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ABSTRACT

School segregation intensified through the 1990s, during which time three major Supreme Court decisions authorized a return to segregated neighborhood schools. Though the U.S. South is much more integrated now than before the civil rights revolution, it is moving backward. This report describes the background of school resegregation; public opinion and trends in school segregation; benefits of desegregation; costs of segregation; public opinion about desegregation; the effectiveness of strategies for equalizing separate education; the impacts of inferior education; and reasons for returning to segregation. Although student diversity has increased significantly, most children experience separate societies and schools. White children attend more segregated schools than any other racial group. Segregation follows Black and Hispanic families as they move from the city to suburbia. The high level of suburban segregation reported for Black and Hispanic students in this report suggests that a major set of challenges to the future of the minority middle class and to the integration of suburbia need to be addressed. Hispanic children have been more segregated than Blacks for a number of years, not only by race and ethnicity but also by poverty. There is also serious segregation developing by language. Segregated schools are highly unequal. Segregation by race relates to segregation by poverty and many forms of educational inequality for minority students. Americans believe their children benefit from integrated education, and segregation has not been an effective policy. Segregated schools have significantly higher dropout levels and poorer records of preparing students for higher education. Eleven recommendations are presented, including: expanding the federal magnet school program and imposing desegregation requirements for federally supported charter schools; exploring school and housing policies to avoid massive resegregation of large sections of the inner suburbs; promoting and funding teacher exchanges

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between city and suburban school districts and training teachers in techniques for successful interracial classrooms; and creating more two-way integrated bilingual schools. (Contains 20 tables.) (SM)

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CONSEQUENCES OF A DECADE OF RESEGREGATION

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JULY, 2001

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Schools More Separate:
Consequences of a Decade of Resegregation

Gary Orfield
July, 2001

Almost a half century after the U.S. Supreme Court concluded that Southern school segregation was unconstitutional and "inherently unequal," new statistics from the 1998-99 school year show that segregation continued to intensify throughout the 1990s, a period in which there were three major Supreme Court decisions authorizing a return to segregated neighborhood schools and limiting the reach and duration of desegregation orders. For African American students, this trend is particularly apparent in the South, where most blacks live and where the 2000 Census shows a continuing return from the North. From 1988 to 1998, most of the progress of the previous two decades in increasing integration in the region was lost. The South is still much more integrated than it was before the civil rights revolution, but it is moving backward at an accelerating rate.

Until the late 1980s, segregation had actually been decreasing nationally for black students, reaching its low point in U.S. history in the late 1980s. Substantial desegregation was most common in the 17 states which had legal apartheid--segregation mandated by law--in their schools before the 1954 *Brown* decision. Enforcement action was concentrated on those states. Whites in the South have attended and still attend schools with more minority students than whites in any other region. The highest levels of integrated education are found in the small towns and rural areas of the country and in the large metropolitan counties where the city and suburban schools were part of a single school district that came under a comprehensive desegregation order. The most far-reaching forms of desegregation, often encompassing entire metropolitan areas, tended to be the most stable and long lasting but were largely limited to Southern county-wide school systems. Most Americans live in metropolitan areas, housing remains seriously segregated, and most current segregation is between school districts of differing racial composition, not within individual districts. As Justice Thurgood Marshall predicted a quarter century ago when the Supreme Court rejected desegregation across city-suburban boundary lines in *Milliken v. Bradley*[1], the central cities, many of them largely minority before desegregation, became overwhelmingly nonwhite, overwhelmingly poor, and showed the highest levels of segregation at century's end.

These trends of increasing resegregation are often dismissed because people believe that nothing can be done. Many Americans believe that desegregation is impossible because of white flight, that it led to a massive transfer to private schools, that public opinion has turned against it, that blacks no longer support it, and that it is more beneficial for students to use desegregation funding for compensatory education. None of these things is true. There have, of course, been unsuccessful and poorly implemented desegregation plans and black opinion has always been far from unanimous, but a large majority prefers integrated education.

The 2000 Census tells us that Latinos have become the largest minority group in the U.S.[2] Their vast increase in student enrollment has been evident across the nation throughout the past decade. Unfortunately, Latino enrollment exploded during the post-civil rights era and very little has been done to provide desegregated education for Latino students. They have been more segregated than blacks now for a number of years, not only

[1] 418 U.S. 717 (1974).
[2] Elizabeth M. Grieco and Rachel C. Cassidy, "Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin," Census 2000 Brief, U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 2001.

by race and ethnicity but also by poverty. There is also serious segregation developing by language.[3] Most Latinos are concentrated in high poverty, low-achieving schools and face by far the highest dropout rate. Also, since most are concentrated in the large states where affirmative action for college is now illegal (California, Texas, and Florida), the concentration of these students in schools with a poor record of graduating students and sending them onto college raises important national issues.

The data from the 2000 Census and from national school statistics show that the U.S. is an overwhelmingly metropolitan society, dominated by its suburbs. In the mid-1990s, the electorate chose the first predominantly suburban Congress and the Congresses of the foreseeable future will be suburban. It is no accident that the suburbs have become the central political battleground in recent presidential elections. What is surprising to many Americans is that the suburbs, long seen as the epitome of white middle class society, are becoming much less white and that some are seeing a huge surge of black and Latino residents and students. The suburbs are becoming far more differentiated by race and ethnicity and the lines of racial change have moved out far beyond the central cities. The high level of suburban segregation reported for African American and Latino students in this report suggests that a major set of challenges to the future of the minority middle class and to the integration of suburbia need to be addressed.

Background

A battle that began early in the 20th century to try to bring equality to the segregated black schools of the South became, by the 1960s, an all-out attack on the entire structure of racially separate schools in the 17 states which mandated segregation by law. The 1954 *Brown* decision outlawing *de jure* segregation was both a key cause of the civil rights movement, announcing that Southern apartheid was unconstitutional and illegitimate, and a principal goal of the movement, beginning a long process of bringing the power of government to bear on the social arrangements of the South. Martin Luther King led demonstrations for integrated education in the North as well as in the South. There were hundreds of protests against unequal conditions and opportunities in segregated schools, and there was almost a decade of struggle in the U.S. Congress about whether or not to cut off federal funds to the thousands of districts that defied the Supreme Court's directive.

The struggle was never just for desegregated schools, nor was it motivated by a desire on the part of black students to simply sit next to white students. It was an integral part of a much broader movement for racial and economic justice supported by a unique alliance of major civil rights organizations, churches, students, and leaders of both national political parties. From 1954 until 1964, the enforcement effort faced almost uniform local and state resistance in the South.[4] A handful of civil rights lawyers, most of them from the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, sued local school boards trying to force the initiation of desegregation in courts presided over by conservative federal judges.[5] When President Kennedy asked Congress in 1964 to prohibit discrimination in all programs receiving federal aid, 98% of Southern blacks were still in totally segregated schools.

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[3] A recent study reports that by 1993, Limited English Proficient (LEP) students were in schools with more than ten times the concentration of LEP students than fluent English speaker's schools contained. 31% of LEP students were in schools where most of the other students also were LEP (Jorge Ruliz-de-Velasco and Michael Fix, *Overlooked and Underserved: Immigrant Students in U.S. Secondary Schools*, Washington: Urban Institute, 2000, p. 30.

[4] Anthony Lewis, *Portrait of a Decade*, New York: Bantam Books, 1965, Reed Sarratt, *The Ordeal of Desegregation*, New York: Harper and Row, 1966.

[5] Jack Peltason, *Fifty-Eight Lonely Men*, New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1961.

The peak of the effort to desegregate the schools came in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The only period in which there was active positive support by both the courts and the executive branch of the government was the four years following the enactment of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. During this period federal education officials, the Department of Justice, and the high courts all maintained strong and reasonably consistent pressure for achieving actual desegregation. During this period desegregation policy was transformed from a very gradual anti-discrimination policy to one of rapid and full integration.[6]

It was in this period that the South moved from almost total racial separation to become the nation's most integrated region. The 1968 election that brought Richard Nixon to the White House was a turning point, leading first to a shutdown of the enforcement machinery of the education office, and then to a change of position in which the Justice Department urged the Supreme Court to slow down or reverse desegregation requirements. Nixon's appointment of four justices to the U.S. Supreme Court set the stage for key 5-4 decisions against desegregation across city-suburban lines and against equalizing finances among school districts.[7] By 1974 it was clear that there was no feasible way to provide desegregated education for millions of black and Latino children attending heavily minority central city school districts within those rapidly changing city districts.

The Nixon period was notable for a 1972 agreement between Congress and the White House to create a substantial program, whose funds could not be used for busing, to pay for programs to improve race relations and educational outcomes in interracial schools.[8] This program, the Emergency School Aid Act, was very popular with school authorities, paid for a good deal of basic research on desegregated schools, and directed most of its funds to heavily burdened urban school districts. When education officials moved to revive school desegregation enforcement under the Carter Administration, Congress took the authority away from them, although the Carter Justice Department did initiate a number of important law suits, seeking to find ways to win city-suburban desegregation in special circumstances and to coordinate the desegregation of housing with school integration policy.

The Supreme Court was stalemated on desegregation policy for a long period and left the law basically unchanged between the mid-1970s and 1991. The legal standards during that time meant that civil rights organizations could almost always win a lawsuit if they had the resources to do the necessary research on the history of school operations in any given school district. Since black and Latino students were heavily concentrated in high poverty city districts, however, there was often no remedy that could put minority students in substantially integrated middle class schools. In a handful of cases, such as the Cleveland case, the courts ordered that all students be placed in schools that reflected the current racial composition of the school district, which meant schools of about three-fourths black students in Cleveland's case. Such plans often had the effect of combining poor whites and poor blacks in the same schools under conditions that led to rapid decline in the remaining white enrollment and little access to better schools for the minority students.

Faced with mandates to desegregate districts which had long had rapidly declining white and middle class enrollment, and with evidence showing that mandating desegregation in such circumstances, while leaving the white suburbs untouched, tended to speed the decline of white enrollment, at least at the beginning of a desegregation plan, many districts adopted limited plans that desegregated part of the student population and that emphasized choice. Such plans often took the form of magnet schools or "controlled choice" plans which either

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[6] *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, 391 U.S. 430 (1968).

[7] *Milliken v. Bradley*, 418 U.S. 717 (1974); *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1 (1973).

[8] Gary Orfield, *Congressional Power: Congress and Social Change*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975, chapter 9.

offered attractive educational alternatives with students admitted under desegregation guidelines, or required all parents to rank their preferences among schools and assigned students to their highest choice that was compatible with preserving integration. These plans were first implemented on a large scale in Ohio and Wisconsin in the mid-1970s and were then implemented in many other districts in the following decades. The federal government supported magnet schools in the l970s and then again after the mid-1980s.

The Reagan Administration brought a rapid repeal of the federal desegregation assistance program and a shift in the Justice Department to a position of strong opposition to desegregation litigation, opposing even the continuation of existing desegregation plans. The Administration developed theories that desegregation had failed and that existing desegregation orders should be cancelled after a few years. The Justice Department began to advocate such a policy in the federal courts in the mid-1980s.[9]

In 1991, the *Oklahoma City* ruling[10] declared that school districts which had sufficiently implemented their court orders in the judgment of the local federal district court should be released from their order and should be free to resume assigning students to neighborhood schools that were segregated as the result of residential isolation. The Court concluded that a certain number of years of feasible desegregation strategies eliminated further desegregation rights of minority students. The desegregation orders had long stated that the courts could not maintain perpetual supervision. During desegregation orders it was a violation of the law to take actions that would have the foreseeable impact of restoring segregation. Many assumed that this would be true after court supervision ended as well. The Supreme Court, however, announced that no such restriction remained unless the school authorities said that their intent in adopting a policy was to foster segregation. The fact that segregation was the certain result of a policy which was to said to be adopted for another purpose would be no barrier.

The story for Latinos is very different. The Latino right to desegregation was recognized by the Supreme Court in 1973 as an afterthought, almost two decades after the *Brown* decision and during the Nixon Administration when the executive branch ended serious enforcement of desegregation rights. There was a conscious decision by executive branch officials to offer Latinos enforcement of bilingual education rather than desegregation. The Supreme Court recognized the right of federal civil rights enforcement officials to devise policies to deal with discrimination on the basis of language in the 1974 *Lau* decision.[11] The only state where there was substantial desegregation of Latino students was Colorado, the site of the 1973 Supreme Court decision recognizing Latino desegregation rights.[12] There never was any significant enforcement of desegregation rights for Latinos. The Nixon Administration decided to enforce bilingual education rights, not desegregation, but those rights would be attacked by the Reagan Administration in the 1980s, foreshadowing major efforts to outlaw bilingual education at the turn of the 21st century.[13]

Following the Oklahoma City decision and two other Supreme Court decisions limiting desegregation rights, a number of the nation's large school districts began to initiate proceedings to end their desegregation

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[9] Norman C. Amaker, *Civil Rights and the Reagan Administration*, Washington: Urban Institute Press, 1988, chapter 3.
[10] *Board of Education of Oklahoma City v. Dowell*, 498 U.S. 237 (1991).
[11] *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974).
[12] *Keyes v. School District No. 1, Denver, Colorado*, 413 U.S. 189 (1973).
[13] Gary Orfield, *Must We Bus? Segregated Schools and National Policy*, Washington: Brookings Institution, 1979, chapters 7 and 9; President Reagan attacked bilingual education in his 1986 State of the Union message and proposed allowing local officials to do whatever they wanted with the funds. (Washington Post, Feb. 28, l986; California voters ratified Proposition 227 in June 1998, drastically restricting bilingual education in the state. (Eugene E. Garcia, "Chicanos in the United States: Language, Bilingual Education, and Achievement, in Jose Moreno, *The Elusive Quest for Equality: 150 Years of Chicano/Chicana Education*, Cambridge: Harvard Education Review, 1999, p. 162.

orders. In other court challenges, the districts had no desire to end desegregation orders, but such actions were initiated by individual white or Asian parents or, in several cases, by a judge who took the initiative to clear his or her docket. Although the federal judges usually delayed implementation of desegregation for years and often ordered limited plans that had to be expanded through appeals, a number acted on their own initiative and with considerable speed in terminating desegregation orders.[14] In the recent past, Courts of Appeals in some parts of the country have been active in terminating desegregation plans, including recent decisions on cases in St. Petersburg, Florida, Charlotte, N.C., and Rockford, Illinois, each of which involved a situation in which either the school district itself or the trial judge or magistrate judge had found the desegregation process to be incomplete but the Court of Appeals ordered termination of the plan. On the other hand, courts in Louisville, in the Rochester, N.Y. area, and in Seattle have recently supported continuation of desegregation efforts as an appropriate policy. There is considerable confusion about the status of desegregation law but the basic trend is toward dissolution of desegregation orders and return to patterns of more serious segregation.

The Supreme Court's resegregation decisions took place at the very time there was a turn toward increased segregation for black students. After an increase in integration for black students for a third of a century, segregation began to intensify again. There may be several reasons for this resegregation, but the impact of the repeal or non-enforcement of desegregation plans became apparent in a number of regions, particularly in the South, where most of the mandatory desegregation occurred.

Public Opinion and Trends in School Segregation

Contrary to conventional wisdom, the poll data shows an extremely high level of acceptance and approval of integrated education among both blacks and whites, with a strong majority saying desegregation improves education for blacks, and a growing proportion of the public believing that it improves education for whites as well.[15] The Gallup Poll's "Social Audit of Black/White Relations in the U.S," asked in 1999 about school integration

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[14] "Conservative Activists and the Rush toward Resegregation," in Jay P. Heubert, ed., Law and School Reform: Six Strategies for Promoting Educational Equity.

[15] Gallup Poll 1999 sample questions:

Assuming that "free choice of public and private schools were allowed in this community" how important would "having your child exposed to a more diverse student body" be:

41%	very important
38%	fairly important
12%	not too important
4%	not at all important

(Asked in a list of questions. 17% responded to another question that it would be "very important" to be in a less diverse student body and 28% said "fairly important," suggesting confusion on the issue).

What do you think are the biggest problems with which the public schools of your community must deal?

	No children in School	Public School Parents
Busing	2%	0%*

(Asked in a list of questions. Less than half of 1% of public school parents saw this as a serious problem. Busing has long been more opposed by those without children in school).

and found both blacks and whites increasingly positive about its educational benefits. Back in 1988, 55% of Americans believed that integration had "improved the quality of education" for blacks, and 35% believed it had made white education better. By 1999, 68% of the public saw an improvement for blacks, and 50% said that it made education better for whites. In 1988, 37% of Americans believed that we needed to do more to integrate the schools, but the number climbed to 59% by 1999.[16] A 1999 survey of young adults (ages 18-29), showed that 60% felt that the federal government should make sure that the schools were integrated.[17] A 1999 Gallup Poll showed that across the U.S. parents believed their children needed to learn about race relations at school: 56% thought that there should be a required course, and 35% believed it should be an elective.[18]

These poll results do not mean that most Americans do not also prefer neighborhood schools --they clearly do. They would also like many other mutually incompatible things: both lower property taxes and much better school facilities, both less regulation and much tougher safety standards, etc. The basic point is that Americans say they believe, by large and growing majorities, that integrated schools are better. Poll data from the last three decades shows that both white and black opposition were highest at the beginning of mandatory busing in the early and mid-1970s and declined significantly since that time. The studies also show considerable support from parents of all races whose children have actually been bused for desegregation purposes.[19] The return to segregation was not the result of a shift in public opinion against desegregated schools.

The one recent national study that reported a lack of black support for desegregation, a widely publicized 1998 study conducted by the Public Agenda Foundation, *Time to Move On*, emphasized a finding that blacks preferred educational improvement to desegregation, reporting responses to a question posing this choice. Since research has long shown that blacks pursue desegregation primarily as a means to obtain better educational opportunities for their children and the forced choice suggested that one must chose between the two goals; of course parents said that their first concern was good education for their children. In fact the survey also found that 60% of blacks and 34% of whites said it was "absolutely essential" for schools to "have a diverse student body, with kids from different ethnic and racial backgrounds," and only 8% of blacks and 20% of whites said that this was

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Values that the public believes "should be taught" in public schools:

	No children in School	Public School Parents
Acceptance of people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds	94%	91%

SOURCE: Lowell C. Rose and Alec M. Gallup, "The 31st Annual Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools," Sept. 1999, www/pdkintl.org/kappan/kpol9909.

