

**Table 8**  
**Racial Composition of Low Poverty Schools by Region,**  
**2002-3<sup>42</sup>**

<b>Percent of Students in Schools with 0-10% Poor Students</b>						
<b>Region</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>	<b>Total</b>
Northeast	88	4	3	5	0.2	100
South	69	12	14	5	1	100
Midwest	89	4	3	4	1	100
Border	83	10	2	5	1	100
West	72	3	12	12	1	100
<b>Racial Composition of Low Poverty Schools</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

Nationally, high poverty schools contain roughly equal shares of Latino, white, and black students and small shares of Asian and Native American students (Table 9). Compared to the other regions, high poverty schools in the Border region have relatively large concentrations of whites, likely influenced by the largely white populations in economically depressed communities such as the Appalachia. In the West, Latinos make up a disproportionate share of students in poor schools: despite the fact that only a third of the students are Latinos in the West, more than 50 percent of students in high poverty schools are Latinos. Likewise, black students are over-represented in disproportionate shares in the Midwest.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Our definition of the regions is as follows: **South:** Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia; **Border:** Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Oklahoma, and West Virginia; **Northeast:** Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont; **Midwest:** Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; **West:** Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Note: Hawaii and Alaska, which have very distinctive populations are treated separately and the District of Columbia is treated as a city rather than a state.

<sup>43</sup> A racial group is said to be over-represented when that racial group attends particular types of schools (e.g. high poverty schools) in greater percentages than what one would expect given the racial composition of the regions. Likewise, a racial group is said to be under-represented when that racial group attends particular types of schools in smaller percentages than what one would expect given the racial composition of the regions.

**Table 9**  
**Racial Composition of High Poverty Schools by Region, 2002-3**

<b>Percent of Students in Schools with 50-100% Poor Students</b>						
<b>Region</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>	<b>Total</b>
Northeast	32	36	28	4	0.4	100
South	37	37	25	1	0.4	100
Midwest	39	41	16	3	2	100
Border	60	28	5	1	6	100
West	26	9	55	8	2	100
<b>Racial Composition of High Poverty Schools</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>

Latino and black students comprise 80 percent of the student population in extreme poverty schools (90 to 100% poor). In the Northeast and Midwest, blacks comprise more than half of the students in these schools, and in the South, the share increases to 62 percent (Table 10). For Latino students, the picture is especially grim in the West, where they make up a striking 76 percent of the student body in these extreme poverty schools. This means that conditions arising from concentrated poverty in schools are often seen as minority issues because, generally, only minorities experience them in any significant numbers in many locations; except for the Border region, poor whites are far less concentrated residentially than poor nonwhites.

**Table 10**  
**Racial Composition of Extreme Poverty Schools by Region, 2002-3**

<b>Percent of Students in Schools with 90-100% Poor Students</b>						
<b>Region</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>	<b>Total</b>
Northeast	9	55	34	2	0.3	100
South	7	62	31	1	0.2	100
Midwest	13	54	30	2	2	100
Border	66	27	5	1	2.2	100
West	7	9	76	6	2	100
<b>Racial Composition of Extreme Poverty Schools</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

**Western Schools**

**Low Poverty Schools**

Students attending low poverty schools in the West are predominantly white (Table 11). As a result, the average white student in these more affluent schools attends a school with 78 percent whites, 9 percent Asians, 9 percent Latinos and just 3 percent blacks. Because the minority presence is so small, minority students in these low poverty settings experience much more multiracial exposure than in other schools with different poverty levels. Desegregation in overwhelmingly white schools means access to schools of much higher economic status.

**Table 11**  
**Racial Composition of Low Poverty Schools in the WEST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	78	53	54	56	69
%Black	3	14	29	3	3
%Latino	9	22	6	10	13
%Asian	9	11	10	30	8
%Native American	1	1	1	1	7
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>

**High Poverty Schools**

Latinos are over-represented in high poverty schools in the West (Table 12). Despite the fact that only 35 percent of the students in the region are Latino students, they comprise more than half of the students attending these schools. In contrast, the region has 49 percent white students but only 26 percent of enrollment in high poverty schools is white.

**Table 12**  
**Racial Composition of High Poverty Schools in the WEST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	49	16	14	17	28
%Black	6	28	7	12	4
%Latino	37	47	72	46	24
%Asian	6	9	6	24	3
%Native American	3	1	1	1	42
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>

## Extreme poverty Schools

In the West, 76 percent of the students in schools with 90% or more poor students are Latino (Table 13). Latino students attending these schools in the West are the third most isolated group in the country and attend essentially monoracial schools: the average Latino student attends a school that is 83 percent Latino. Nowhere is it more obvious than in the West that racial dynamics are changing: some of the old measures of what it means to be in segregated schooling environments (i.e. predominantly black or predominantly white) no longer applies to regions such as the West where Latinos are now the majority minority racial group. Any discourse on segregation will have to be based on a multiracial versus a biracial paradigm. What is very clear in these statistics is the growing presence of very large numbers of Latino students in schools isolated by both ethnicity and poverty. We know from other studies that many of these schools also have significant isolation by language status, creating three dimensions of separation and isolation for those children.<sup>44</sup>

**Table 13**  
**Racial Composition of Extreme Poverty Schools in the WEST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

Percent Race in Each School	White Student	Black Student	Latino Student	Asian Student	Native American Student
%White	28	6	5	8	9
%Black	8	27	7	11	3
%Latino	55	59	83	56	23
%Asian	7	7	4	24	2
%Native American	3	1	1	1	64
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>44</sup> Lee, C. (2004). *Racial Segregation and Educational Outcomes in Metropolitan Boston*. Cambridge: The Civil Rights Project

**Southern Schools**  
**Low-Poverty Schools**

Like their peers in the West, students attending low poverty schools in the South are predominantly white (69%). Because of high white isolation, the average white student attends a school that is 80 percent white (Table 14). Conversely, there is a relatively small presence of minority students in the school of the average white. Compared to the shares of enrollment in the South, black and Latino students are under-represented in these schools, at 12 and 14 percent respectively. Despite the fact that only 14 percent of the students are Latino in these low poverty schools, Latinos experience relatively high isolation: the average Latino student in a low poverty school attends a school that is 64 percent Latino. One possible explanation for this trend is the large concentration of Latino students with relatively more economic resources, such as Cubans in Florida.

**Table 14**  
**Racial Composition of Low Poverty Schools in the SOUTH**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	80	53	28	72	29
%Black	9	35	6	8	20
%Latino	6	7	64	7	5
%Asian	5	3	2	13	1
%Native American	0.4	2	0.4	0.3	45
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

**High Poverty Schools**

While equal shares of white and black students (37%) attend high poverty schools in the South, whites are under-represented and blacks are over-represented (Table 15). Students experience a certain amount of isolation in these Southern poor schools: the average white, black, and Latino student attend schools where more than 60 percent of their peers are of the same racial group. Despite the isolation, because there are substantial numbers of white, black, and Latino students in these schools, students in high poverty schools

tend to be exposed to more diverse schooling environments than their peers in low poverty schools.

**Table 15**  
**Racial Composition of High Poverty Schools in the SOUTH**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

Percent Race in Each School	White Student	Black Student	Latino Student	Asian Student	Native American Student
%White	60	25	19	30	46
%Black	26	63	15	35	27
%Latino	13	10	64	28	15
%Asian	1	1	2	6	1
%Native American	1	0.3	0.3	0.4	10
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.4</b>

### Extreme Poverty Schools

Black and Latino students together comprise more than 90 percent of the student population in extreme poverty Southern schools (Table 16). Black students are especially over-represented in these schools: 62 percent of the students are black, despite the fact that black students make up less than 30 percent of the public school enrollment in the South. Due to the intense black isolation in these schools, black students in extreme poverty schools in the South are the second most isolated group in the nation: 87 percent of the average black student's peers are black. Latinos are also isolated in these schools: close to four out of every five students in the school of the average Latino student are Latino. Even white students experience some isolation in these schools: despite the fact that only 7 percent of the students in these extreme poverty Southern schools are white, fully a third of the student body in the school of the average white student is white.

**Table 16**  
**Racial Composition of Extreme Poverty Schools in the SOUTH**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	33	5	4	9	13
%Black	46	87	16	46	51
%Latino	20	8	79	37	29
%Asian	1	1	1	8	1
%Native American	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3	6
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.2</b>

**Northeast Schools**  
**Low Poverty Schools**

In the Northeast, an even greater percentage of white students than in the West and South attend low poverty schools (88% versus 82% and 69% respectively). In contrast, five percent or fewer of black, Latino, Asian, and Native American students attend these schools (Table 17). Because of their relatively small presence in these schools, minority students have high exposure to white students, although still lower than the isolation experienced by the average white student. Fully 90 percent of the average white student's peers are also white. Given the intense concentration of white students in these schools, we can expect to find low proportions of white students in less affluent schools.

**Table 17**  
**Racial Composition of Low Poverty Schools in the NORTHEAST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	90	64	78	79	88
%Black	3	25	7	4	4
%Latino	3	6	9	4	3
%Asian	4	5	7	13	4
%Native American	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	2
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.2</b>

### **High Poverty Schools**

Despite deceptively similar proportions of white and black students attending high poverty schools (32 and 36 percent respectively), white students are under-represented and black students are over-represented in high poverty schools (see Table 1). Asians and Native Americans both attend schools with racial compositions that more closely reflect the racial composition of high poverty schools overall, possibly due to the fact that they are present in very small percentages in these schools (4% and .04%). Whites, blacks, and Latinos are relatively isolated in these schools: more than half of their peers share the same race/ethnicity. Despite this isolation, high poverty schools (50-100% poor) are still more multiracial than low poverty schools or extreme poverty schools in the region.