[16] "Gallup Poll Topics: Race Relations," poll conducted Sept. to Nov. 1999 (Gallup.com website).
[17] Zogby International Poll, "Racial Attitudes Poll of Young Americans," August 16, 1999.
[18] "Gallup Poll Topics: Education," poll conducted August 1999. (Gallup.com website).
[19] Gary Orfield, "Public Opinion and School Desegregation" *Teachers College Record* 96, no. 4 (Summer 1995): 654-670; Harris and Associates, *The Unfinished Agenda on Race in America*, report to the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, January 1989; Harris, Louis, and associates, *A Study of Attitudes toward Racial and Religious Minorities and Toward Women*, report to the National Conference of Christians and Jews, November 1978.

"not too important." This finding was not featured in the release, giving readers of press accounts the inaccurate impression that blacks no longer cared and that it was "time to move on."[20]

Also contrary to popular belief, there has been no significant growth in the percent of U.S. students in private schools since the desegregation era began --in fact, the proportion is lower than a half century ago. If desegregation produced gains for private schools, a return to segregated neighborhood schools would logically produce a decline in private education. That has not happened even while desegregation has been reduced or eliminated in many areas, and the nation's schools have become more segregated.

In 1960, before any significant desegregation, 19.2% of kindergarten students, 14.9% of elementary students and 10.1% of high school students were in private schools. [21] In 1998, the share of kindergarten students in private schools had dropped by 4.4%, the share of elementary students in private schools was down by 5.8%, and the private share of high school students had dropped by 1.0%.[22] There were, of course, communities in the South where "segregation academies" became very important, primarily at the beginning of serious desegregation, but that impact was not large on a national scale. Private school enrollment has actually increased more in the resegregation era than in the era of major increases in desegregation. Projections of existing trends suggest that the private share of students will continue to drop slowly.

Much of the change in the proportion of whites in the schools was caused by disparate birth rates, immigration, and the building of more and more white suburban communities, not by desegregation plans. The U.S. is in the midst of the largest wave of immigration in its history--the first that is overwhelmingly non-European and non-white. Latino families are much younger and much larger than white families, a factor that promises a continuing shift in population proportions, exclusive of future immigration. If the number of white children being born falls, and the number coming to the U.S. from outside is a small minority in a society where population growth is very strongly linked to immigration, school enrollment can change dramatically without whites fleeing.

There are a good many examples of communities where substantial desegregation has lasted a quarter century or longer, and that have actually gained white enrollment while highly desegregated.[23] There are also a number of communities that never experienced significant desegregation which have had drastic loss of white enrollment—communities such as New York City, Chicago, and Atlanta. In fact, Atlanta avoided busing, partly in the hope of preventing further loss of white enrollment, to no avail. Los Angeles terminated all but a tiny voluntary transfer program in 1981, with the opponents charging that busing was causing white loss. Yet, in l998-99, Los Angeles, free of mandatory busing for almost two decades, had 10.5 percent whites; while Chicago, where no mandated busing had occurred, had 10.1 percent.

These numbers point to an important fact that has been widely ignored in the debate over desegregation. Neighborhood schools were extremely unstable. Whatever integration occurred was usually on the boundaries of expanding minority communities, and the "integrated" schools usually became virtually all-minority in a few years,

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[20]Steve Farkas and Jean Johnson, with Stephen Immerwahr and Joanna McHugh, *Time to Move On: African-Americans and White Parents Set an Agenda for Public* (New York: Public Agenda, 1998).

[21]U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1961*, Table 136, p. 107.

[22] National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 1997*, p. 150 (numbers for 1996 school year for elementary schools); NCES, *Digest of Education Statistics 1999*: 60, 61, 69.

[23] Metropolitan Raleigh (Wake County, NC) and Charlotte (Mecklenburg Co., NC) were examples of this pattern in the mid-1990s. (Orfield and Eaton, *Dismantling Desegregation*, 316-317.)

as did the neighborhoods. City school districts have been losing white enrollment for decades, in spite of neighborhood schools, because the neighborhoods are highly unstable along the racial boundaries. Minority families desiring to move out of poverty areas are directed to a very limited set of communities, and whites tend to leave or not to move into racially changing areas. These problems are typically intensified within neighborhood school systems because the minority families who move out are often young with children and are seeking good public schools. The whites that live in the receiving communities are often older, with fewer children, and more likely to use parochial and private schools. This means that neighborhood schools go through racial change much faster than neighborhoods; even when there is a very high level of acceptance of school integration, attitudes are far more negative about schools with a nonwhite majority. Even when a neighborhood is well integrated residentially, its neighborhood school may well be resegregated, thus creating a barrier to future entry of white families. The idea that ending desegregation plans will produce stable white enrollments is not supported by the actual enrollment trends in districts without desegregation in the last several decades. The debate over desegregation policy often presupposes that doing nothing produces stability, but that is incorrect.

In a society with a rapidly growing minority population and little stable residential integration, unless there are successful strategies to stabilize either school or housing integration or both, there will be a great deal of resegregation and decline in white enrollment, whether or not there is any busing. There still is a tendency for whites to locate away from areas of concentrated black enrollment if there are segregated white public schools available at a reasonable distance.[24] For this reason, white enrollment is most stable when there are large school districts that both tend to equalize integration and to deny the possibility of finding nearby all-white schools, a finding that explains the success of county-wide desegregation in a number of metropolitan areas.[25] Metropolitan Louisville, which has had city-suburban desegregation for a quarter century, has a high level of white enrollment, as do a number of other communities. In contrast, some of the largest districts that never had significant desegregation including New York, Atlanta, Baltimore, and Chicago experienced huge losses in white enrollment.[26] The underlying reality is the failure to significantly change the pattern of intense housing segregation for expanding black communities and growing housing segregation for dramatically growing Latino populations.[27]

Unfortunately, the fragmentation of many northern metropolitan areas into dozens of small districts and the Supreme Court's blocking of cross-district desegregation have created the most difficult situation for stable desegregation. The list of most-segregated states included in this report is dominated by states with large metropolitan areas that are split into many separate districts, which is the typical pattern for school systems in the Northeast and Midwest and some other regions of the country.

Many suburban communities are now facing the problems of unstable and rapidly changing racial enrollments and the emergence of segregated minority schools and communities. If the pattern of transition and resegregation extends out from the cities, as it obviously does in some large minority suburbs, many communities will face hard questions about the possibility of continuing to attract white homebuyers. Since the average

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[24] Charles T. Clotfelter, "Are Whites Still 'Fleeing'? Racial Patterns and Enrollment Shifts in Urban Public Schools, 1987-1996" (Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, Working Paper 7290, August 1999); the conservative Civil Rights Commission dominated by Reagan appointees sponsored a study of white flight in the 1980s which unexpectedly concluded that metropolitan desegregation produced larger and more stable desegregation levels. (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, *New Evidence on School Desegregation*, June 1987.)

[25] Ibid., p. 28: "...where the dominant districts are large, the prospects for avoiding large white losses are good."

[26] Gary Orfield and Franklin Monfort, *Status of School Desegregation: The Next Generation*, Alexandria: National School Boards Association, March 1992, pp. 21-22.

[27] 2000 and 1990 segregation indices published on the website of the Mumford Center, State University of New York at Albany, March, 2001.

American moves every six years, attracting white buyers is essential if a neighborhood is to remain integrated for any length of time. There are no major initiatives in the country now, except the policies adopted by some individual suburban communities, to help suburbs resolve these challenges.

In summary, most of the assumptions about desegregation impacts are questionable or clearly incorrect. The public school systems have not been abandoned. The private school sector is smaller than a half century ago. There is a problem of declining white enrollments, but much of it comes from broader demographic forces and it is manifest in cities that never desegregated as well as those that abandoned desegregation efforts. Neighborhood schools with interracial student bodies are often not stable. Further decline in white enrollment may best be limited by more widespread, not more restricted, desegregation plans.

Benefits of Desegregation/Costs of Segregation

Desegregation was not ordered as an educational treatment but to end deeply rooted patterns of illegal separation of students. Nevertheless, there is evidence that desegregation both improves test scores and changes the lives of students.[28] More importantly, there is also evidence that students from desegregated educational experiences benefit in terms of college going, employment, and living in integrated settings as adults.[29] There are also well documented and relatively simple instructional techniques that increase both the academic and human relations benefits of interracial schooling.[30]

A recent study of elite law schools shows, for example, that almost all of the black and Latino students who made it into those schools came from integrated educational backgrounds.[31] Minority students with the same test scores tend to be much more successful in college if they attended interracial high schools.[32] In addition, recent surveys show that both white and minority students in integrated school districts tend to report by large majorities that they have learned to study and work together and that they are highly confident about their ability to work in such settings as adults. Students report that they have learned a lot about the other group's background and feel confident about the ability to discuss even controversial racial issues across racial lines.[33] In other words, students report great confidence about skills many adults are far from confident about. [34] Longitudinal research at the

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[28] Robert L. Crain and Rita E. Mahard, "The Effect of Research Methodology on Desegregation-Achievement Studies: A Meta-Analysis," *American Journal of Sociology* 88, No. 5. (March 1983): 839-854; Janet Ward Schofield, "Review of Research on School Desegregation's Impact on Elementary and Secondary School Students," in James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks, eds., *Handbook of Multicultural Education* (New York: McMillan Publishing, 1995) chapter 33.

[29] Jomills Henry Braddock II, "The Perpetuation of Segregation across Levels of Education: A Behavioral Assessment of the Contact-Hypothesis," *Sociology of Education* 53, No. 3 (July 1980): 178-186; Jomills Henry Braddock II and James M. McPartland, "Social-Psychological Processes That Perpetuate Racial Segregation: The Relationship Between School and Employment Desegregation," *Journal of Black Studies* 19, No. 3 (March 1989): 267-289; Amy Stuart Wells and Robert L. Crain, "Perpetuation Theory and the Long-Term Effects of School Desegregation," *Review of Educational Research* 64, no. 4 (Winter 1994): 531-555.

[30] Robert E. Slavin and Eileen Oickle, "Effects of Cooperative Learning Teams on Student Achievement and Race Relations: Treatment by Race Interactions," *Sociology of Education* 54, No. 3 (July 1981): 174-180; Sandra Bowman Damico and Christopher Sparks, "Cross-Group Contact Opportunities: Impact on Interpersonal Relationships in Desegregated Middle Schools," *Sociology of Education* 59, No. 2 (April 1986): 113-123.

[31] Gary Orfield with Dean Whitla, *Diversity and Legal Education: Student Experiences in Leading Law Schools* (Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, July 1999).

[32] Eric M. Camburn, "College Completion among Students from High Schools Located in Large Metropolitan Areas, *American Journal of Education* 98, no. 4 (August 1990): 551-569.

[33] Michal Kurlaender and John T. Yun, "Is Diversity a Compelling Educational Interest? Evidence from Metropolitan Louisville," (Cambridge, MA: Civil Rights Project, August 2000).

[34] These issues are explored in depth in Susan Eaton's study of long-time impacts of a city-suburban integration program in metropolitan Boston. (Susan E. Eaton, *The Other Boston Busing Story: What's Won and Lost Across the Boundary Line*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

college level shows long term gains in understanding complexity from integrated educational experiences. Studies exploring the life experiences of black students attending suburban white high schools show that such students experience far higher graduation and college-going rates than those left in central city schools, frequently attain an ability to be fluently bicultural, and, as adults, are often able to work with and offer guidance on issues that require these skills.

Interestingly enough, the period of growing desegregation coincided with the period of the most dramatic narrowing of the test score gap ever recorded for blacks and whites. This cannot be attributed simply to desegregation but may well be a product of the broad reforms that were associated with the civil rights era according to a 1998 study by Rand researcher David Grissmer and an earlier study by Daniel Koretz.[35] In the 1990s, on the other hand, racial gaps in achievement have been growing and the high school graduation rate of black students is decreasing.[36] The integration period was a time of major gains and gap closing for black students and the resegregation era is showing signs of retrogression.[37]

When the Supreme Court said that separate schools were "inherently unequal" it was discussing the impact of discrimination, not the talent of minority students. Although there is a great deal of debate about the scale of the benefits produced by desegregation, there is no doubt that segregated schools are unequal in easily measurable ways. To a considerable degree this is because the segregated minority schools are overwhelmingly likely to have to contend with the educational impacts of concentrated poverty (defined as having 50% or more of the student population eligible for free or reduced lunch), while segregated white schools are almost always middle class. This study shows that highly segregated black and/or Latino schools are many times more likely than segregated white schools to experience concentration of poverty. This is the legacy of unequal education, income, and the continuing patterns of housing discrimination.

Anyone who wants to explore the continuing inequalities need only examine the test scores, dropout rates, and other statistics for various schools in a metropolitan community and relate them to statistics for school poverty (free lunch) and race (percent black and/or Latino) to see a distressingly clear pattern. The state testing programs, which now publish school level test data in almost all states, identify schools as low performing, many of which are segregated minority schools with concentrated poverty. There is a very strong correlation between the percent poor in a school and its average test score. Therefore, minority students in segregated schools, no matter how able they may be as individuals, usually face a much lower level of competition and average preparation by other students. Such schools tend to have teachers who are themselves much more likely to be teaching a subject they did not study and with which they have had little experience.[38] This, in turn, often means that there are not enough students ready for advanced and AP courses and that those opportunities are eliminated even for students who are ready because there are not sufficient students to fill a teacher's advanced classes. Many colleges give

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[35]David Grissmer, Ann Flanagan, and S. Williamson, "Why Did the Black-White Score Gap Narrow in the 1970s and 1980s?", in Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips (eds.), *The Black-White Score Gap* (Washington, DC: Brookings Inst. 1998); Daniel Koretz, *Trends in Educational Achievement* (Washington, DC: Congress of the U.S. Congressional Budget Office 1986).

[36] Phillip Kaufman and associates, *Dropout Rates In the United States: 1999*, Washington: National Center for Education Statistics, November 2000: 24; National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics 1999*: pp. 144-148; National Center for Education Statistics, *The Nation's Report Card, Fourth-Grade Reading 2000*, Washington: NCES, 2001: p. 110, table C.11.

[37] Desegregation was one of a related set of policies attacking discrimination and poverty in the earlier period and resegregation has been part of a much broader conservative agenda so these trends cannot, of course, be attributed to one single issue.

[38] The various inequalities are described in Beth Aronstamm Young and Thomas M. Smith, "The Social Context of Education," Findings from the *Condition of Education 1997*, National Center for Education Statistics 97-991, 1997.

special consideration to students who have taken AP classes, ignoring the fact that such classes are far less available in segregated minority high schools.

These problems are most serious when racial segregation is reinforced by class segregation, but they are also serious for the black middle class schools. The College Board is supporting a study examining the achievement gap for black middle class students, since students in middle class black schools perform at a much lower average level than would be predicted on the basis of their economic level. [39] Part of this difference is due to the fact that black middle class families tend to live in communities with far more poor people than white middle class families and often live near and share schools with lower class black neighborhoods.[40]

The basic message is that segregation, as normally seen in American schools almost a half-century after *Brown,* produces schools that are, on average, deeply unequal in ways that go far beyond unequal budgets. Integrated schools, on average, clearly have better opportunities. There are, of course, exceptions. Even if integrated schools have better opportunities, this does not assure that minority children enrolled in those schools will receive fair access to those opportunities. That depends on the policies and practices under which the school operates. Desegregation at the school level is a necessary but far from sufficient condition for assuring equal opportunity in practice. A great deal is known about the conditions under which interracial schools operate more or less effectively and fairly.[41] There are a variety of things that children learn in interracial schools about understanding and working together with people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds, things that are difficult or impossible to learn in segregated schools.

Have the People Turned Against Desegregation?

By huge majorities Americans express a preference for integrated education and believe that it is very important for their children to learn how to understand and work with others of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. There has been little or no positive leadership on this issue for a generation, however, from any branch of government, and the courts have moved from requiring desegregation to, in many cases, pressing for the elimination of desegregation plans or even forbidding voluntary action that communities wish to undertake on their own. There has been little public discussion outside local communities about the return to segregation that has been going on throughout the 1990s. Citizens in some communities, such as Charlotte, NC, have elected school boards committed to integration only to have their will blocked by a federal court forbidding any conscious effort to achieve or maintain desegregation.

This report shows that racial isolation continued to intensify in the late 1990s, that it was happening in all parts of the country, that minority enrollment was continuing the climb, particularly in the suburbs, and that segregation was growing, especially in parts of the South and in suburbia.

It is often said that desegregation failed, that attitudes cannot change, that young people did not interact and learn from each other, and that more could be gained by putting the money into segregated neighborhood schools. This report and others in this series show that there was substantial desegregation, particularly for blacks

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[39] Task Force on Minority High Achievement, *Reaching the Top*, New York: College Board, 1999.

[40] Mary Patillo-McCoy, *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

[41] Robert E. Slavin, and Nancy Madden, "School Practices that Improve Race Relations," *American Educational Research Journal* Vol. 16 (1979): 169-180.

in the South, that it lasted for a long time, and that significant resegregation did not begin until the Supreme Court supported it in a series of decisions in the past decade. There is no evidence of a turn of opinion against desegregation and certainly no evidence that blacks gave up on this goal, though they certainly did not support all aspects or types of desegregation efforts.