**Table 18**  
**Racial Composition of High Poverty Schools in the NORTHEAST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	61	17	19	28	39
%Black	19	60	26	27	25
%Latino	17	20	51	30	17
%Asian	3	3	4	15	3
%Native American	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4	17
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0.4</b>

### **Extreme Poverty Schools**

Like their peers in the Southern intensely poor schools, black and Latino students in the Northeast are over-represented in high poverty schools and experience heavy isolation (Table 19). The average black student attends a school that is 75 percent black, and 62 percent of the students in the school of the average Latino is Latino. Because they are present in such small percentages, white students, on average, are exposed to the most diversity in these schools. Yet even in these schools, there is a higher concentration of white students in the school of the average white student (38%) than in the schools of the other racial groups.

**Table 19**  
**Racial Composition of Extreme Poverty Schools in the NORTHEAST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	38	5	7	12	18
%Black	32	75	29	38	43
%Latino	26	18	62	33	29
%Asian	3	2	2	17	3
%Native American	1	0.2	0.3	0.4	7
<b>Percent of School Enrollment</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.3</b>

**Midwestern Schools**  
**Low Poverty Schools**

Almost ninety percent of the students attending low poverty schools in the Midwest are white (Table 20). As a result of the high concentration of white students in these low poverty schools, white students in these schools are the most isolated group in the nation: the average white student attends a school that is 91 percent white. Minority students also experience very high exposure to white students: more than 70 percent of students in the school of the average black, Latino, and Asian are white. However, because of the predominance of white students in these schools, students of all racial groups are attending relatively monoracial schools, where students experience racial contact to members of one predominant group.

**Table 20**  
**Racial Composition of Low Poverty Schools in the MIDWEST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	91	71	77	82	60
%Black	3	19	6	4	2
%Latino	3	5	11	4	2
%Asian	3	4	6	10	2
%Native American	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	34
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

### **High Poverty Schools**

Compared to overall racial composition of the Midwest (75% white), white students are under-represented in high poverty schools at 39 percent. Conversely, black and Latino students are over-represented at 41 and 16 percent respectively (Table 21). The average black student attends a school that is 74 percent black, while more than half of the average Latino student's school is Latino. Similar to white students attending high poverty schools in other regions, white students in the Midwest are isolated within their own group: the average white student attends a school that is 68 percent white.

**Table 21**  
**Racial Composition of High Poverty Schools in the MIDWEST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	68	17	26	32	36
%Black	18	74	19	28	11
%Latino	10	7	51	18	6
%Asian	2	2	3	20	2
%Native American	2	1	1	1	44
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

#### **Extreme Poverty Schools**

White, black, Latino, and Native American students are heavily isolated in these extreme poverty schools in the Midwest (Table 22). More than half of the students attending these schools are black, but the average black student attends a school that is 84 percent black. Latinos are also over-represented in these schools at 30 percent; the average Latino student attends a school that is 77 percent Latino. The average Native American student attends a school that is 73 percent Native American.

**Table 22**  
**Racial Composition of Extreme Poverty Schools in the MIDWEST**  
**Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	53	6	7	13	12
%Black	27	84	14	38	8
%Latino	17	8	77	24	6
%Asian	2	1	1	24	2
%Native American	2	0.3	0.4	2	73
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

**The Border States**

**Low Poverty Schools**

White students are over-represented in low poverty schools in the Border states: 83 percent of the students enrolled are white (Table 23). In contrast, black students are under-represented in these schools: despite being 21 percent of the enrollment, only 10 percent of the students attending these schools are black. Because of the high white concentration in these states, minority students also experience a high level of exposure to white students: more than two thirds of the students in the schools attended by the average minority student are white. In these schools, minority students are exposed to white students at a level that is reflective of the region's racial composition overall.

**Table 23**  
**Racial Composition of Low Poverty Schools in the BORDER**  
**States Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	86	67	73	73	78
%Black	8	25	14	10	8
%Latino	2	3	5	3	3
%Asian	4	5	7	13	3
%Native American	1	1	1	1	8
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

### **High Poverty Schools**

Unlike trends in the other regions, a majority (60%) of the students attending high poverty schools in the Border states are white (Table 24). Another 28 percent of the students are black. In these poor schools, white students are extremely isolated: 82 percent of the students in an average white student's class are white. Due to the white isolation, black students also experience isolation in their schools: on average, almost three quarters of their peers are black. Latino students are isolated in their schools to a certain extent. Despite the fact that only five percent of the students in these schools are Latino, the average Latino student attends a school that is 27 percent Latino. Overall, the average Asian student attends the multiracial high poverty schools: there are at least three races with a substantial presence in their schools. This table shows that a majority of the white students are poor and that black and white students in predominantly poor Border schools are isolated from each other. Poor students tend to be either white or black.

**Table 24**  
**Racial Composition of High Poverty Schools in the BORDER**  
**States Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

<b>Percent Race in Each School</b>	<b>White Student</b>	<b>Black Student</b>	<b>Latino Student</b>	<b>Asian Student</b>	<b>Native American Student</b>
%White	82	20	35	41	52
%Black	9	72	30	35	6
%Latino	3	5	27	16	4
%Asian	1	1	3	5	1
%Native American	5	1	5	3	38
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>

### **Extreme Poverty Schools**

About two-thirds of the students attending extreme poverty schools in the Border states are white, and they are severely isolated in their schools (Table 25). The average white student attends a school that is 86 percent white. The pattern of isolation in these schools is pronounced for both black and Latino students: the average black student attends a severely impoverished school that is 68 percent black, and the average Latino student attends a school where over one third of their peers are Latino. Asians attend these schools in the smallest shares, probably due to the fact that they comprise only two percent of the overall enrollment in the region.

**Table 25**  
**Racial Composition of Extreme Poverty Schools in the BORDER**  
**States Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2002-3**

Racial Composition of School Attended by Average:

Percent Race in Each School	White Student	Black Student	Latino Student	Asian Student	Native American Student
%White	86	25	32	42	37
%Black	10	68	23	39	16
%Latino	2	4	38	11	14
%Asian	0	1	1	6	1
%Native American	1	1	6	3	33
<b>Percent of Enrollment</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

### Dropouts, “Dropout Factories”—Relationship with Poverty and Race Segregation

Several studies have shown the link between segregation by poverty, race, and academic performance.<sup>45</sup> Using the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI), scholars found that estimated high school completion rates differ substantially by race.<sup>46</sup> Nationally, Asians have the highest graduation rate at 77 percent, followed by 75 percent of white students. In contrast, a little more than half of all black, Latino, and Native American students graduated on time in 2001.<sup>47</sup> Another study found that the number of high schools with weak promoting power primarily found in North, West, and South, has increased since the 1990s, and the majority of the students attending these schools are overwhelmingly minority students.<sup>48</sup> A majority minority school was five times as likely to have weak

<sup>45</sup> Orfield, G., Losen, D., Wald, J., and Swanson, C. (2004). *Losing Our future: How minority youth are being left behind by the graduation rate crisis*. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University. Contributors: Urban Institute, Advocates for Children of New York, and The Civil Society Institute; Balfanz, R. and Legters, N. (2003). Weak promoting power, minority concentration, and high schools with high dropout rates in urban America: A multiple cohort analysis of the 1990s using the Common Core of Data.” Prepared for *Making Dropouts Visible* conference at Teachers College, Columbia University.

<sup>46</sup> According to the study, some of the ways in which official dropout rates underreport dropouts include the omission of summer dropouts from the count or students who move to adult education GED classes. For a more detailed explanation of the CPI index, see the Appendix.

<sup>47</sup> Orfield, G., et al., supra note 44.

<sup>48</sup> Balfanz, R. and Legters, N. (2004). Locating the dropout crisis: Which high schools produce the nation’s dropouts? In Gary Orfield, ed. *Dropouts in America: Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

promoting power as a majority white school.<sup>49</sup> In some cities, the prevalence and concentration of low promoting schools in cities means that students—for the most part minority— have no choice but to attend these schools.<sup>50</sup> Dropout rates for black students in central cities of large metropolitan areas are among the highest.

Across the nation, the huge problem of minority high school dropouts is concentrated in a few hundred high schools where a huge proportion of the students never finish, called “dropout factories” by Johns Hopkins researcher Robert Balfanz.<sup>51</sup> These high schools are overwhelmingly poor and nonwhite and, apart from the South, they are very largely urban. Though much more attention has been devoted in recent years to test scores, dropping out is, of course, the ultimate failure for a student in the post-industrial economy—a failure that usually causes deep and irreversible life-long damage to a student and his future family.