Desegregation levels for African American students increased markedly from the mid-1960s through the early 1970s. During the long period of judicial stalemate, they continued to rise slowly, even under hostile administrations. The era of desegregation lasted far longer than the civil rights movement and continued with very little support from any level of government. During this period, it virtually disappeared as a serious political issue, although public support increased substantially among both minorities and whites. While there was never anything close to a white majority in favor of busing, the percent of whites supporting the policy increased substantially over time, and there was a clear majority of white parents whose children were actually bused who said that it was "highly satisfactory." [42] In any case, mandatory busing has not been the basic form of desegregation policy for two decades, yet few of the public opinion questions recognize this. Many communities are actually debating not the termination of mandatory student reassignments ("busing"), but the future of magnet schools and programs set up under desegregation requirements that often enjoy widespread support. Several courts have ordered school districts to end their desegregation standards for magnet schools.

There has been no major push to integrate schools since the early 1970s. The courts, Congress, and the executive branch all reduced enforcement a generation ago. Significant federal aid aimed at helping interracial schools succeed ended in 1981. Many states have quietly abandoned the offices, agencies, and policies they set up to produce and support interracial education. California, Illinois, and New Jersey are three examples of this process. An observer might assume that the problem had either been solved or proved to be unsolvable. Many white Americans believe that there has been a substantial decline in educational inequality by race and that civil rights issues have been fully or even excessively addressed.

Are Strategies for Equalizing Separate Education Working?

Critics of desegregation often argue that it would be better to spend the money on improving schools where they are. The suggestion is that while a great deal of money is being spent on desegregation, we are ignoring alternative solutions that have been shown to produce academic gains in segregated neighborhood schools. In reality, such solutions do not exist. Before the Supreme Court ordered desegregation in 1954, the nation had been operating under a constitutional mandate to equalize the segregated schools, which had been a massive failure. School boards consistently provided segregated and strikingly unequal schools, minority communities' efforts were regularly defeated because they did not have enough political power to force changes in local politics, and neither the courts nor Congress nor any state government showed any interest in strongly enforcing the equality requirement.[43] There was a similar pattern of neglect and blatant inequality for Mexican

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[42] Harris and Associates, *The Unfinished Agenda on Race in America*, report to the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, January 1989; Harris, Louis, and Associates, *A Study of Attitudes toward Racial and Religious Minorities and Toward Women*, report to the National Conference of Christians and Jews, November 1978.

[43] James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Horace Mann Bond, *The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (New York: Octagon, 1966, reprint ed.); Meyer Weinberg, *A Chance to Learn: The History of Race and Education in the United States*, 2nd ed. (Long Beach: California State University Press, 1995); Gunnar Myrdahl, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1944, chapters 35, 41, and 43).

American students.[44] Even after the Supreme Court acted, dramatic inequalities continued to exist between minority and white schools in many districts and were often part of the proof presented to courts as a basis for desegregation orders. Civil rights groups engaged in decades of unsuccessful battles to equalize segregated schools before desegregation was ordered.[45] This long history in thousands of communities produced great skepticism about the willingness of the majority to make minority schools equal.

Desegregation was seriously pursued by the elected branches of government for only a few years in the mid-1960s (1965-1968), the crucial period of breakthrough in making Southern school districts the nation's least segregated. The period of the most active Supreme Court intervention on more than token desegregation went from 1968 to 1973. Even in this period, the government always spent much more money on programs intended to equalize education in poor minority schools than it did on desegregation. The only significant federal expenditures on desegregation occurred during the 1970s, when the Emergency School Aid Act provided funds for training teachers to deal with diverse classes, to develop curricula, and to work on improved race relations among students. The federal government did not fund school busing.[46] This desegregation aid program, which was widely popular and had been shown to improve interracial schools, was summarily ended in President Reagan's first budget.[47] Since then there has been only a small program of aid to magnet schools. Those who say that the federal government has been spending much on this issue are simply wrong.

Most of the added expenditures were for more transportation of students and for new magnet schools and programs, and were funded from local budgets, sometimes reimbursed by state governments. In most cases studied, the added costs were a few percent of the local school budget, a significant share of which could be attributed to new educational programs and choices. Since most American school children had long been transported to school, at its peak, busing for purposes of desegregation probably only added several percentage points to those numbers, less than busing for sports and activities. [48] Ironically, the highest increases in transportation came under voluntary desegregation through educational choices, something many parents of all races strongly valued, as shown by the strong demand for enrollment in many magnet schools. Very few U.S. school districts had schools of choice before the desegregation era.[49]

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[44] Herschel T. Manuel, *Spanish Speaking Children of the Southwest: Their Education and Public Welfare* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965); Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., *"Let All of Them Take Heed": Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987); Gilbert G. Gonzalez, "Segregation and the Education of Mexican Children, 1900-1940," in Jose F. Moreno, ed., *The Elusive Quest for Equality: 150 Years of Chicano/Chicana Education* (Cambridge: Harvard Educational Review Books, 1999): 53-76.

[45] Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality* (New York: Knopf, 1976, c1975).

[46] Gary Orfield, "Desegregation Aid and the Politics of Polarization," Chapter 9, in Orfield, *Congressional Power: Congress and Social Change* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975).

[47] National Opinion Research Center, *Southern Schools: An Evaluation of the Effects of the Emergency School Assistance Program and of School Desegregation* (Chicago: NORC, 1973); Jean B. Wellish et al., An In-Depth Study of Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) Schools: 1975-1976 (Santa Monica: Systems Development Corporation, 1977); Richard P. Nathan et al., *The Consequences of Cuts: The Effects of the Reagan Domestic Program on State and Local Governments* (Princeton: Princeton Urban and Regional Research Center, 1983): 50-51, 85.

[48] U.S. Senate, Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity, Hearings, *Pupil Transportation Costs*, 92d Cong. 1st Sess., 1971; After considerable investigation the committee concluded in its final report that desegregation busing was far less than busing for extracurricular activities and was "typically no more than 1 or 2 percent" of the district's budget (Orfield, *Must We Bus: Segregated Schools and National Policy* [Washington: Brookings Inst., 1978]: 130-133.

[49] Lauri Steel and Roger Levine, *Educational Innovation in Multiracial Contexts: The Growth of Magnet Schools in American Education* (Palo Alto: American Institutes for Research, 1994).

Even at its peak, desegregation received much less money than compensatory education, and substantial parts of the desegregation money were spent on new educational offerings in choice and magnet programs and providing transportation to get the students to programs which parents often saw as superior to what had been offered in their neighborhood schools.

Compensatory education for high poverty schools has, in fact, been the central goal of federal educational policy for the past 35 years. The largest program, Title I, pumps dollars into high poverty schools. Many other programs, including bilingual education, Head Start, and charter schools, are intended to improve education without addressing the issue of race or moving children away from their communities. Typically, when school districts dissolve their desegregation orders, they tend to offer more compensatory programs for at least some of the resegregated minority schools for at least a transition period. These programs are often similar to Title I programs --programs which typically have not proved effective --nor is there any guarantee of their long-term funding or effectiveness.[50]

Since the 1980s, the basic educational goal of both national parties has been to improve schools by imposing tough standards, and there has been no priority given by education officials of any administration in the past twenty years to desegregation. In 1989, President George H. Bush and the nation's governors, led by then Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, embraced the goal of racial equity in education by 2000, which Congress embodied in the Goals 2000 legislation.[51] Almost all the states adopted sweeping state reforms based on more course requirements and mandatory testing. Those reforms ignored the issue of race and class segregation. The idea was to equalize outcomes within the existing structure of segregated schools. During this period there was a substantial increase in compensatory resources directed at improving impoverished schools and bringing strong pressure to bear on their teachers and administrators to raise achievement.

In fact, however, racial differences in achievement and graduation began to expand in the 1990s, after having closed substantially from the 1960s into the mid-1980s. There is no evidence that we have learned how to make segregated high poverty schools equal, though there are a few policies and programs that have had a significant impact on raising achievement, particularly in the early grades, and there are a handful of remarkably successful high poverty segregated schools, usually elementary schools, in most big cities.

The *Prospects* study Congress commissioned of the Title I program showed that low income students receiving Title I services in high poverty schools, which are usually segregated minority schools, did less well than similar students receiving no services in less impoverished schools.[52] It suggested that the average benefits of the huge federal compensatory education program, administered by state and local educators, were extremely small or non-existent. A recent study of several cities shows that the typical achievement gap for low-income students is much wider for those living in concentrated poverty areas, areas that are overwhelmingly black and Latino.[53]

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[50] Experiences in a number of districts are discussed in Orfield and Eaton, *Dismantling Desegregation* (New York: New Press, 1996).
[51] Colin Campbell and Bert A. Rockman, *The Bush Presidency: First Appraisals* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, 1991): 83. Even earlier, in 1987, the state superintendents had unanimously adopted the goal of a zero dropout rate by 2000 together with guarantees of full educational opportunities for all students (Lynn Olson, "Chiefs Unanimously Endorse School GuaranteesPolicy, *Education Week*, 25 November, 1987, pp. 1, 16.
[52] U.S. Department of Education. Office of Policy and Planning, *Prospects: The Congressionally Mandated Study of Educational Growth and Opportunity* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Office of Policy and Planning, 1992).
[53] Stephen J. Schellenberg, "Concentration of Poverty and the Ongoing Need for Title I," in Orfield and DeBray, eds., *Hard Work for Good Schools* (Cambridge, MA: Civil Rights Project, 1999): 130-146.

There are, of course, possible impacts of interracial schooling that cannot be obtained in segregated schools, those involving learning about race relations, learning directly from students with other backgrounds, and learning how to work effectively with students of other backgrounds. There is some new survey evidence showing positive effects from desegregated education for both minority and white students, whose reactions have rarely been seriously studied.[54]

Impacts of Inferior Education

The consequences of unequal education have become more severe because employment and income are sharply linked to education than in the past. Post-secondary education is essential to significantly share in the benefits of economic growth, and the availability of well-paying manufacturing jobs with low educational requirements has declined greatly. High school graduates with no college or technical training have also experienced serious economic decline as educational requirements are increasing. High school dropouts find themselves in jobs that pay only half as much as a quarter century ago, in spite of the greater wealth in society. Those who drop out are far more likely to end up in the mushrooming prison population with staggering costs to the economy. Dropout rates are by far the highest in a few hundred segregated high-poverty high schools; about half of the high schools in the largest cities were graduating less than half of their students in the mid-1990s, and they were overwhelmingly segregated minority schools.[55]

Academic competition is by far the strongest in schools with concentrations of whites, Asians, and middle class children. These are the schools that draw and hold strong teachers who are teaching in their subject, that provide more accelerated and fewer remedial programs, that have fewer personal and community problems to deal with, that have the most active involvement by parents, and that have strong relationships with colleges. As special programs to help disadvantaged students attend college erode, and course and test requirements intensify, access to these strong high schools becomes all the more important. Academic standards for high school graduation and for college admissions have risen sharply in many states. More financial aid is being given to high scoring students and less assigned on the basis of economic need. Affirmative action has been outlawed in five states and is under attack elsewhere. Because educational attainment has become so critical and the standards so unforgiving, the consequences of being isolated in a weak school are far worse than in the past.

Not only are the consequences worse, but a much larger fraction of the nation's students is being affected by them. Minority enrollment has risen dramatically and now accounts for about three times as large a share of our total enrollment as a half-century ago. The number and percent of white students have fallen. Asian enrollment has risen rapidly but tends to be in schools that have neither ethnic nor linguistic isolation and do not have high levels of poverty.

Residential segregation and discrimination remain prominent features of our metropolitan areas. Both the school statistics reported here on suburban segregation and recent studies of housing choice and mortgage discrimination show that the problems of metropolitan separation are not solving themselves. A recent study of

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[54] The Civil Rights Project has conducted surveys in several major school districts that will be released this year. The first, in Louisville-Jefferson County, KY can be viewed at www.law.harvard.edu/civilrights.

[55] Robert Balfanz and Nettie Legters, "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, Harvard University, January 13, 2001.

housing markets in metropolitan Boston showed, for example, that black and Latino families are not moving into 94% of the suburban towns in any significant numbers,[56] and where they are moving, the schools tend to be weak.

Why Are We Turning Back to Segregation?

If desegregated schools are doing better, and segregated schools are clearly weaker, and the experience with 35 years of compensatory programs has been profoundly frustrating, then why are we returning to segregation? Why, if there is increasing belief that integrated education is beneficial, are we offering our students more segregated schools? There is no simple answer, but we believe that it is a combination of a dramatic reversal in policy by the U.S. Supreme Court and a number of lower courts, the failure to develop a policy a quarter century ago that could deal with the realities of metropolitan communities, and the large demographic transformation the country now faces. It is a crisis of law, policy, and demography.

The role of the courts has changed dramatically during the course of the school desegregation story. The Supreme Court opened the issue of Southern desegregation with the *Brown* decision in 1954, and several courts in the Southwest acted against segregation of Mexican Americans slightly earlier. The courts were, however, slow and ineffectual in enforcing the rights, and the pattern of segregation remained almost unchanged until Congress and the Johnson Administration acted a decade later to initiate the only period during which desegregation was a political priority --1965-68. The Supreme Court continued to expand and toughen desegregation requirements through the early 1970s, first authorizing busing when needed for urban desegregation in 1971, and then requiring desegregation outside the South in 1973.

Once the Warren Court was gone and President Nixon had the opportunity to appoint four justices, the Court divided on civil rights and limited the reach of desegregation remedies. The executive branch stopped enforcing desegregation requirements. When the Carter Administration began enforcing the law again, Congress took away the education agency's power. The long battle to change the Supreme Court by the Nixon, Reagan and Bush administrations succeeded in creating a court with a fundamentally different approach to civil rights by the late 1980s. The Rehnquist Court, led by a consistent dissenter against school desegregation law[57], adopted the assumptions that the history of discrimination had been cured, enough had been done so the orders should be ended, and that there was a serious danger of discrimination against whites if civil rights requirements were to continue. In three decisions in the l990s, the Court defined desegregation as a temporary remedy and found that school boards released from their orders (found to be "unitary") could reinstate segregated schools.[58] The Rehnquist Court concluded that positive policies taking race into account for the purpose of creating integration were suspect and had to demonstrate both a compelling reason and prove that the goal could not be realized without considering race. These policies led some lower courts to forbid even voluntary action for desegregation, such as magnet schools with desegregation policies for admissions. Such orders have been handed down, for example, in Virginia, Maryland, and Boston.

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[56] Guy Stuart, *Segregation in the Boston Metropolitan Area at the End of the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Civil Rights Project, February 2000.
[57] Justice Rehnquist, who as a Supreme Court clerk at the time of *Brown v. Board* wrote a memo urging continuation of the *Plessy* "separate but equal" policy, consistently pressed to limit or reverse desegregation and affirmative action requirements (Sue Davis, *Justice Rehnquist and the Constitution* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989]: 56-62). Rehnquist was often on the dissenting side of such cases until a majority with similar views was consolidated by the appointment of Justice Clarence Thomas in 1991.
[58] *Board of Education of Oklahoma City v. Dowell*, 498 U.S. 237 (1991); *Freeman v. Pitts*, 503 U.S. 467 (1992).

The logic of the situation today is that any individual parent can bring a challenge against continuing a desegregation plan even when the local school authorities want to continue it for what they see as important educational reasons. Unless school authorities can prove to a judge's satisfaction that they have a compelling educational goal that can only be met by desegregation, they may be ordered to stop and to adopt a policy likely to produce a segregated school. Clearly the courts have shifted the entire playing field for resolving the issue. One mark of the extraordinary shift has been the intervention of individual judges to force the termination of a desegregation plan even when no one has asked for it. The judges doing this are taking a much more activist role than judges ever did in the desegregation fight, which typically involved judicial foot-dragging and minimalism, especially in the South. [59]

In other words, the leading policy influence on the reversal is a transformed role for federal courts. During the Nixon, Reagan and Bush administrations, this slow shift was intensified by political and legal pressure for terminating desegregation from the executive branch, particularly the Justice Department. One might assume that in a society in the midst of a massive racial and ethnic transition with extremely unequal schools and few other institutions capable of effectively crossing racial and ethnic lines, there would be a major effort to assure that all schools were equal and that interracial experiences were extensive and well supported. In fact, the country is moving in precisely the opposite direction and has been throughout the 1990s. There has been a clear reversal of the gains in desegregation of the past quarter century and a widening of educational achievement gaps in the most recent years. Young whites, who make up what is predicted to be the last generation of a white majority of school children, are remaining highly isolated.

The Basic Findings

This report shows that the trend of intensifying segregation that has characterized the 1990s continues to operate. Since the future society becomes apparent much earlier among the school age population, this data from one of the last school years of the old century offers important predictions about the overall society of the next. When we look at schools, we are looking at the primary working-age population of two and three decades later. Since current immigration is overwhelmingly non-white, the coming adult population is likely to be even more diverse than today's school enrollments.

Although the diversity of our students has increased by orders of magnitude since mid-century, most of our children are growing up in separate societies and schools. Even most of the middle class minority families who move their children to the suburbs find themselves in heavily minority schools, often schools with limited educational success. Segregation is following the black and Latino families who are moving out of the central cities, and it is threatening the suburban dream of upward mobility for nonwhite families. White children, who will increasingly find themselves working as adults in interracial workplaces, are growing up in more segregated schools than any other racial group, even in many places where the minority population has soared and the white population plummeted.

[59] Orfield, "Conservative Activists and the Rush toward Resegregation," in Jay Heubert (ed.), *Law and School Reform,* New Haven: Yale University Press, l999: 39-87.

The Surge in Diversity in U.S. Schools

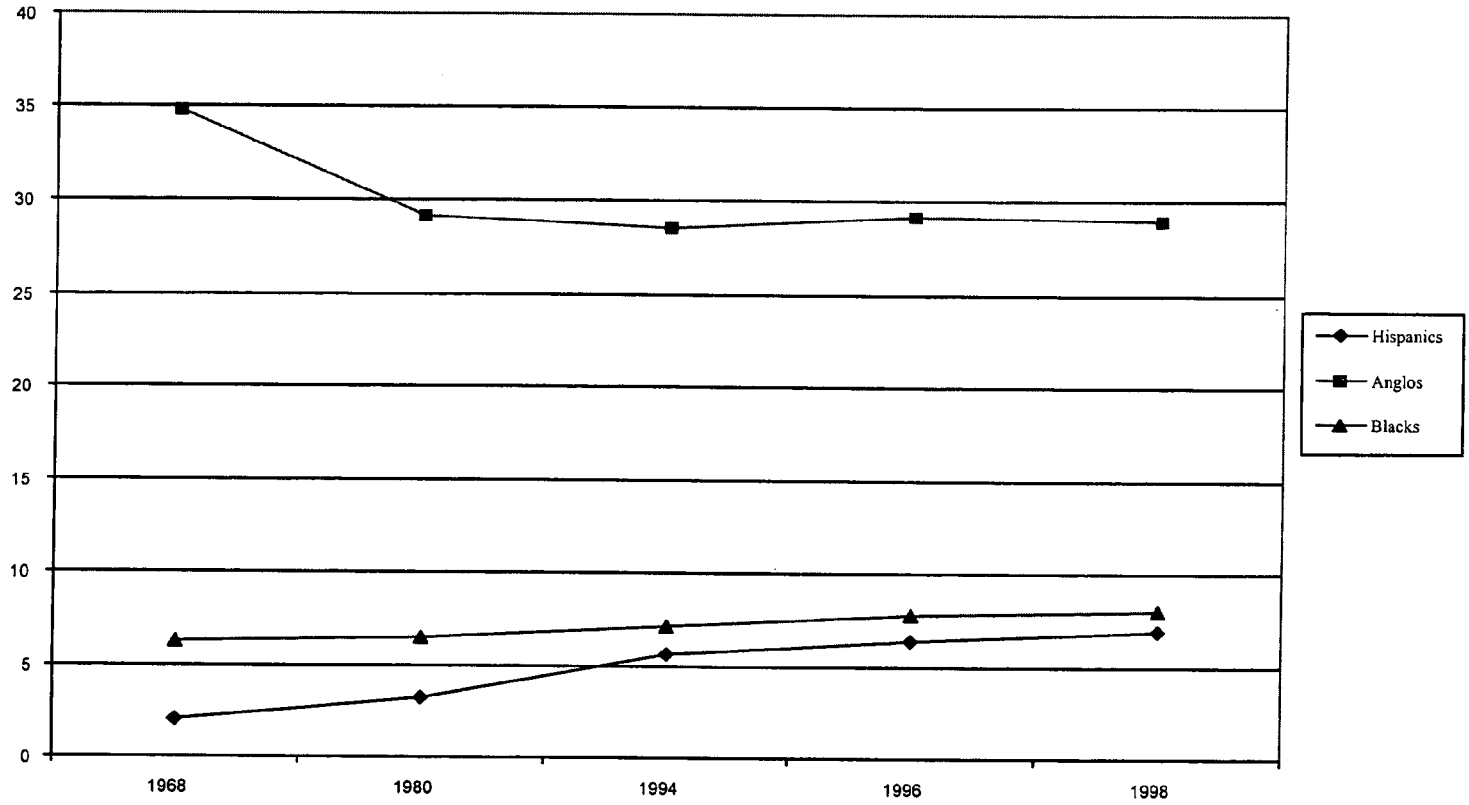
The nation's schools have changed in amazing ways since the civil rights era. The number of black and Latino students in the nation's public schools is up 5.8 million, while the number of white students has declined by 5.6 million. The schools reflect the transformation of the U.S. population in an era of low birth rates and massive immigration. Latino students, a group that was just 2 million in 1968 has grown to 6.9 million, an extraordinary growth of **245%** in just thirty years. In I968 there were more than three times as many blacks as Latinos in our schools, but in 1998 there were seven Latino students for every eight blacks, and soon there will be more Latino than black students. This is an extraordinary switch. The decline of white students by 5.6 million during these 30 years has a massive impact on the college-going population and the future work force. Our schools will be the first major institutions to experience non-white majorities.

Table 1
Public School Enrollment Changes, 1968-1998
(In Millions)

	1968	1980	1994	1996	1998	Change 1968-1998
Hispanic	2.00	3.18	5.57	6.38	6.90	+4.90 (245%)
Anglos	34.70	29.16	28.46	29.11	28.93	- 5.77 (-17%)
Blacks	6.28	6.42	7.13	7.69	7.91	+1.63 (26%)

Sources: DBS Corp., 1982, 1987; Gary Orfield, Rosemary George, and Amy Orfield, *Racial Change in U.S. School Enrollments*, 1968-84, paper presented at National Conference on School Desegregation, University of Chicago, 1988; 1997-98 NCES Common Core of Data.

Public School Enrollment Changes, 1968-1998, in Millions



Sources: DBS Corp., 1982, 1987; Gary Orfield, Rosemary George, and Amy Orfield, *Racial Change in U.S. School Enrollments*, 1968-84, paper presented at National Conference on School Desegregation, University of Chicago, 1988; 1997-98 NCES Common Core of Data.

In 1968 there were 17 white students for every Latino student. Thirty years later there were four. These are vast transformations in a short period of history. Rapid growth in the Asian population also helped increase diversity.

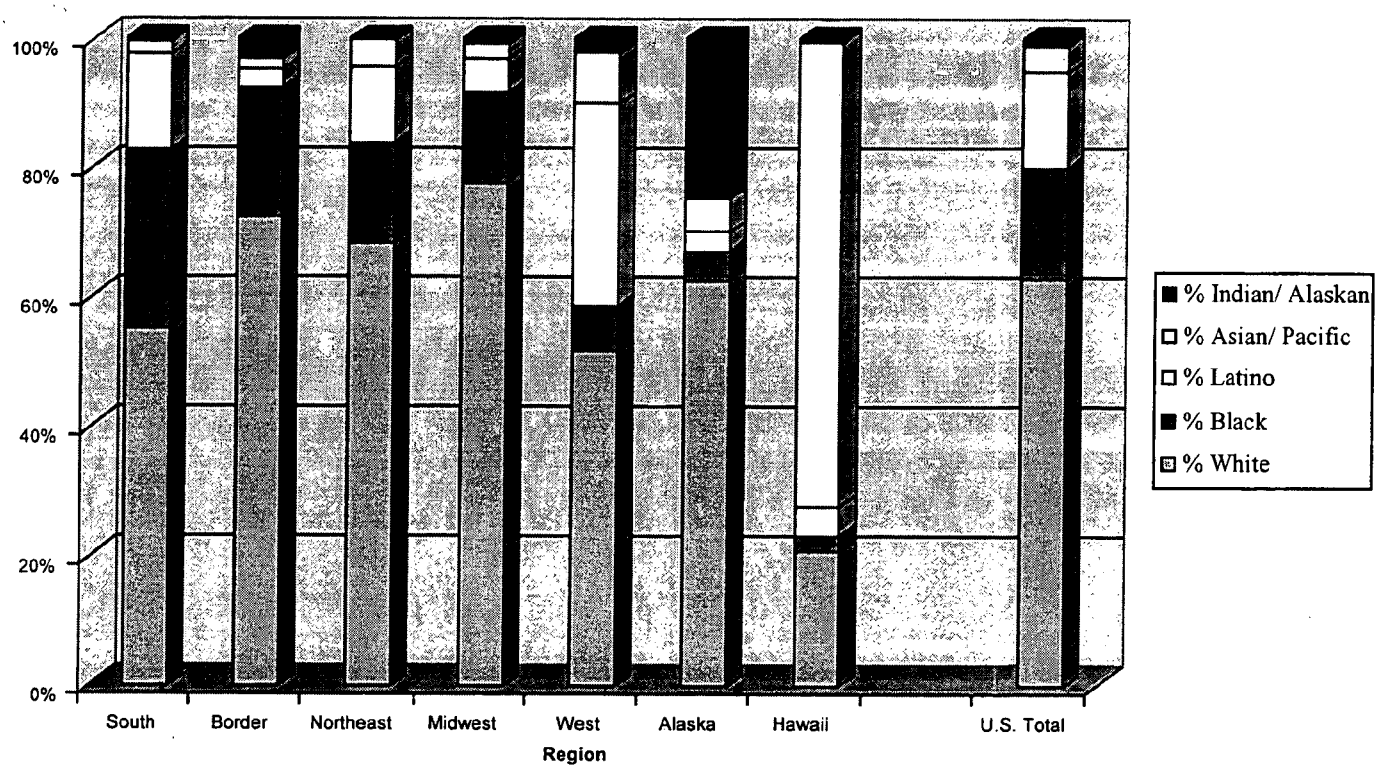
Two reasons for the time lag in recognizing the scope of the changes is that the changes are most visible in the young population and the immigrant population, both of which have little political power, and are least consequential among the older adults. The other reason is that blacks have always been concentrated in the South, and the immigrant population so far is concentrated in relatively few states, mostly Southwest and Coastal states and Illinois. Asians are even more concentrated, particularly in California.

Table 2
Regular Public School Enrollments by Race/Ethnicity and Region, 1998-99

Region	Total Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Latino	% Asian/ Pacific	% Indian/ Alaskan
South	14,059,539	55.2	27.5	15.0	1.9	0.4
Border	3,492,072	72.3	20.2	2.7	1.7	3.1
Northeast	8,117,655	68.4	15.4	11.8	4.1	0.3
Midwest	9,813,122	77.7	14.1	5.1	2.2	0.9
West	10,292,359	51.9	6.8	31.4	7.8	2.2
Alaska	135,291	62.5	4.6	3.0	5.1	24.8
Hawaii	188,069	20.8	2.4	4.6	71.7	0.4
U.S. Total	46,098,136	62.8	17.2	15.0	4.0	1.1

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data

Regular Public School Enrollments
by Race/Ethnicity and Region, 1998-99



Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data

Maps showing minority enrollment across the U.S. indicate that the South and West have far higher concentrations of non-white students than the rest of the nation, where minority enrollment tends to be heavily concentrated in big cities and some of their older suburbs. Although no major region had a majority-minority student enrollment by the 1998-99 school year, the West, a vast region that includes the Pacific coast states and the Rocky Mountain states as well as the desert Southwest, had only 52% white students; the South, the states from Virginia to Texas that made up the old Confederacy, had only 55% whites. Both of these regions are likely to have white minorities within the next few years.

It is in these regions that the growth of the United States population and of the economy are concentrated. They have produced all the U.S. presidents elected since 1960 and are certain to profoundly impact our national future. Although white residents of many central cities have experienced living in predominantly non-white communities for years, we will increasingly see entire metropolitan areas and states where there will be no majority group or the majority group will be Latino or African American. This will be a new experience in American educational history. We will be facing either pluralism in schools on an unprecedented level, with millions of whites needing to adjust to minority status, or the possibility of very serious racial and ethnic polarization, reinforced by educational inequalities, with the possible exclusion of the majority of students from access to educational mobility. We will, in the process, be affecting the kind of relationships and experiences that prepare people to function in highly multiracial civic life and workplaces.

The other major regions of the country, stretching from Maine to Maryland, and from Oklahoma to the Dakotas to the East Coast, have from two-thirds to three-fourths white students and are experiencing less change, in part because they are growing more slowly and drawing in fewer of the new minority immigrants. The U.S. is now in the midst of its largest immigration ever in terms of numbers (not percentages) of newcomers, and the people coming since the 1965 immigration reform have been overwhelmingly Hispanic and Asian. The Asian growth is even more rapid than the Latino expansion but started from a much lower base. Asian students are concentrated in the West, where they make up 8% of the students, and in Hawaii, where they account for 72% of total enrollment. American Indian students are also concentrated in the West and in Alaska, where they account for 2.5% of all students.

The West presents a picture of extraordinary diversity and most dramatically illustrates the need for new ways of thinking about race relations. It is the only region where blacks are now the third largest of the minority populations, with just 7% of total enrollment. In the West, there are four Latino students for every African American. The Asian population is larger and growing much faster. Obviously statistics showing only levels of black segregation from whites would seriously oversimplify the complexities of the West's multiracial population. We are well into a period in which we need new ways of describing and understanding the population.

Table 3
Public School Enrollments in Majority Non-White States by Race/Ethnicity, 1998-99

Region*	Total Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Latino	% Asian/ Pacific	% Indian/ Alaskan
California	5,828,599	37.9	8.7	41.4	11.1	0.9
Hawaii	188,069	20.8	2.4	4.6	71.7	0.4
Louisiana	768,329	49.7	47.1	1.3	1.3	0.7
Mississippi	503,742	47.7	51.0	0.5	0.6	0.1
New Mexico	328,753	37.2	2.3	48.8	1.0	10.8
Texas	3,945,367	44.1	14.4	38.6	2.5	0.3
Washington DC	71,889	4.3	85.9	8.3	1.6	0.0

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data

Until recently Hawaii was the only U.S. state with a clear majority of nonwhite students. The data for 1998-99 show that there are six states and the District of Columbia in which white are the minority. They include the nation's two largest states, California and Texas, which serve nearly 10 million students. (The influence of these two states is evident in the fact that they have produced the victors in seven of the last ten presidential elections.) Only one state, Mississippi, enrolled a majority of African American students, and one other, Hawaii, has a large Asian majority. California, Texas, and New Mexico are moving rapidly toward majorities of Latino students if the existing trends continue.

White Enrollment Trends

The proportion of white students in the total regional enrollment is falling by far the fastest in the West, declining from 63.3% to 5l.9% white students in just 11 years; the West may have a majority of nonwhites this school year. Although in the past the decline in the share of white enrollment was often attributed to desegregation orders, there have been no significant new orders in the West for many years, and a number of the older ones have been dropped, which, according to this theory, should have led to white return. Instead, segregation has risen sharply. The West is experiencing a vast Latino and Asian immigration and a low white birthrate. Latino families are the youngest and their fertility levels the highest, so these changes have a great deal of momentum regardless of what happens to immigration.

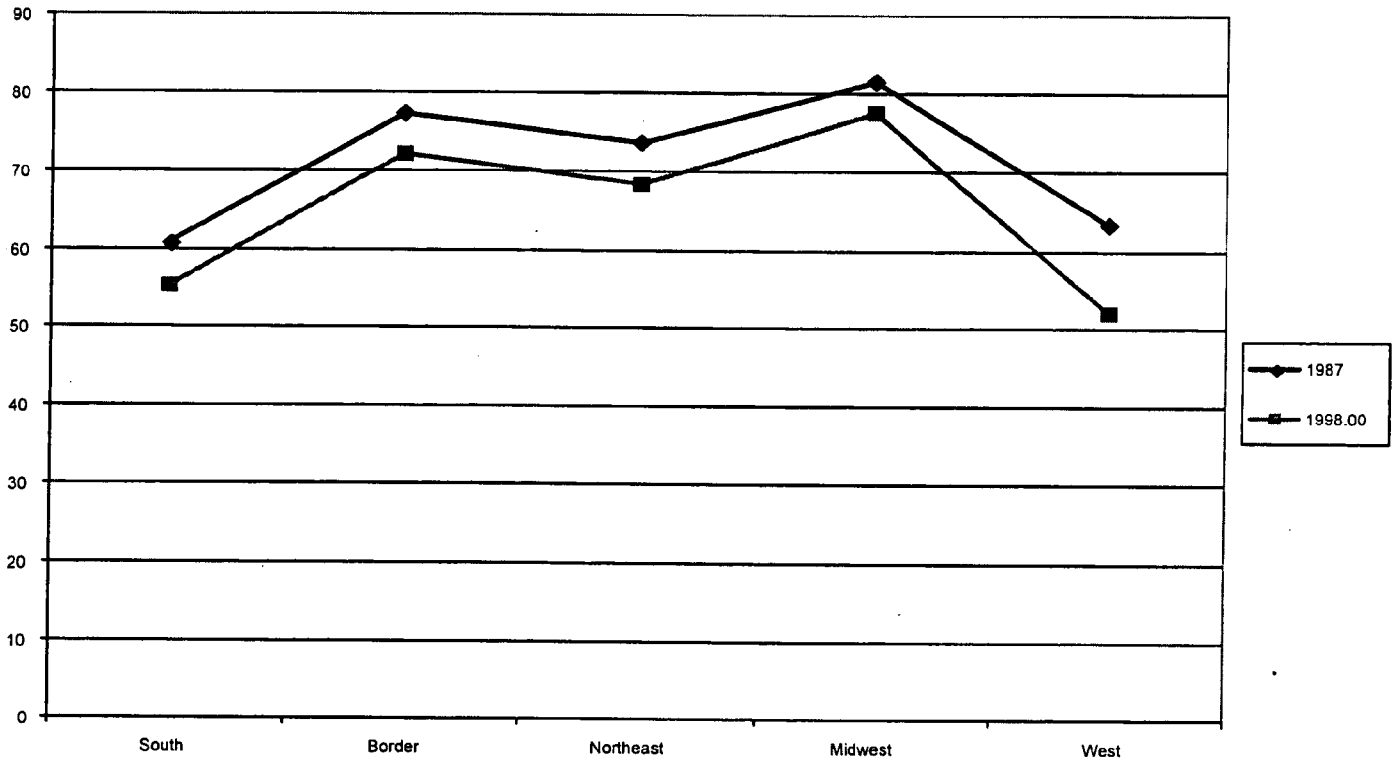
The next most rapid change in the proportion of whites was seen in the South and in the Northeast. The slowest was in the Mid-western region.

Table 4
Percentage of White Students Enrolled, by Year and Region

	South	Border	Northeast	Midwest	West
1987	60.8	77.4	73.8	81.6	63.3
1998	55.2	72.3	68.4	77.7	51.9
Change	-5.6	-5.1	-5.4	-3.9	-11.4

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data Longitudinal Research File (School File), 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.