The 24 largest central cities together enroll more than 4.5 million of the public school population.<sup>52</sup> These districts are so heavily minority that except for one district, more than 70 percent of the black and Latino students in these districts attend predominantly majority minority schools (50-100% minority schools), and in 20 districts, more than 90 percent of black students attend these schools. In Dallas, El Paso, and Santa Ana, 100 percent of Latino students attend schools that are predominantly minority, and in 15 districts, more than 90 percent of Latino students attend schools where more than half of their peers are minority students. These are districts where, for the most part, are high poverty districts. Among these large districts, all of those with the lowest high school completion rates are central city systems with very high levels of segregation. The cities with the lowest completion rates are among the country’s largest: New York City, Los Angeles, and Chicago. More than three-quarters of the students in these schools are minority. Sadly included in this group is the first city that experienced full urban desegregation outside the South, Denver, which is also the city in which the right of Latino students to desegregated education was established in a decision on the city schools by the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 62.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p. 60.

<sup>51</sup> Balfanz & Legters, supra note 48.

<sup>52</sup> See Tables 1-3 in Appendix B for enrollment figures.

<sup>53</sup> *Keyes v. Denver School District No. 1*, 413 U.S. 189(1973).

**Table 26: Graduation Rate for the 24 Largest Central City Districts, 2002-3**

Central City	State	Graduation Rate	Percent on Free or Reduced Lunch	Percent of Racial Groups in 50-100% Minority Schools		
				% White	% Latino	%Black
Arlington ISD	TX	60	43	43	87	81
Austin ISD	TX	60	53	36	88	88
Baltimore City Public Schools	MD	77	69	60	79	99
Boston	MA	60	74	84	99	99
City Of Chicago School Dist 299	IL	51	78	75	98	100
Cleveland Municipal SD	OH	67	80	47	76	94
Columbus City SD	OH	44	62	42	72	89
Dade County School District	FL	50	62	91	99	99
Dallas ISD	TX	45	76	92	100	100
Denver County	CO	56	62	66	97	92
Detroit City School District**	MI	---	58	87	98	100
District of Columbia	DC	65	61	60	98	99
El Paso ISD	TX	64	67	99	100	99
Fort worth ISD	TX	50	64	63	96	93
Fresno Unified	CA	59	76	73	96	94
Houston ISD	TX	48	73	81	99	99
Los Angeles Unified	CA	45	74	80	99	98
Milwaukee School District	WI	43	75	70	92	97
New York City Public Schools*	NY	40	73	61	97	98
Orleans Parish School Board	LA	65	78	79	97	100
Philadelphia City SD	PA	43	71	67	95	98
San Diego Unified	CA	64	57	61	92	93
Santa Ana Unified	CA	72	75	68	100	92
Tucson Unified District*	AZ	66	71	43	84	60

\*In instances where districts did not report the number of students on free or reduced lunch for 2002-3 school year, the number of students on free or reduced lunch for 2001-2 was used instead.

\*\*CPI numbers are not reported for Detroit due to reporting problems with the survey.

### Characteristics of Countywide Districts vs. Central City Districts

Minority students are not as concentrated in predominantly minority schools in metropolitan countywide districts as they are in central city districts (Table 27). Over 80 percent of the black students in Broward, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Mobile, Orange County, and Palm Beach County attend these schools. Close to 80 percent of Latino students attend predominantly minority schools in one district, Clark County, which has a graduation rate of 55 percent. Less than half of the white students attend predominantly minority schools in the largest metropolitan countywide school systems. The completion

rates in these districts are generally higher than in central city districts. Except for three districts, more than half of the students in these schools graduate on time.

**Table 27: Graduation Rate for the 17 Largest Metropolitan Countywide Districts, 2002-3**

Metropolitan Countywide School Systems	State	Graduation Rate	% on Free or Reduced Lunch	% of Racial Groups in 50-100% Minority Schools		
				% White	% Latino	%Black
Brevard County School District	FL	67	28	2	5	14
Broward County School District	FL	46	39	45	68	91
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NC	57	40	36	80	83
Clark Co Sch Dist*	NV	55	29	35	78	70
Duval County School District	FL	47	42	25	34	67
Guilford County Schools	NC	66	45	25	65	73
Hillsborough County School District	FL	56	49	28	61	70
Jefferson County	KY	80	70	14	43	29
Lee County School District	FL	66	48	14	24	44
Mobile County	AL	52	67	17	45	84
Orange County School District	FL	56	43	44	73	82
Palm Beach County School District	FL	56	41	27	66	80
Pinellas County School District	FL	47	39	5	16	16
Polk County School District	FL	66	55	11	38	21
Seminole County School District	FL	67	29	5	10	18
Volusia County School District	FL	57	39	4	15	27
Wake County Schools	NC	75	23	15	33	39

\*In instances where districts did not report the number of students on free or reduced lunch for 2002-3 school year, the number of students on free or reduced lunch for 2001-2 was used instead.