Percentage of White Students Enrolled, by Year and Region



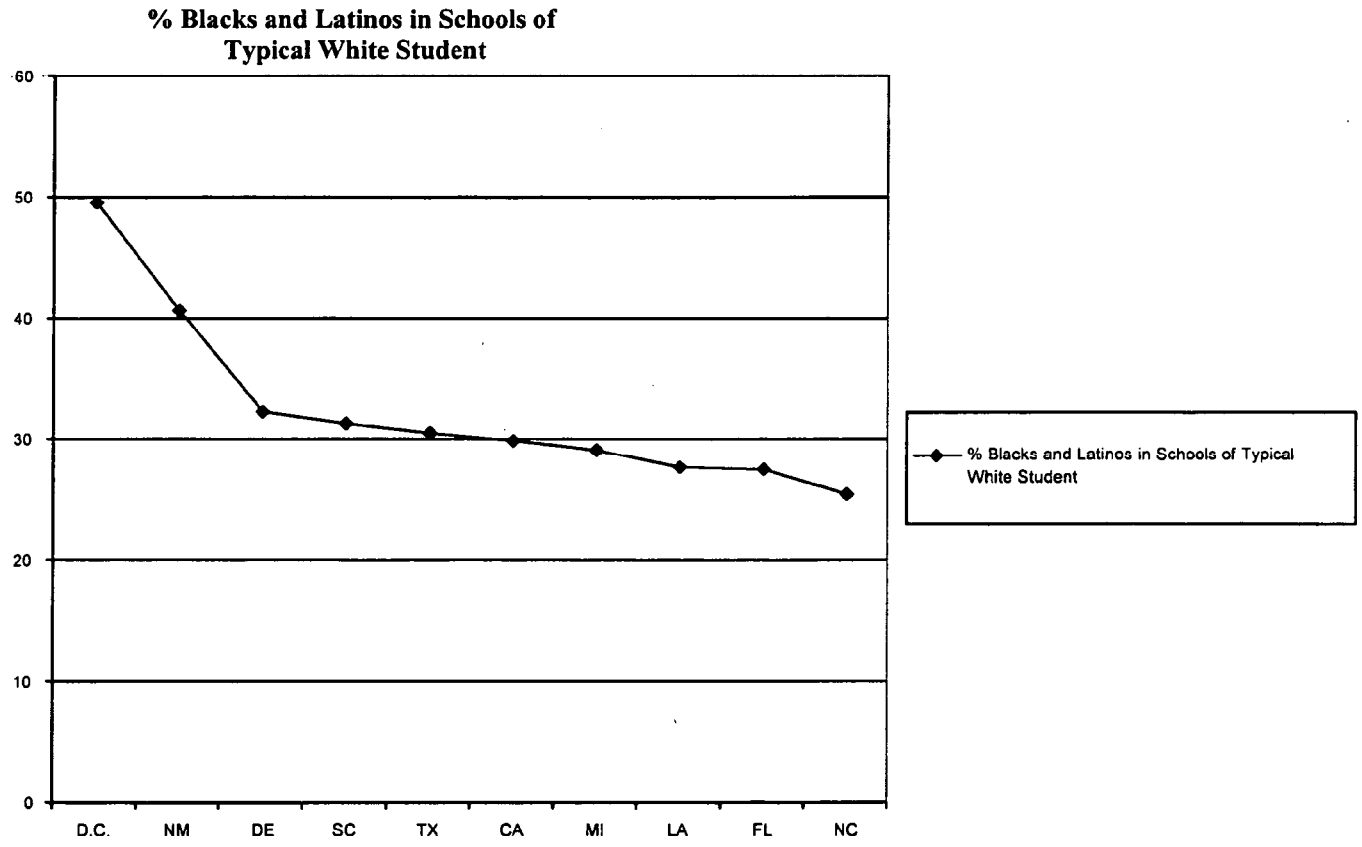
Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data Longitudinal Research File (School File), 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.

Persistence of White Segregation

In spite of the rapid increase in minority enrollment, white students in most states had relatively few minority classmates. Even in the District of Columbia, where less than one student in twenty was white, the typical white student was in a class with a slight majority of whites. Even as the white proportion of students was dropping nationally, they managed to remain segregated from growing minority populations. Data from the 2000 Census shows a similar pattern of residential segregation.

Table 5
States Where Whites Attend School with Highest Proportion of Black and Hispanic Students, 1998-99

State	% Blacks and Latinos in School of Typical White
Washington, D.C.	49.6
New Mexico	40.6
Delaware	32.3
South Carolina	31.2
Texas	30.4
California	29.9
Mississippi	29.1
Louisiana	27.6
Florida	27.4
North Carolina	25.4



None of the states where the average white student was in a school with more than a fourth of students of other races were in the North or Midwest. All except New Mexico and California were among the states that had practiced legally imposed apartheid in their schools until the civil rights revolution. Three of the states were states taken from Mexico a century and a half ago. The Southern states were those where enforcement of desegregation was most seriously pursued, where the highest level of integration was produced in the early 1970s and 1980s, and where the effects were most long lasting.

The Southern complaint during the civil rights era that the North was not enforcing upon itself the kind of social change that was being required in the South turns out to be correct. Only states in the South and two in the Southwest have their white students in schools that average less than three-fourths white. Doubtless, white middle class and upper middle class students are even more isolated, particularly in areas with many small districts without desegregation plans. This white segregation is a result of continuing residential segregation, the Supreme Court's decision to exclude suburbs from a role in urban desegregation remedies, and the historic fact that northern metropolitan areas were typically organized into many more small districts than those in the South. New suburbs continue to be marketed overwhelmingly to whites, even in metropolitan communities with large middle class nonwhite populations. Both the much higher standard of proof needed to obtain desegregation in the North, (in the South proving the historical violation merely required submitting the racial language of the state Constitution and laws) and the failure to confront either housing segregation or the fact that districts were far more fragmented than those in many Southern metropolitan areas, meant that otherwise similar urban areas in the South were often required to do much more than those in the North and West, and that their children were much more likely to attend substantially interracial schools.

In 1998-1999 there were 26 central cities with more than 60,000 students. These cities enrolled 4,715,000 of the nation's 48,392,000 public school students. While about a tenth (9.74%) were enrolled in these districts, the districts served only a minute fraction of the nation's white students and a large share of the blacks and Latinos. Los Angeles alone, for example, served more than 480,000 Latino students, while New York had more than 380,000 African Americans. Five of these systems were more than 90% nonwhite, while a large majority of the others had less than one-fifth white students. Most of these cities either never had or dissolved their district-wide desegregation efforts. New York City, for example, never had a city-wide plan. Los Angeles was the first major city to win a court decision allowing it to dismantle everything except a small voluntary transfer plan twenty years ago. Chicago had only a small magnet and voluntary transfer school plan, as had Houston and Philadelphia. Lower court efforts to desegregate across city-suburban boundary lines were rejected by the Supreme Court in the 1974 case from Detroit, *Milliken v. Bradley*, leaving metropolitan Detroit the nation's most segregated metro in the early 1990s.

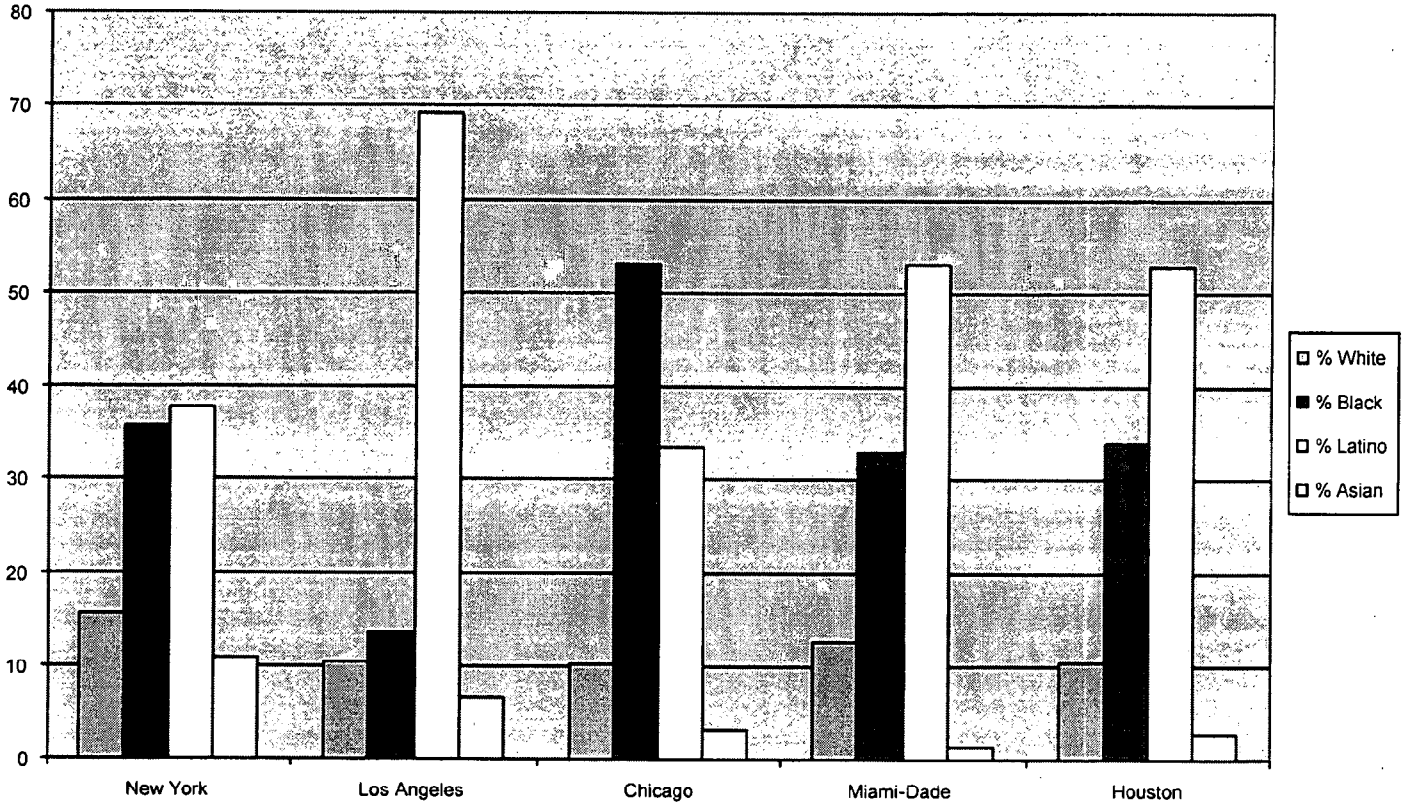
Table 6

Enrollment of the Largest Central City School Districts by Race/Ethnicity, 1998-99

City	Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Latino	% Asian
New York	1,071,074	15.5	35.6	37.7	10.9
Los Angeles	695,885	10.5	13.6	69.1	6.5
Chicago	430,914	10.1	53.1	33.4	3.2
Miami-Dade	352,317	12.6	33.0	53.1	1.3
Houston	210,179	10.5	33.8	52.9	2.8
Philadelphia	207,465	18.4	64.6	12.2	4.7
Detroit	179,102	4.3	91.3	3.3	1.0
Dallas	159,908	9.3	39.4	49.3	1.6
San Diego	138,433	28.2	16.7	36.2	18.3
Memphis	109,055	12.7	85.0	1.1	1.1
Baltimore	106,540	12.2	86.4	0.5	0.6
Milwaukee	99,814	20.2	61.4	13.3	4.1
Long Beach	89,193	18.9	20.3	42.0	18.4
Albuquerque	85,847	42.0	3.7	48.3	1.8
New Orleans	82,176	4.7	91.7	1.2	2.3
Austin	79,496	35.7	17.4	44.1	2.5
Fresno	78,942	21.5	11.5	46.6	19.5
Fort Worth	77,956	24.0	32.3	41.1	2.3
Cleveland	75,386	19.5	71.3	8.0	0.9
Washington, DC	71,889	4.3	85.9	8.3	1.6
El Paso	62,945	16.9	4.7	76.8	1.2
Tucson	62,670	44.2	6.6	42.8	2.4
Boston	61,219	15.6	48.8	26.2	9.0
San Francisco	61,042	12.2	16.0	21.3	49.9
Atlanta	60,541	6.6	89.9	2.3	1.2

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data and computations by Harvard Project on School Desegregation

Enrollment of the Five Largest Central City School Districts by Race/Ethnicity, 1998-99



Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data and computations by Harvard Project on School

Transformation of Student Population

Looking back at this period, it is likely that historians will see the incredible expansion of Latino enrollment as a dominant characteristic of this era in U.S. education. It has received surprisingly little serious attention because of the decline of the civil rights movement and the strong central emphasis on raising achievement through standards-based reform, which tends to ignore student background. Another reason is that the enrollment is so concentrated in a few states. They are very important states, however, and the changes are staggering. Latino enrollment was up more than 200% from 1970 to l998 in five of the eight states with the highest concentrations of students. In California and Texas, the two largest states and where a majority of all Latinos are enrolled, there was an increase of 1.7 million (241%) in the Golden State and nearly 1 million in Texas (169%). In Illinois, a slowly growing state, Latinos were up 258% during the period. Enrollments have more than doubled in Arizona and New Jersey and have exploded 508% in Florida, as South Florida emerged as one of the nation's

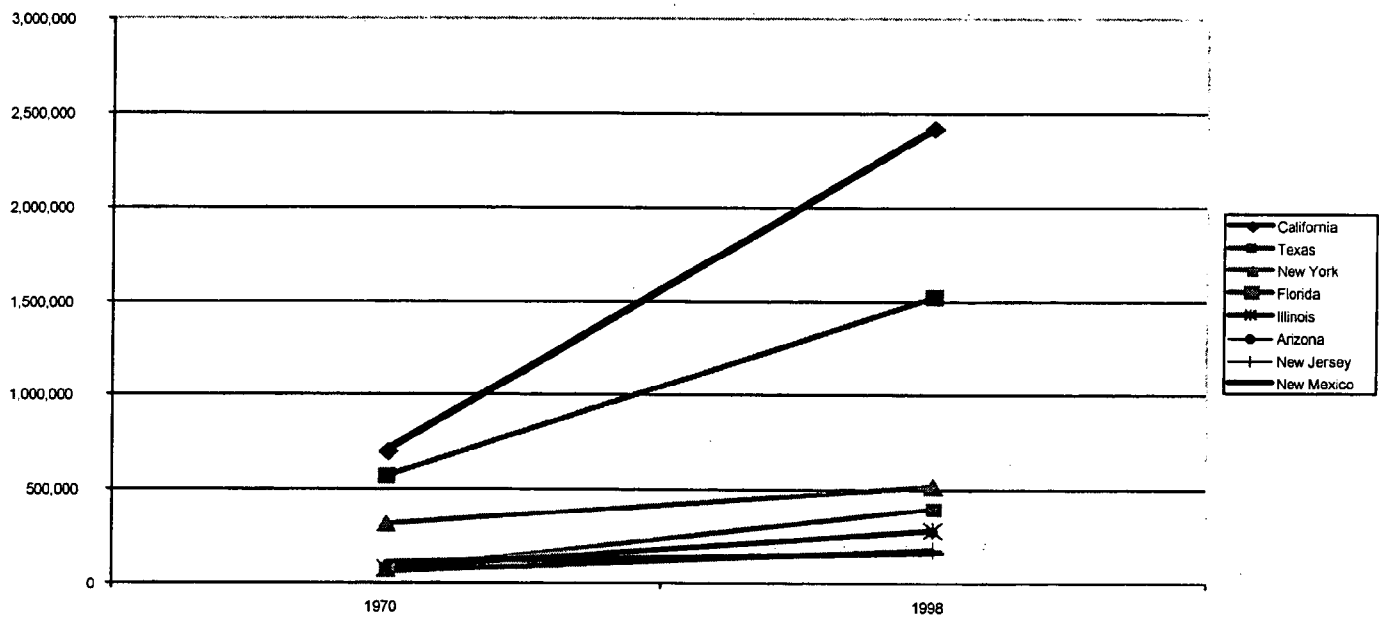
centers of Latino culture and business and a major international center for Latin America. The states most affected include the nation's four largest, all of which play a very large role in the U.S. economy and culture. The numbers were amazingly large, the students experienced very severe educational problems, and they became far more segregated in many areas as their numbers grew. The Census Bureau projects a continued dramatic growth of these numbers, and Latino students will soon surpass black students as the nation's largest minority.

Table 7
Growth of Latino Enrollments, 1970-98 in States with More than 150,000 Latino students in 1998

			Change 1970-98	
	1970	1998	Enrollment Change	Percent Change
California	706,900	2,412,059	1,705,159	241.2
Texas	565,900	1,523,769	957,869	169.3
New York	316,600	519,440	202,840	64.1
Florida	65,700	399,503	333,803	508.1
Illinois	78,100	279,717	201,617	258.2
Arizona	85,500	268,038	182,538	213.5
New Jersey	59,100	181,710	122,610	207.5
New Mexico	109,300	160,398	51,098	46.8

Source: DBS Corp., 1982;1987;1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

Growth of Latino Enrollment, 1970-98
(in states with more than 150,000 Latino students in 1998)



Resegregation of the South

The central story of the desegregation battle was the transformation of a region that has always been home to most U.S. blacks from virtually total apartheid to the most integrated region in the U.S. between 1964 and 1970. During this time, the South had the highest level of integration and the most substantial contact between black and white students. It remains the only region in which whites typically attend schools with significant numbers of blacks. Though the South led the nation in resisting the civil rights revolution and in voting for candidates who promised to roll it back, the integration of the South continued to rise into the 1980s. Only in the 1990s do we see a clear and continuing reversal. This report shows that in 1998 the South has fallen behind the level of black access to majority white schools achieved three decades ago in 1970 and is moving steadily backward. This certainly does not mean that the South is back where it started, however. Blacks are still more than 300 times as likely to be in majority white schools as they were in 1960, and well above the level achieved in 1968. What is being lost is the impact of the systemic attack on residentially-based school segregation that began in the late 1960s and accelerated in the 1970s. Before urban school desegregation, residential segregation generally determined school opportunity and that pattern is returning. The South as a region is not experiencing a sudden resegregation but one that is substantial and has been steady now for a decade. It may well accelerate as a number of the largest county-wide school districts in some of the most integrated states are being ordered to

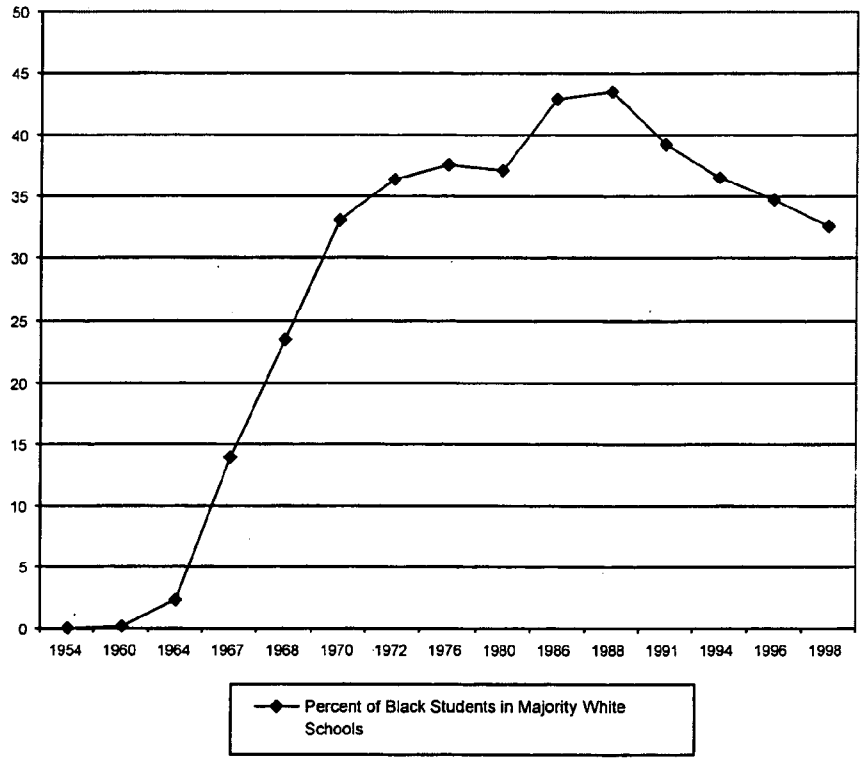
terminate their desegregation plans. Recently, for example, several decisions have ended desegregation plans in large Southern districts.