### Large Suburban Districts

Among the nation’s largest districts, the highest high school graduation levels are found in a series of large suburban systems—Ft Bend (outside Houston,) Jordan (outside Salt Lake City,) and Fairfax as well as two other Washington suburban counties—Montgomery, Anne Arundel (Table 28). The other large districts are outside Denver and San Antonio. The highest graduation rate of any metro district is found in Wake County (metropolitan Raleigh, NC) at 75 percent. Except for a few cases (Long Beach, Prince George’s County, and Northside,) white students in suburban districts attend predominantly minority schools in very small numbers. However, despite the large concentration of white students in the suburbs, blacks and Latinos are surprisingly isolated in these schools. In Montgomery County, for example, more than three quarters of black and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools compared to a little

over a third whites, and in Cobb County, both over 70 percent of black and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools, compared to 19 percent of white students. In Fairfax County, one of the richest districts in the country, more than half of the black and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools, compared to 22 percent whites.

**Table 28: Graduation Rate for the 15 Largest Suburban Districts, 2002-3**

Suburbs	State	Graduation Rate	% on Free or Reduced Lunch	% in 50-100% Minority Schools		
				% White	% Latino	%Black
Anne Arundel County Public Schools	MD	73	16	9	44	48
Baltimore County Public Schools	MD	84	28	11	33	69
Cobb County	GA	73	24	19	71	72
Cypress-Fairbanks Is	TX	81	24	31	65	55
Dekalb County	GA	51	59	69	96	99
Fairfax County Public Schools	VA	85	19	22	65	56
Fulton County	GA	68	33	9	57	82
Granite School District	UT	72	37	4	12	11
Gwinnett County	GA	71	26	15	65	50
Jefferson County R-1	CO	75	16	3	24	14
Jordan School District	UT	86	20	0	10	2
Long Beach Unified	CA	72	65	85	98	98
Northside Isd*	TX	80	45	73	90	89
Mesa Unified District	AZ	72	40	11	50	32
Montgomery County Public Schools	MD	84	22	40	81	82
Prince George's County Public Schools	MD	67	45	90	99	99
Virginia Beach City Public Schools	VA	69	31	20	36	50

\*Northside ISD encompasses both city and suburban areas in the city's limits.

## THE CASE FOR DESEGREGATION

There is clear evidence that experience with diversity produces both short and long term advantages in terms of intellectual and social development. These findings strongly suggest that exposure to more desegregated settings can break the tendency for racial segregation to become self-perpetuating for all students later in life.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, students of all races who are exposed to integrated educational settings feel much more

<sup>54</sup> See Wells, A.S., and Crain, R.L. (1994). Perpetuation theory and the long-term effects of school desegregation. *Review of Educational Research*, 64, 531-555; Braddock, J.H. and McPartland, J. (1989). Social-psychological processes that perpetuate racial segregation: The relationship between school and employment segregation." *Journal of Black Studies*. 19(3): 267-289.

comfortable about their ability to live and work among people of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.<sup>55</sup>

The 2000 Census showed striking differences in income by educational level. For the total adult working age population, high school dropouts made 35 percent less than the national average and only 52 percent were employed. High school graduates made 84 percent of the national average and 71 percent had jobs, while 83 percent of college grads were working and they made 131 percent of the national average income.<sup>56</sup> The statistics for minority workers are stark with significantly lower wages at each level, but large differences by level. Our research project is studying the implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind law and has issued five reports to this point<sup>57</sup> exploring the identification and classification of failing schools, the results of the standardized tests required by the law, and the reaction of teachers to the requirements and sanctions. The studies show that heavily minority and low income schools are far more likely to be classified as failing under the act and that schools with concentrations of language minority students are particularly unlikely to make the required test score gains in English-language tests. The law requires segregated minority schools to make far larger yearly gains than affluent suburban schools and, since that often does not happen in spite of the pressure, many of these schools have already been required to inform the families that the school is failing. These schools are threatened with the possibility of radical changes included in the act, including dissolution of the school. Though the law requires that all schools find “highly qualified” teachers, our survey of teachers in California and Virginia shows that many of the teachers in these high poverty, minority schools are not planning to remain for long and believe that the pressure will encourage teachers to leave more rapidly.<sup>58</sup> Trying to impose change on segregated schools without understanding the roots of the inequalities may actually compound their impacts.

During the years of research leading up to the findings of the Supreme Court in 2003 on the benefits of diversity, there has been a great deal of research on the educational and social impacts of integrated education on both minority and white students in higher education and some significant work on elementary and secondary education. The higher education research identified strong benefits in understanding and knowledge for all groups of students that was a product of interaction across racial and ethnic lines. The Supreme Court’s majority opinion in the University of Michigan Law School case<sup>59</sup> cited a number of these studies and concluded:

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<sup>55</sup> *The Impact of Racial and Ethnic Diversity on Educational Outcomes: Cambridge, MA School District*, The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, January 2002.

<sup>56</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2000). *Earnings by Occupation and income, reporting data for the 21-year-old to 64-year-old population* [Data file]. Available from the Census Web site, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/income/earnings/callusboth.html>

<sup>57</sup> The reports can be found at <http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/esea/nclb.php>

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 123 S.Ct. 2325 (2003).

In addition to the expert studies and reports entered into evidence at trial, numerous studies show that student body diversity promotes learning outcomes, and 'better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society, and better prepares them as professionals.' Brief for American Educational Research Association et al. as *Amici Curiae* 3; see, e.g., W. Bowen & D. Bok, *The Shape of the River* (1998); *Diversity Challenged: Evidence on the Impact of Affirmative Action* (G. Orfield & M. Kurlaender eds. 2001); *Compelling Interest: Examining the Evidence on Racial Dynamics in Colleges and Universities* (M. Chang, D. Witt, J. Jones, & K. Hakuta eds. 2003).

These benefits are not theoretical but real, as major American businesses have made clear that the skills needed in today's increasingly global marketplace can only be developed through exposure to widely diverse people, cultures, ideas, and viewpoints. Brief for 3M et al. as *Amici Curiae* 5; Brief for General Motors Corp. as *Amicus Curiae* 3-4. What is more, high-ranking retired officers and civilian leaders of the United States military assert that, '[b]ased on [their] decades of experience,' a 'highly qualified, racially diverse officer corps ... is essential to the military's ability to fulfill its principle mission to provide national security.' Brief for Julius W. Becton, Jr. et al. as *Amici Curiae* 27

The Civil Rights Project convened national experts to develop a survey to measure the impact of diversity on high school juniors and seniors in seven districts across the U.S. The results of this research conducted by Professor John Yun, University of California, Santa Barbara and Professor Michal Kurlaender, University of California, Davis, showed that educational diversity was clearly related to better preparation to live and work in our increasingly diverse communities and to a variety of other benefits.<sup>60</sup> A decision by a Federal District Court in the Lynn, MA case found compelling evidence of such benefits in that city.<sup>61</sup>

A recent research synthesis<sup>62</sup> by Professor Willis Hawley of the University of Maryland reported the evidence on cognitive impacts:

- African American and Hispanic students learn somewhat more in schools that are majority white than in schools that are predominantly nonwhite. This appears to be particularly the case for higher ability African American students;
- The earlier that students experience desegregated learning environments, the greater the positive impact on achievement.
- The integration of schools that remain majority white appears to have no negative effect on white students. However, white students in predominantly nonwhite schools may achieve at lower levels than students from similar socioeconomic backgrounds who attend majority white schools.

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<sup>60</sup> Kurlaender, M. and Yun, J. (2001). Is diversity a compelling educational interest? Evidence from Louisville in Gary Orfield and Michal Kurlaender, eds. *Diversity challenged: Evidence on the impact of affirmative action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Publishing Group.

<sup>61</sup> *Comfort v. Lynn School Committee*, 263 F.Supp.2d 209 (D.Mass.2003).

<sup>62</sup> Hawley, W. (2004). *Designing schools that use student diversity to enhance the learning of all students*. Paper presented at Positive Interracial Outcomes Conference, Cambridge, MA.

These are only samples of extensive literature from the U.S. and elsewhere which finds that concentration of disadvantaged students in particular schools tends to intensify disadvantage while access to more privileged schools can produce substantial benefits, particularly if it is carried out well. Certainly this evidence is considerably stronger than the evidence for impacts from the current strategy of sanctions and intense test pressure and it deserves serious attention in educational policy making.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

As we enter into serious review and possible renewal of No Child Left Behind and discussion of new proposals for high school accountability, we must not ignore the possible implications of the findings of high economic and racial segregation, closely related to each other and to negative educational conditions and outcomes. Clearly policy makers should consider possible strategies to reduce the harm.

There should be a concerted effort to avoid the creation of more concentrated poverty schools. Wherever possible there should be positive plans to use assignment and choice policies to foster more diverse schools.

Housing and land use policies should be designed on a regional basis to foster access for all students to strong schools and educational diversity.

Community groups should seriously analyze the social consequences of proposals to terminate desegregation plans that lower isolation by race and class.

Basic research should be supported on the impacts of Latino segregation and of multiracial schools and school reforms should be designed and evaluated in light of deepened understanding of rapidly changing realities.

Charter schools should not be set up in ways that make them intensely segregated by poverty and race. There should be an explicit goal of fostering diversity.

Court orders and remedial plans designed to deal with findings of educational inadequacy that are rapidly spreading around the country should take these findings into account and provide both policy support and aid to foster access of students in impoverished schools to more privileged schools.

Schools should look seriously at classroom segregation by class and race and design plans to lower it.