Table 8
Change in Black Segregation in the South,* 1954-98

Percent of Black Students in Majority White Schools	
1954	0.001
1960	0.1
1964	2.3
1967	13.9
1968	23.4
1970	33.1
1972	36.4
1976	37.6
1980	37.1
1986	42.9
1988	43.5
1991	39.2
1994	36.6
1996	34.7
1998	32.7

Source: Southern Education Reporting Service in Reed Sarratt, *The Ordeal of Desegregation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966): 362; HEW Press Release, May 27, 1968; OCR data tapes: 1992-93, 1994-1995, 1996-97; and 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.

Change in Black Segregation in the South, 1954-98



Source: Southern Education Reporting Service in Reed Sarratt, *The Ordeal of Desegregation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966): 362; HEW Press Release, May 27, 1968; OCR data tapes: 1992-93, 1994-1995, 1996-97; and 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.

The statistics on black segregation in the South are a fever chart of the civil rights revolution and its gradual reversal. These statistics reflect the experience of eleven states, all of which had an intense commitment to educational apartheid, and had been the historic center of slavery and mandatory segregation laws and disenfranchisement of black voters. These states have always been home to most African Americans and have a substantially higher percentage of black students than any other region. This chart shows that these states managed to largely defy the Supreme Court for a decade after the *Brown* decision. They then experienced a very rapid increase in desegregation from I964 through 1970 and a continued gradual rise in integrated education through 1988. In other words, the civil rights reforms produced extensive integration, probably more than had ever been seen in any states with substantial black population. Table 8 clearly shows that the 1990s brought a continual reversal of desegregation.

By 1998, the level of integration was back below that achieved 28 years earlier, before significant urban desegregation. More dramatic reversals have been seen in some states particularly hit by reversal of desegregation orders. These data do not reflect the results of resegregation in a number of large Southern districts where the return to neighborhood schools had not been implemented when this data was collected but decisions have been made by the courts. The 2000 statistics will likely show additional rapid increases in segregation.

Even with all of these negative trends, however, it is completely inaccurate to conclude, as is often said, that the South is back to where it was before the *Brown* decision or before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the work of the Johnson Administration. A Southern black student is 32,700 times more likely to be in a white majority school than a black student in 1954 and fourteen times more likely than his counterpart in 1964 when the Civil Rights Act was passed. Revisionists who argue that these reforms made no difference are wrong. They made a long lasting difference, but that difference is now being steadily reduced each year.

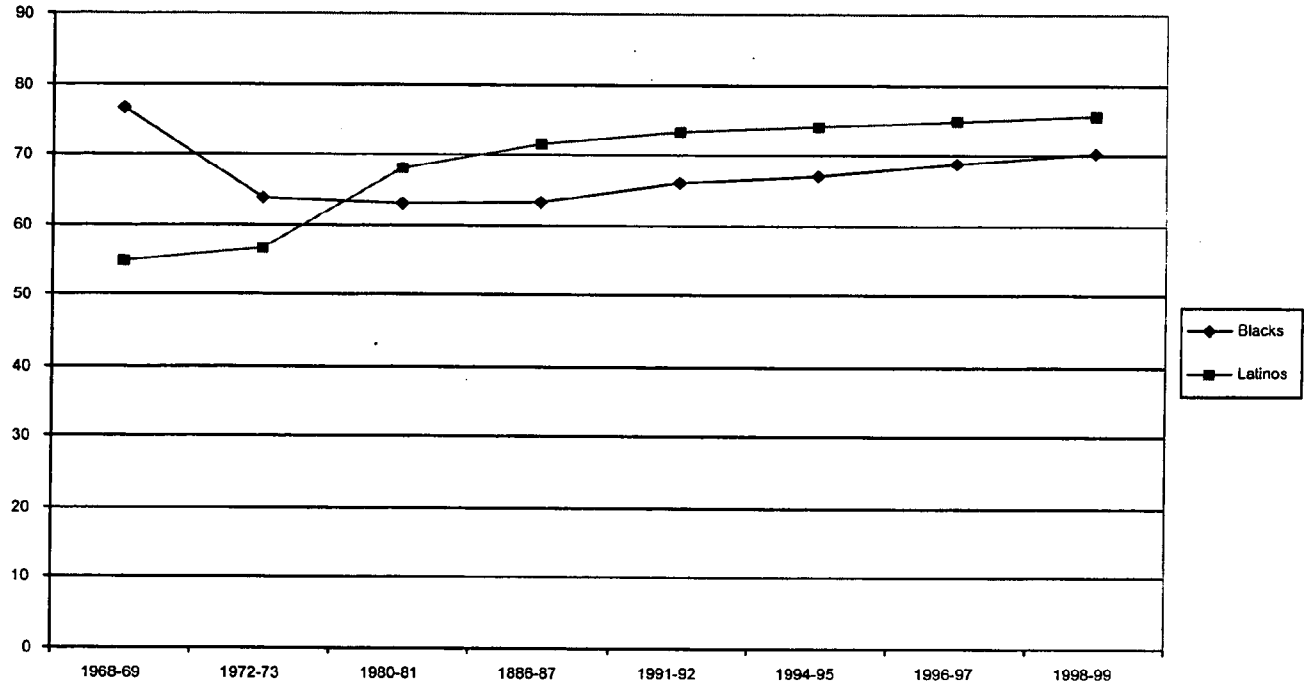
National Resegregation Trends

Table 9
Percentage of U.S. Black and Latino Students in Predominantly Minority and 90-100% Minority Schools, 1968-98

	50-100% Minority		90-100% Minority	
	Blacks	Latinos	Blacks	Latinos
1968-69	76.6	54.8	64.3	23.1
1972-73	63.6	56.6	38.7	23.3
1980-81	62.9	68.1	33.2	28.8
1986-87	63.3	71.5	32.5	32.2
1991-92	66.0	73.4	33.9	34.0
1994-95	67.1	74.0	33.6	34.8
1996-97	68.8	74.8	35.0	35.4
1998-99	70.2	75.6	36.5	36.6

Source: U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights data in Orfield, Public School Desegregation in the United States, 1968-1980, Tables 1 and 10; 1991-92, 1996-97; and 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.

Percentage of U.S. Black and Latino Students in Predominantly Minority Schools, 1968-98



Source: U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights data in Orfield, Public School Desegregation in the United States, 1968-1980, Tables 1 and 10; 1991-92, 1996-97; and 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.

The broad national trends parallel results for African Americans from the South. More than 70% of the nation's black students are now in predominantly minority schools, up significantly from the low point in 1980. The gradual rise that took place during the 1990s is continuing. In terms of intense segregation, the busing orders of the 1970s clearly brought a rapid and dramatic decline in the proportion of blacks in 90-100% nonwhite schools, dropping from 64% in 1968 to 32.5% in I986. The proportion of black students in such schools has been rising consistently but slowly on a national level through the I990s, but it is far below the pre-busing level in the 1998-99 statistics.

The more dramatic and largely ignored trends are those affecting Latino students. While intense segregation for blacks is still 28 points below its 1969 level, it has actually grown 13.5 points for Latinos. Little more than a fifth of Latino students were in intensely segregated schools in 1968, but now it is more than a third, remaining slightly higher than the rising black level throughout the I990s. There is no significant policy effort to blunt this trend in any period. In terms of attending majority nonwhite schools, there is a similar and even sharper trend. In 1968, more than half (54.8%) of Latinos were in predominantly nonwhite schools, but almost half attended majority white schools. By 1998, more than three-fourths (75.6%) of Latinos were in predominantly minority schools, and less than a fourth in majority white schools. By this measure Latinos have been substantially more segregated than black students since 1980, although black resegregation gradually narrowed the gap in the 1990s.

Table 10
Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by Typical Black or Latino Students, 1970-98 (Exposure Index)

	Blacks	Latinos
1970	32.0	43.8
1980	36.2	35.5
1986	36.0	32.9
1991	34.4	31.2
1994	33.9	30.6
1996	32.7	29.9
1998	31.7	29.1

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe

A third basic measure of national desegregation trends is the exposure index, which looks at desegregation from the standpoint of the average student of a given racial group. It combines all the schools in the U.S. and gives us the average racial composition of schools attended by blacks and Latinos. This measure shows that blacks were in schools with the highest average percentage of white students, 36.2%, in 1980 and that it has fallen to 31.7% in 1998, gradually declining throughout the 1990s. Latinos were in much more integrated schools than blacks in 1970, schools that averaged 44% white, but have become steadily more isolated throughout the 28 year period, with less contact with whites than African Americans for the past 18 years.

Each of these three measures of national trends tells us a different aspect of the story. They all tell, however, a broadly consistent story. Desegregation efforts made a substantial difference for black students, particularly in the South. It was not a brief impact limited to the l960s and the civil rights era, but it lasted and even grew for another decade and a half. There was no similar effort for Latino students, who were initially far less segregated and have been even more isolated from whites than black students for a considerable time now. Both black and Latino students have become gradually more segregated throughout the 1990-98 period.

Table 11
Racial Composition of Schools Attended by The Average Student of Each Race, 1998-1999

Percent Race in Each School	Racial Composition of School Attended by Average : White Student	Black Student	Latino Student	Asian Student	American Indian Student
% White	80.6	31.7	29.1	46.3	49.7
% Black	8.7	54.6	12.0	12.2	7.0
% Latino	6.9	10.5	53.2	18.7	9.8
% Asian	2.9	2.8	4.9	22.1	2.5
%Native American	0.9	0.5	0.8	0.7	31.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe

Most studies of segregation consider only black and Latino students and only study isolation from whites. The public schools of the U.S., however, are multiracial, and it is important to understand the segregation patterns of Asian and American Indian students as well. It is also, of course, important to examine the levels of integration and segregation for the nation's majority of white students. These are students who will be growing up in a society where the racial and ethnic diversity will be vastly greater than it was a generation ago, and they need to be able to function in multiracial settings.

The data show that white students are by far the most segregated in schools dominated by their own group. Whites on average attend schools where less than a fifth of the students are from all of the other groups combined. Blacks and Latinos are next in terms of isolation, but far behind, attending schools with 53% to 55% students of their own group on average. Latinos attend schools with far higher average black populations than whites do, and blacks attend schools with much higher average Latino enrollments. Both of these groups, in other words, are in schools with about two-thirds of students from groups that lag far behind in average educational attainment.

American Indian students attend schools in which about a third (31%) of the students are from Indian backgrounds, 17% are black and Latino, and 50% of the students are white. Asian and Pacific Island students, the most rapidly growing group of students, attend schools with the lowest percentage of students from their own ethnic background. On average only about a fifth of their classmates (22.1%) are from all the combined Asian backgrounds, almost half (46%) of the students are white, one-eighth (12.2%) are black, and nearly a fifth (18.7%) are Latino. One of the secrets of the rapid mobility of Asian students in American schools may be that they are the most integrated group in the most multi-racial schools, and that most attend schools where their native language is spoken by only a small minority of students. In contrast to African Americans and Latinos who attend schools that have about two-thirds students from disadvantaged groups, Asian students on average attend schools that are 68% white and Asian combined, the two highest achieving groups of American students. They have a very different educational setting than their fellow immigrants from Latin America. Karen Narasaki, President of the National Asian Pacific Legal Consortium, commented on the patterns in the 2000 Census: "Of all the racial groups, Asian Americans... are most likely to live in very diverse communities.... Even more importantly, Asian Americans have a great stake in working together with other racial groups to develop a constructive approach to sharing power and resources, as well as a process for working out any racial tensions in diverse communities.[60]

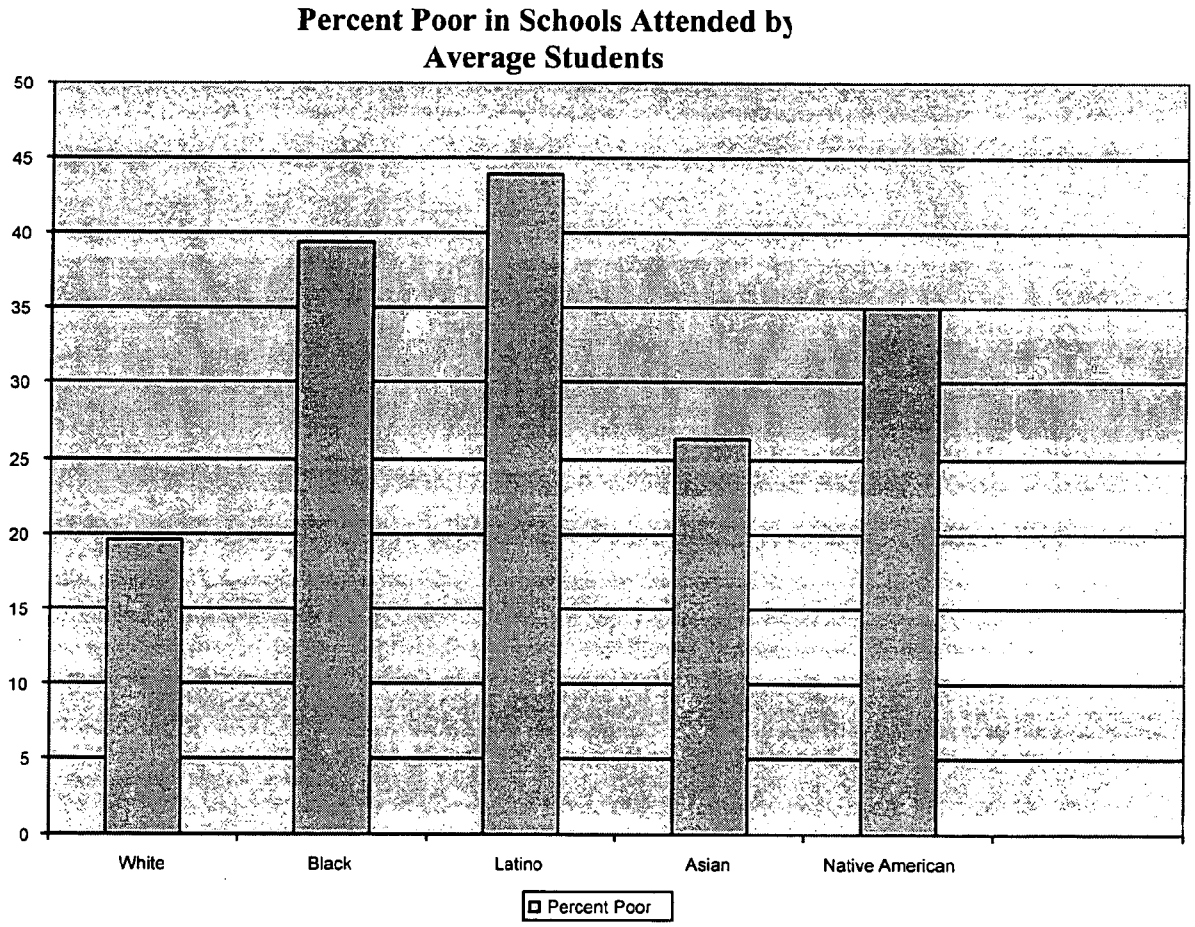
[60] Statement, National Press Club, May 2, 2001.

Poverty and Race

Table 12
Percent Poor in Schools Attended by the Average White, Black, Latino, Asian, and Native American Student, 1998-1999.

	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American
Percent Poor	19.6	39.3	44.0	26.3	35.1

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe



Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe

Educational disadvantage is closely linked to poverty, both poverty of the individual student and of the school he or she attends. Latinos attend the schools with the highest levels of students poor or near poor (those who qualify for free and reduced lunch) followed by African Americans and Native Americans. Asians are in schools where nearly three fourths

of the students are not poor, and whites are in schools with less than one-fifth poor children. The true levels of poverty are doubtless even higher because many eligible high school students refuse to register for free and reduced lunch, not wanting to face the stigma in the lunchroom and in their school. For this reason many districts report a significantly lower level of poverty than actually exists among high school students.

Table 13
Relationship between Segregation by Race and by Poverty, 1998-99

	Percent Black and Latino Students in Schools									
% Poor in Schools	0-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-100%
0-10%	22.6	17.0	7.7	5.2	5.2	4.4	5.8	5.2	5.0	3.2
20-25%	27.4	29.3	24.9	14.9	8.1	4.6	3.4	2.4	2.0	1.9
25-50%	33.0	38.9	43.4	44.6	39.1	28.3	19.2	12.4	8.8	7.2
50-100%	17.0	16.9	23.9	35.3	47.6	62.8	71.6	80.0	84.3	87.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
% of U.S. Schools	42.1	11.1	8.3	6.9	6.2	5.3	4.3	3.8	3.8	8.2

Note: The correlation between the percentage of Black and Latino enrollments and the percentage of free lunch eligible is 0.60.
Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data; Harvard Project on School Desegregation.

Among U.S. schools in 1998-99, 42 % had nine-tenths or more white students, and 8% had nine-tenths or more black and/or Latino students; 17% of the white schools had more than 50% low income enrollments, but 88% of the segregated minority schools had concentrated poverty. In other words, segregated white neighborhood schools were very likely to have middle class student bodies, but exactly the opposite was true for black and Latino schools. In fact, segregated minority schools had concentrated poverty nine times out of ten. Since there is a strong relationship between a school's poverty level and the quality of its teachers, the nature of its instruction, and its achievement test scores, and since poverty is known to affect schools in many other important ways, it is often easy to confuse the impact of poverty as if it were an impact of race.

Black Student Segregation

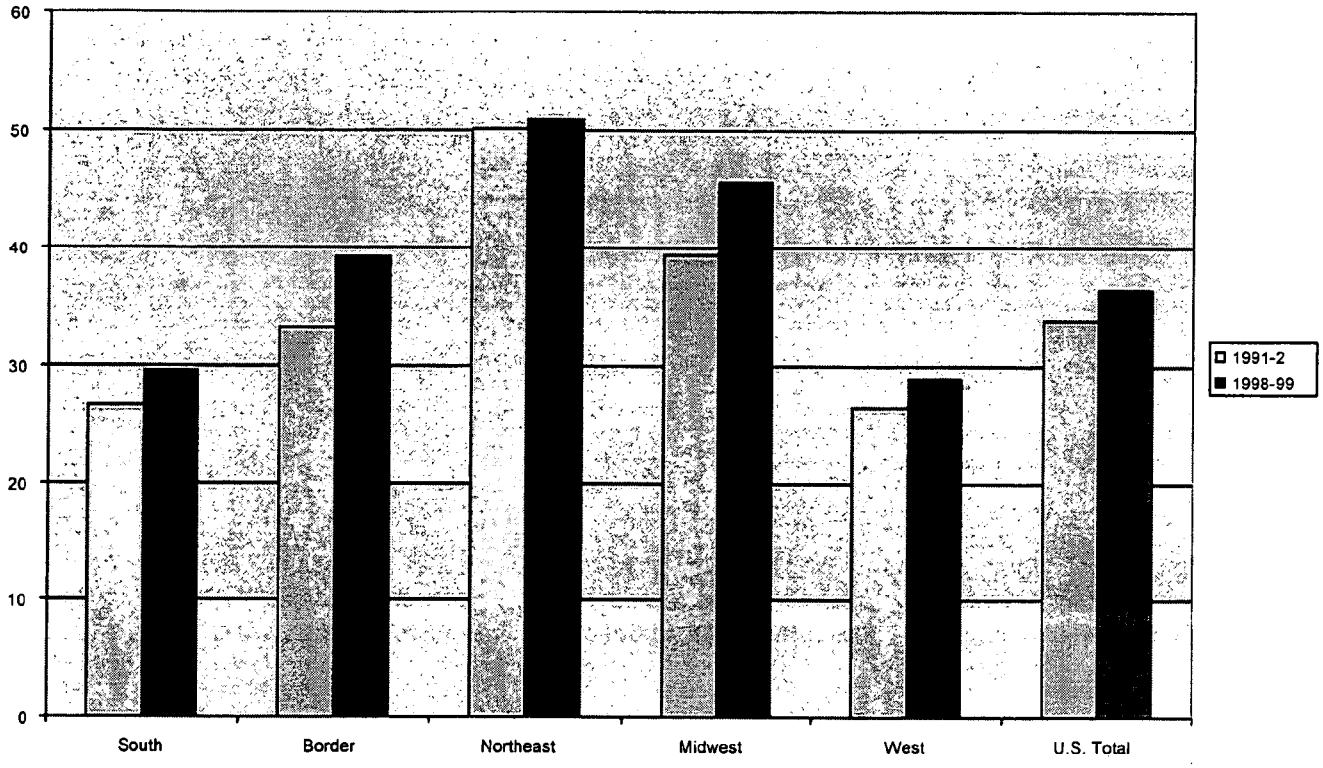
Table 14
Segregation of Black Students by Region,* 1991-92 and 1998-99

	1991-92 % of Blacks in 50-100% Minority Schools	% of Blacks in 90-100% Minority Schools
South	60.8	26.6
Border	59.3	33.2
Northeast	76.2	50.1
Midwest	69.9	39.4
West	69.7	26.4
U.S. Total	66.0	33.9

	1998-99 % of Blacks in 50-100% Minority Schools	% of Blacks in 90-100% Minority Schools
South	67.2	29.7
Border	64.7	39.2
Northeast	77.5	50.9
Midwest	72.8	45.5
West	74.0	28.8
U.S. Total	70.1	36.5

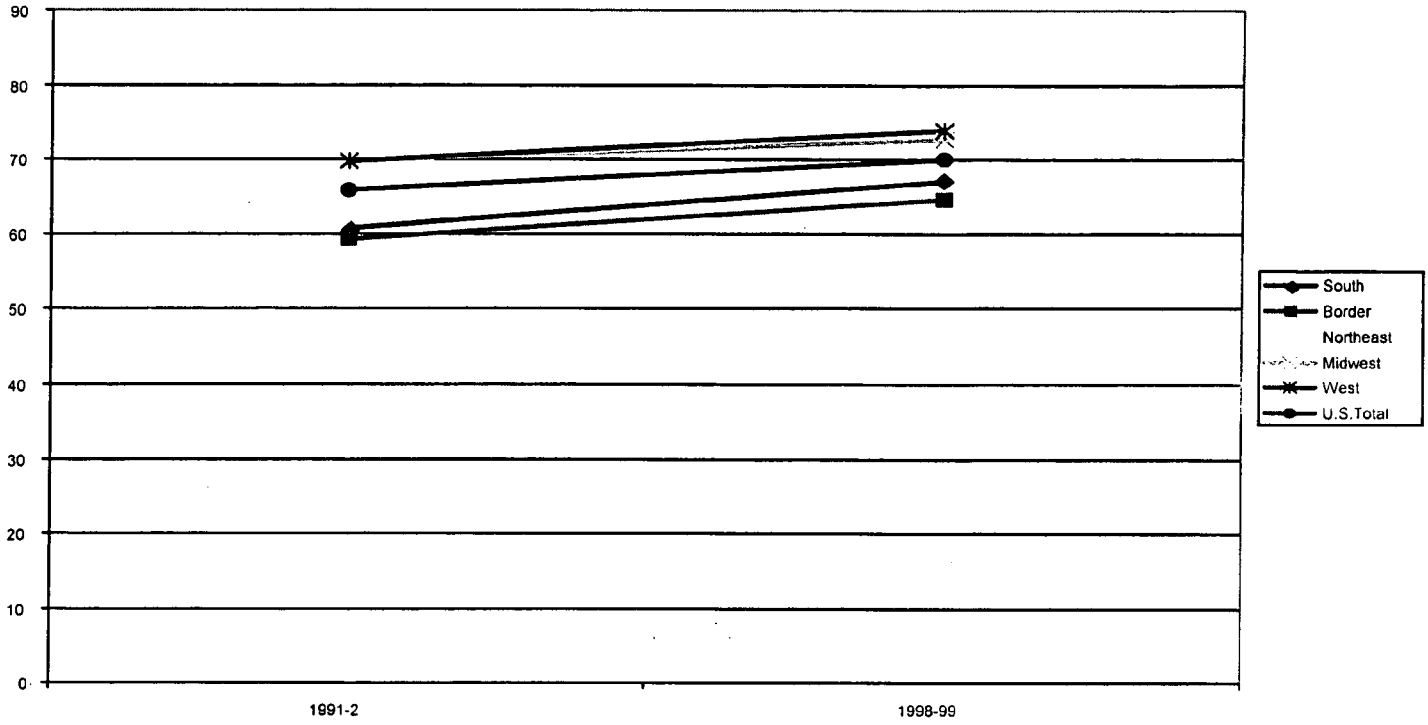
Source: 1991-92 & 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.
*See Appendix B for a list of states included in each region

Percentage of Blacks in 90-100% Minority Schools



Source: 1991-92 & 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.
*See Appendix B for a list of states included in each region

Percentage of Blacks in 50-100% Minority Schools



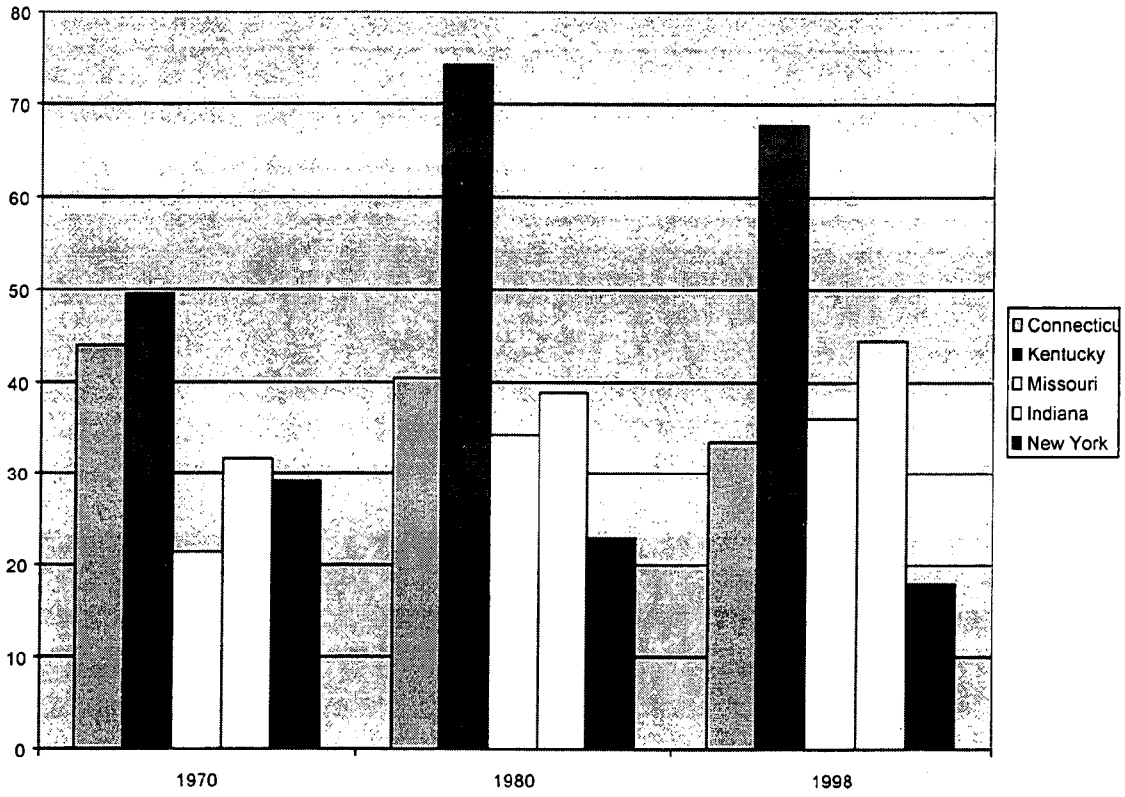
Between 1991 and 1998-99 the percent of black students in schools that were more than half minority increased most rapidly in the South, rising from 61% to 67%. The percent of black students in intensely segregated schools, on the other hand, rose most rapidly in two regions with much lower proportions of black students, who are concentrated in a few urban areas: the Midwest and the Border states. These large changes are probably the result of termination of urban desegregation plans. The Midwest is now approaching the level of segregation of the Northeast, long the most intensely segregated region for blacks, even though its black population is small and there is a net migration out to the South.

Table 15
Changing Patterns of Black Segregation by State, 1970-1998
Changes in the Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by Typical Black Students

	1970	1980	1998	Change 1970-80	Change 1980-98
Alabama	32.7	37.9	31.1	5.2	-6.8
Arkansas	42.5	46.5	38.9	4.0	-7.6
California	25.6	27.7	24.0	2.1	-3.7
Connecticut	44.1	40.3	33.5	-3.8	-6.8
Delaware	46.5	68.5	55.7	22.0	-12.8
Florida	43.2	50.6	37.2	7.4	-13.4
Georgia	35.1	38.3	31.8	3.2	-6.5
Illinois	14.6	19.0	19.1	4.4	0.1
Indiana	31.7	38.7	44.5	7.0	5.8
Kentucky	49.4	74.3	67.8	24.9	-6.5
Louisiana	30.8	32.8	27.8	2.0	-5.0
Maryland	30.3	35.4	24.9	5.1	-10.5
Massachusetts	47.5	50.4	40.7	2.9	-9.7
Michigan	21.9	22.5	19.3	0.6	-3.2
Mississippi	29.6	29.2	26.6	-0.4	-2.6
Missouri	21.4	34.1	35.9	12.7	1.8
New Jersey	32.4	26.4	26.2	-6.0	-0.2
New York	29.2	23.0	18.1	-6.2	-4.9
North Carolina	49.0	54.0	45.4	5.0	-8.6
Ohio	28.4	43.2	34.2	14.8	-9.0
Oklahoma	42.1	57.6	44.5	15.5	-13.1
Pennsylvania	27.8	29.3	30.2	1.5	0.9
Rhode Island	NA	65.8	43.4	NA	-22.4
South Carolina	41.2	42.7	39.8	1.5	-2.9
Tennessee	29.2	38.0	32.2	8.8	-5.8
Texas	30.7	35.2	30.1	4.5	-5.1
Virginia	41.5	47.4	43.1	5.9	-4.3
Wisconsin	25.7	44.5	30.5	18.8	-14.0

Source: DBS Corp.,1982; 1987; 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings
(states with at least 5% black enrollment by 1980)

Changes in the Percentage of White Students in Schools Atte Black Students



Source: DBS Corp.,1982; 1987; 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings
(states with at least 5% black enrollment by 1980)

The most segregated states for black students include the leaders for the last quarter century --Illinois, Michigan, New York and New Jersey. California, which has a small percentage of black students, and Maryland have moved rapidly up this list. With the exception of Mississippi and Alabama, Southern states were not among the most segregated a generation ago. However, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Texas now rank high on these lists. Florida has had a major decline in white students in the school of the typical black student since l980 and will experience further resegregation under recent court orders. Likewise, Georgia has had a substantial increase in black segregation.

Outside the South we find the two states with the most dramatic declines in black student contact with white students since 1980: Rhode Island and Wisconsin (see table 15). Two border states that had desegregation plans in the largest urban areas, Delaware and Oklahoma, have also seen sharp drops in integration levels.

Table 16
Most Segregated States* for Black Students on Three Measures of Segregation, 1998-99

Rank	% In Majority White Schools		Rank	% in 90-100% Minority Schools		Rank	% Whites in School of Typical Black	
1	New York	13.8	1	Michigan	64.0	1	New York	18.1
2	California	15.3	2	Illinois	60.3	2	Michigan	19.3
3	Michigan	17.7	3	New York	60.3	3	Illinois	19.4
4	Illinois	18.7	4	New Jersey	51.3	4	California	24.0
5	Hawaii	20.8	5	Maryland	49.7	5	Maryland	24.9
6	Mississippi	22.5	6	Pennsylvania	46.7	6	New Jersey	26.2
7	Maryland	23.0	7	Alabama	43.1	7	Mississippi	26.6
8	Louisiana	24.2	8	Mississippi	41.2	8	Louisiana	27.8
9	New Jersey	25.9	9	Tennessee	40.8	9	Texas	30.1
10	Texas	26.6	10	Louisiana	40.3	10	Pennsylvania	30.2
11	Wisconsin	27.0	11	Wisconsin	37.4	11	Wisconsin	30.5
12	Georgia	28.7	12	California	36.2	12	Alabama	31.1
13	Pennsylvania	30.2	13	Texas	35.6	13	Georgia	31.8
14	Ohio	29.8	14	Georgia	33.5	14	Tennessee	32.2
15	Connecticut	29.7	15	Missouri	32.7	15	Connecticut	33.5
16	Tennessee	31.2	16	Connecticut	32.2	16	Hawaii	33.6
17	Alabama	31.4	17	Ohio	31.6	17	Ohio	34.2
18	Missouri	32.8	18	Florida	28.4	18	Missouri	35.9
19	Arkansas	32.9	19	Massachusetts	21.1	19	Florida	37.2
20	Massachusetts	36.4	20	Indiana	20.9	20	Arkansas	38.9

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

Table 17
Segregation of Black Students in States with Less than Six Percent Black Public School Enrollment, 1998-99

	% Black	% in 50-100% Minority Schools	% in 90-100% Minority Schools
Alaska	4.6	20.0	0.2
Arizona	4.5	55.6	15.1
Colorado	5.6	54.2	16.5
Hawaii	2.4	79.2	7.2
Iowa	3.6	14.6	0
Maine	1.0	0	0
Minnesota	5.8	60.9	12.5
Montana	0.5	4.6	0
North Dakota	1.0	0.3	0.2
Nebraska	6.2	35.4	2.2
New Hampshire	1.0	0	0
New Mexico	2.3	57.3	7.6
Oregon	2.7	33.7	0
South Dakota	1.0	3.7	0
Utah	0.8	13.2	0.1
Vermont	0.9	0	0
Washington	5.1	32.1	3.2
West Virginia	4.2	10.5	0
Wyoming	1.0	5.0	0.1

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe
*Washington D.C: is not included in any of these state rankings

The nation's minority students are unequally distributed among the states. In spite of the rapid racial changes affecting the entire nation and the even more rapid transformation of a number of states, there are others that still have small black or Latino populations. They either tend to be states in the far North or states with very slow economic growth. Sometimes states with substantial populations of one minority group will have few of the other. There were 19 states that had fewer than 6% black students in 1998-99. They included the states of northern New England and all the states of the northern border from Minnesota to Washington, the outlying states of Alaska and Hawaii, and most of the Rocky Mountain states, as well as some states in the Southwest. These are states where one might assume that it would be particularly easy to desegregate blacks, simply because it is difficult to thoroughly segregate such a small group. Yet, except for three New England states with 1% or fewer black students, all of these states had some segregation. In New Mexico and Hawaii, the black students were substantially isolated from whites, in large part because there were relatively few whites in these majority nonwhite states. The highest segregation was seen in Minnesota, followed by Arizona and Colorado. Minnesota had 61% of its black students in majority nonwhite schools and 12.5% in intensely segregated 90 to 100% minority schools. Arizona and Colorado had roughly similar levels. Both Minneapolis and Denver dismantled their desegregation plans in the mid-1990s. Arizona's major city, Phoenix, is divided into many separate school districts within the central city's boundaries and never experienced desegregation at the city-wide level.