## Technical Appendix

### Calculating The Cumulative Promotion Index

The Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI), developed by Christopher B. Swanson of the Urban Institute, is a method for measuring completion rates, and differences between using CPI versus official dropout rates are detailed in “Who Graduates? Who Doesn’t? A Statistical Portrait of Public High School Graduation, Class of 2001.”<sup>63</sup>

This study used the CPI along with enrollment data from the National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data to “approximate the probability that a student entering the 9th grade will complete school on time with a regular diploma. . . . It does this by representing high school graduation as a stepwise process composed of three grade-to-grade promotion transitions (9 to 10, 10 to 11, and 11 to 12) in addition to the ultimate high school graduation event (grade 12 to diploma.)”

The equation below illustrates the formula for calculating the CPI using the class of 2002 as an example:

$$CPI = \left[ \frac{E_{2003}^{10}}{E_{2002}^9} \right] * \left[ \frac{E_{2003}^{11}}{E_{2002}^{10}} \right] * \left[ \frac{E_{2003}^{12}}{E_{2002}^{11}} \right] * \left[ \frac{G_{2002}}{E_{2002}^{12}} \right]$$

where

$G_{2002}$  is the count of students who graduated with a regular high school diploma during the 2001-2002 school year

$E_{2002}^9$  is the count of enrolled in grade 9 at the beginning of the 2001-02 school year

$E_{2003}^{10}$  is the count of students enrolled in grade 10 at the beginning of the 2002-03 school year

By multiplying grade-specific promotion ratios together, the CPI estimates the

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<sup>63</sup> [http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410934\\_WhoGraduates.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410934_WhoGraduates.pdf)

likelihood that a ninth grader from a particular school system” (or grouping of school systems,) “will complete high school with a regular diploma given the conditions prevailing in that school system during the 2001-02 school year.”<sup>64</sup>

## APPENDIX B: TABLES

**Table B-1: Enrollment of the Largest Central Cities**

CENTRAL CITY	STATE ENROLLMENT	
Arlington ISD	TX	61,928
Austin ISD	TX	78,523
Baltimore City Public Schools	MD	96,185
Boston	MA	61,542
City Of Chicago School Dist 299	IL	435,968
Cleveland Municipal SD	OH	70,456
Columbus City SD	OH	64,174
Dade County School District	FL	371,519
Dallas ISD	TX	163,059
Denver County 1	CO	71,962
Detroit City School District	MI	172,461
District Of Columbia Pub Schls	DC	67,512
El Paso ISD	TX	63,175
Fort Worth ISD	TX	81,051
Fresno Unified	CA	81,189
Houston ISD	TX	212,005
Los Angeles Unified	CA	746,842
Milwaukee Sch Dist	WI	97,243
New York City Public Schools	NY	1,045,455
Orleans Parish School Board	LA	70,216
Philadelphia City SD	PA	192,673
San Diego Unified	CA	140,733
SANTA ANA UNIFIED	CA	63,498
TUCSON UNIFIED DISTRICT	AZ	61,958

<sup>64</sup> Swanson, Christopher B. (2004). *Who graduates? Who doesn't? A statistical portrait of public high school graduation, Class of 2001*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, p. 7.

**Table B-2: Enrollment of Metropolitan Countywide School Systems**

<b><u>Metropolitan Countywide School Systems</u></b>	<b><u>STATE</u></b>	<b><u>ENROLLMENT</u></b>
Brevard County School District	FL	72,394
Broward County School District	FL	267,336
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	NC	109,677
Clark Co Sch Dist*	NV	255,971
Duval County School District	FL	127,047
Guilford County Schools	NC	65,677
Hillsborough County School District	FL	174,899
Jefferson County	KY	91,150
Lee County School District	FL	62,991
Mobile County	AL	63,768
Orange County School District	FL	158,123
Palm Beach County School District	FL	164,223
Pinellas County School District	FL	114,199
Polk County School District	FL	81,958
Seminole County School District	FL	63,272
Volusia County School District	FL	62,693
Wake County Schools	NC	104,836

**Table B-2: Enrollment of The Largest Suburban School Systems**

<b>Suburbs</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
Anne Arundel County Public Schools	MD	74,776
Baltimore County Public Schools	MD	108,257
Cobb County	GA	100,389
Cypress-Fairbanks	TX	138,978
Dekalb County	GA	97,957
Fairfax County Public Schools	VA	156,401
Fulton County	GA	71,362
Granite School District	UT	71,161
Gwinnett County	GA	122,570
Jefferson County	CO	87,915
Jordan school district	UT	73,808
Long beach unified	CA	97,192
Northside isd*	TX	69,409
Mesa Unified District	AZ	75,239
Montgomery County Public Schools	MD	138,978
Prince George's County Public Schools	MD	135,395
Virginia Beach City Public Schools	VA	75,882