Of the states with less than 1% black students, only Utah managed to achieve a significant degree of segregation. With 8/10 of one percent black students, Utah managed to get more than an eighth of them in predominantly minority schools.

Latino Student Segregation

Table 18
Segregation of Latino Students by Region, 1998-99

	% in 50-100% Minority Schools	% in 90-100% Minority Schools	% Whites in School of Typical Latino
South	76.1	39.1	28.1
Border	46.1	13.1	50.3
Northeast	78.5	45.7	26.0
Midwest	55.6	24.1	44.1
West	78.3	35.2	27.7
U.S. Total	75.6	36.7	29.1

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data, Harvard Project on Desegregation.

One of the least studied and perhaps most important transformations in the nation's schools in recent decades has been the steadily increasing isolation of Latino students. The 2000 Census shows increasing residential isolation of Latinos at a national level. This is particularly true for school age children.[61] In California, where about one-third of all Latino students live, the change has been particularly drastic in the schools. Three decades ago, the average Latino student in the Golden State attended a well-integrated 54.4% white school. In 1998, however, the typical Latino student was in a school that was 78% nonwhite. The students were increasingly isolated by ethnicity, poverty and language, and were attending schools with low average achievement levels and low success in enrolling students in the state's public universities. As California decided in the 1990s to forbid affirmative action in higher education and ban bilingual education in the schools, the state was facing a very severe problem of segregation and inequality for Latino students. California's students faced the nation's highest dropout rate, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.[62] The state has instituted a high stakes graduation test that may well further increase this rate.

In Texas, the second most important center of Latino residence, Latino students were considerably more segregated in 1970. Unlike California, however, Texas experienced some significant desegregation of Latino students in the 1970s, and was about even with California by the 1980s, with segregation increasing to a similar level in the late 1990s. Texas had the nation's second highest dropout rate by some measures, which rose significantly for Latino students following the imposition of a high school graduation test in the early 1980s. The segregation picture in New York, the great center of Puerto Rican and Dominican immigration, was even more

[61] Eric Smith, "Segregation Growing Among U.S. Children," *New York Times*, May 6, 2001.
[62] National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1999*, NCES 2001-022, November 2000.

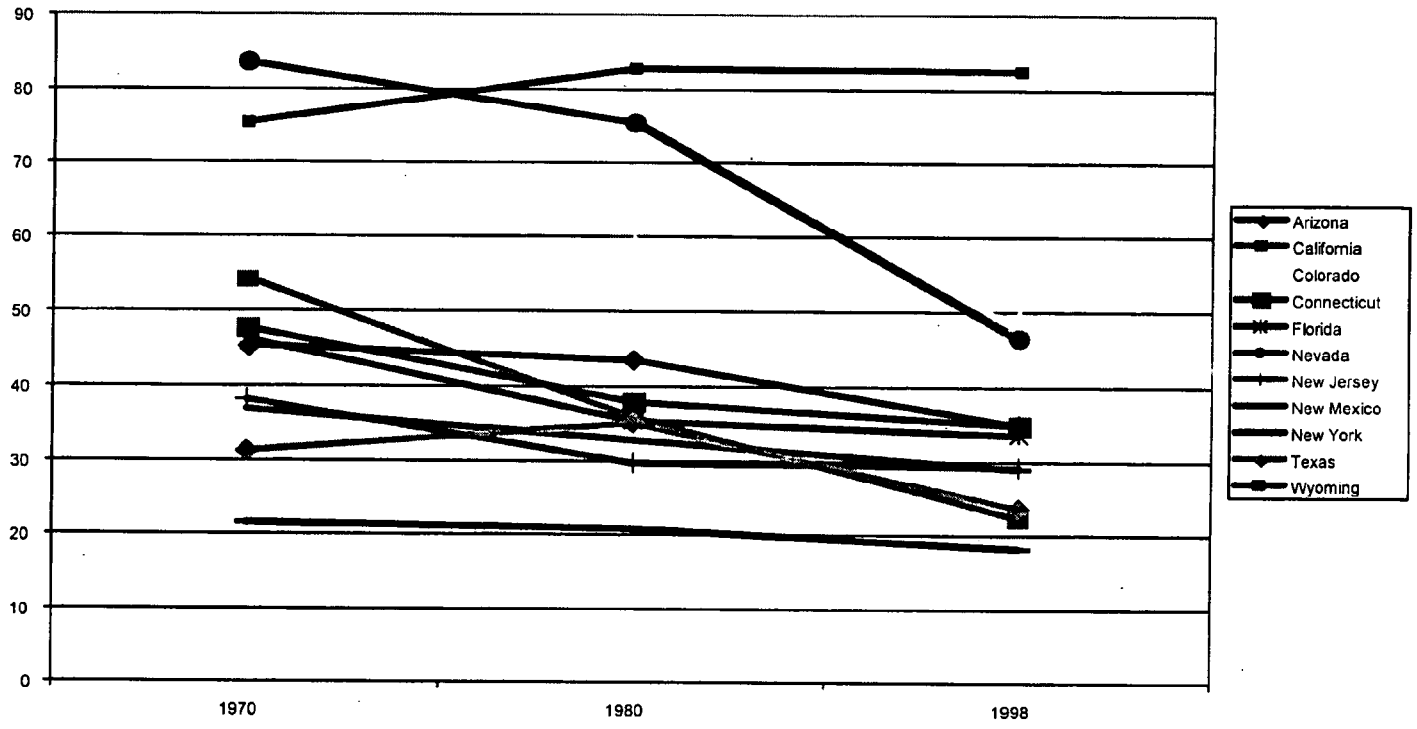
bleak. Segregation was very high throughout this period studied. New York in the 1970s was already at the point where California and Texas would arrive three decades later. There was never any significant escape from highly segregated schools. New Jersey and Connecticut, the nation's most suburban states, became secondary migration destinations from New York, and both experienced a substantial increase in Latin segregation.

Table 19
Changes in the Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by a Typical Latino Student, 1970-1998

	1970	1980	1998	Change 1970-80	Change 1980-1998
Arizona	45.5	43.5	34.8	-2.0	-8.7
California	54.4	35.9	22.3	-18.5	-13.6
Colorado	56.8	59.0	49.0	2.2	-10.0
Connecticut	47.8	37.9	34.8	-9.9	-3.1
Florida	46.4	35.3	33.6	-11.1	-1.7
Massachusetts	NA	52.6	41.1	NA	-11.5
Nevada	83.7	75.3	46.6	-8.4	-28.7
New Jersey	38.2	29.6	29.1	-8.6	-0.5
New Mexico	36.9	32.6	28.9	-4.3	-3.7
New York	21.6	20.8	18.1	-0.8	-2.7
Texas	31.1	35.1	23.5	4.0	-11.6
Wyoming	75.3	82.8	82.7	7.5	-0.1

Source: DBS Corp.,1982;1987;1996-97 and 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

Changes in the Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by a Typical Latino Student, 1970-1998



Source: DBS Corp.,1982;1987;1996-97 and 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe.
*Washington D.C. is not included in any of these state rankings

There have been large increases between 1970 and 1998 in the segregation levels of Latinos in the states where they are most concentrated. In 1970, Latino students were highly segregated only in a few places, most notably New York and Texas. During the 1970 to 1980 period of school desegregation, segregation increased in all of the states with substantial Latino enrollment, except Colorado and Texas, both of which were subject to a number of desegregation orders, and Wyoming, which had a small minority population. Texas was the state in which Latino organizations worked for the longest period against segregation, with the GI Forum pursuing the issue from the 1940s and the efforts of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund.[63] Denver was the first case where the Supreme Court established the right of Latinos to a desegregation remedy. In both states the increase in contact between Latino and white students was modest, but quite different from the rapid increase in segregation in California, Florida, Nevada, and New Jersey during the 1970s.

Since 1980 all states with significant Latino populations have seen increased segregation. By far the most rapid increase took place in Nevada where the huge Clark County (metropolitan Las Vegas) is experiencing explosive growth and massive Latino in-migration, making it the nation's sixth largest school district; Clark County

[63] Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr., *"Let All of Them Take Heed": Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987).

has won a court case to terminate its desegregation plan. Large increases are also apparent in California, Texas, Colorado (where the Denver plan was terminated) and Arizona.

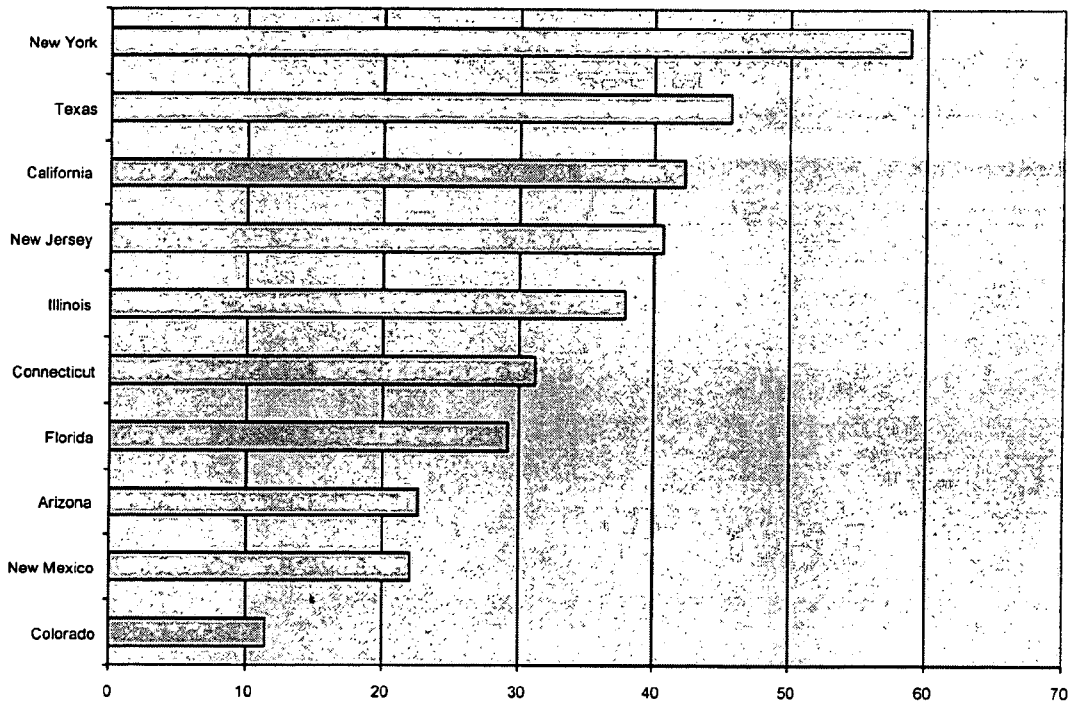
Over the 28-year period a number of states have witnessed fundamental transformations. Back in 1970 the typical Latino student in Nevada was in an 84% white school, which has declined to 47%. In California the change was from an average of 54% white classmates to 22%, from a highly integrated educational experience to a highly segregated one. The existing trends suggest that these levels of isolation will continue to rise.

Table 20
State Rankings* in the Segregation of Latino Students by Three Measures, 1998-99 School Year

Rank	% of Latinos in Majority White Schools		Rank	% of Latinos in 90-100% Minority Schools		Rank	% Whites in School of Typical Latino	
1	Hawaii	4.6	1	New York	58.8	1	New York	18.1
2	New York	13.1	2	Texas	45.7	2	Hawaii	22.3
3	California	14.5	3	California	42.2	3	California	22.3
4	Texas	17.8	4	New Jersey	40.7	4	Texas	23.5
5	New Mexico	19.4	5	Illinois	37.8	5	New Mexico	28.9
6	Rhode Island	22.7	6	Connecticut	31.3	6	New Jersey	29.1
7	Illinois	26.1	7	Florida	29.2	7	Illinois	29.3
8	New Jersey	26.9	8	Pennsylvania	26.5	8	Rhode Island	32.8
9	Connecticut	29.0	9	Arizona	22.7	9	Florida	33.6
10	Arizona	30.7	10	New Mexico	22.1	10	Arizona	34.8
11	Florida	31.5	11	Rhode Island	18.9	11	Connecticut	34.8
12	Maryland	35.3	12	Maryland	18.8	12	Maryland	38.7
13	Pennsylvania	36.4	13	Massachusetts	14.9	13	Massachusetts	41.1
14	Massachusetts	36.6	14	Indiana	13.1	14	Pennsylvania	41.2
15	Nevada	45.4	15	Hawaii	13.0	15	Nevada	46.6
16	Georgia	48.2	16	Wisconsin	13.0	16	Georgia	48.4
17	Louisiana	49.4	17	Colorado	11.4	17	Colorado	49.0
18	Colorado	51.1	18	Georgia	9.7	18	Louisiana	50.1
19	Virginia	52.5	19	Louisiana	9.5	19	Virginia	51.1
20	Washington	58.0	20	Tennessee	9.4	20	Delaware	53.2

Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe
*These rankings do not include Washington, D.C.

Percentage of Latinos in 90-100% Minority Sch



Source: 1998-99 NCES Common Core of Data Public School Universe
*These rankings do not include Washington, D.C.

New York, Texas, New Jersey, Illinois and California have been centers of segregation for Latino students for some time. Each has more than 38% of all Latino students in schools with less than a tenth white pupils.

Many will be surprised, however, by the inclusion of two New England states on the list of most segregated states for Latino children. Latinos have become the largest minority group in the schools of several New England states and Rhode Island and Connecticut now have only about a fourth of their Latino students in majority white schools. Massachusetts has only about a third. Connecticut has 31% of its Latino pupils in intensely segregated schools and Rhode Island has 19% (see table 20).

Summary

The United States has the most diverse group of students in its history, and all the basic trends indicate the diversity will become even greater. Among our school age population we have only a generation before the entire county becomes majority non-white or non-European in origin. Diversity is growing rapidly in the nation's suburban rings, which have become the center of American life and politics.

Yet our schools remain largely segregated and are becoming more so. Segregated schools are still highly unequal. Segregation by race relates to segregation by poverty and to many forms of educational inequality for African American and Latino students; few whites experience impoverished schools. Efforts to overcome the effects of segregation through special programs have had some success, but there is no evidence that they have equalized systems of segregated schools. Americans believe that their children benefit from integrated education, and there is substantial evidence that those beliefs are correct. Segregated schools, particularly those in big cities, have stunningly high levels of high school dropouts and very poor records of preparing students for higher education. Segregation has not been a successful educational or social policy. Yet we are experiencing a continuing expansion of segregation for both blacks and Latinos and serious backward movement in the South.

Recommendations

If the U.S. had been investing billions of dollars in a social or educational experiment that had never had a systemic success in a century of trials and was clearly related to pervasively unequal opportunity, and if the proportion of Americans being hurt by it was continually growing, one might expect an angry public demand for a new policy. That experiment is segregation. Segregation is not inevitable. It declined sharply for a long time when there was a serious effort for change a generation ago. While segregation is far from the only problem facing American schools, it makes the other problems worse and takes away an important tool for teaching people of differing backgrounds how to live and work and run communities together. Desegregation is not an easy policy and does not transform all differences, but it has substantial benefits. We have learned in more than a third of a century of implementing compensatory education and school reform policies that there are no easy or certain policies for changing our schools that serve poor and minority children. Desegregation on the basis of choice and magnets is a broadly acceptable policy related to the creation of many effective new schools. A large majority of Americans agree that desegregated schools are better and want their children to learn how to function effectively in our increasingly multiracial society.

We should be considering the following policy issues if we wish to offer our children and our communities more opportunity for stable interracial education:

1) expansion of the federal magnet school program and the imposition of similar desegregation requirements for federally supported charter schools
2) active support by private foundations and community groups of efforts to continue local desegregation plans and programs, through research, advocacy and litigation
3) creation of expertise on desegregation and race relations training in state departments of education
4) school district surveys documenting the value (in legal terms, the compelling interest) of interracial schooling experience in their own cities
5) creation of many two-way integrated bilingual schools in which students of each

language group work with, learn with, and help each other acquire fluency in a second language

6) provision of funding for better counseling and transportation for interdistrict transfer policies
7) funding of teacher exchanges between city and suburban school districts and training of teachers in techniques for successful interracial classrooms
8) exploration of school and housing policies to avoid massive resegregation of large sections of the inner suburbs
9) federal and state funds and university sponsorship for the creation of integrated metropolitan-wide magnet schools
10) serious research to learn about the most effective approaches to effective education and race relations in schools with three or more racial groups present in significant numbers and two or more languages strongly represented
11) careful research and analysis documenting what happens to students in districts that restore segregated neighborhood schools

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Appendix A

Definition of Regions

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: Alaska and Hawaii are excluded from most parts of this study because of their unique ethnic compositions and isolation from the regions studied here.

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