

# Education & Race

Applied Research Center

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Photography: Scott Braley, Dick Doughty (Impact Visuals),  
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Printing:

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This handbook was prepared with the generous support of the Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Unitarian Universalist Reach Program at Shelter Rock, the Albert A. List Foundation, and the French American Charitable Trust.

1 INTRODUCTION

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RACE REVEALED

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3 REPORTING ON RACE AND EDUCATION

KEY ISSUES

---

19 SEGREGATION

25 SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

31 FUNDING

REVENUES

EXPENDITURES

VOUCHERS

41 CURRICULUM

47 TRACKING AND TESTING

DATA

---

57 STUDENTS

59 TEACHERS

61 DROPOUT AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

63 DISCIPLINE

65 SEGREGATION – LEADING COURT DECISIONS

69 TRACKING AND TESTING

71 GLOSSARY OF COMMONLY USED EDUCATION TERMS

79 RESOURCES

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## THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

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### Gary Delgado

POLL after poll places education at the top of the list of public concerns. Most Americans believe that young people must have a decent education if they are to successfully navigate the choppy waters of modern life. It is not surprising that people care passionately about the quality of their children's schools. They need to be fully informed about the often emotional issues that affect educational opportunities in this country. But sometimes there's a piece of the story missing. At the core of many stories about test scores, funding, or teacher competence lies another story—one about race.

Race plays a key role in almost every news story about education. When the story concerns a heated parents' meeting about a desegregation ruling, race naturally takes center stage. More often, though, racial dynamics are at work *behind the scenes*, hidden in stories about college admission rates, disputes over curriculum, or the introduction of a new standardized test.

We have prepared this book to provide reporters with background materials and the tools they need to ferret out the story behind the story—the hidden dimension of race.

In the process you may come across some startling facts about racial inequality in today's public schools. For example:

- 40% of all public schools are racially exclusive, meaning that fewer than 10% of their students are children of color.

- 40% of public schools in large cities are “intensely segregated,” meaning that more than 90% of the students they serve are children of color.
- African American students are more than twice as likely as white students to be suspended from school.
- Native American and African American high school students are 2-1/2 times as likely as white students to be placed in vocational rather than academic classes.
- While 35% of public school students are children of color, the teaching corps remains 88% white.

These statistics are more than isolated “factoids.” They suggest the extent to which race is an essential thread in the complex fabric of our schools.

We have prepared this book to help reporters get the full story on race and education. In these pages you will find everything you need to help your readers understand how racial inequalities affect every aspect of our schools:

- Chapters on such key issues as segregation, school funding, discipline and curriculum
- Suggested questions for covering such hot topics as school violence or vouchers
- Contact information for organizations and individual experts as well as print and internet resources

We believe that members of the public want and need to get the most complete story possible, so they can make informed decisions about the issues that deeply affect all our children. This book is designed to help you get that story.



**Gary Delgado**  
Executive Director, Applied Research Center

## RACE: CONCEALED OR REVEALED?

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FOR better or worse, the Supreme Court's 1954 ruling against school segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education* placed the public schools at the center of race relations in this country. Almost half a century later, race is still a central factor in many stories about public education. Reporting and revealing the racial dimension help the general public acquire the most accurate picture possible of public education.

Often it is difficult to cover the race story. Local school districts, states, and the federal government collect and disseminate vast amounts of information about the public schools. It is very common for agencies to cross-tabulate data about an issue, class size for example, with a number of different variables—such as school size, grade level, income level of students' parents—and leave out the variable of race. It can take some digging to bring the racial dimension to light, but that digging can make an education story complete.

Here are some examples of how revealing the racial dimension illuminates new and important information.

# race CONCEALED

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## **Demographics**

In 1995 (the most recent year for which figures are available), there were approximately 46 million students attending public school in 16,000 school districts.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, *1996 Condition of Education*

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The vast majority of U.S. children attend public school. In 1995, 89% of all students attended public school.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, *1996 Condition of Education*

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There are 2.7 million public school teachers.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, *1996 Condition of Education*

**Demographics**

In 1995 there were approximately 46 million students attending public school in 16,000 school districts. Of these:

- 65% were white
- 17% were African American
- 14% were Latino
- 4% were Asian American or Pacific Islander
- 1% were Native American

In 1998, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that for the first time, the absolute number of Latino children surpassed that of African American children.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

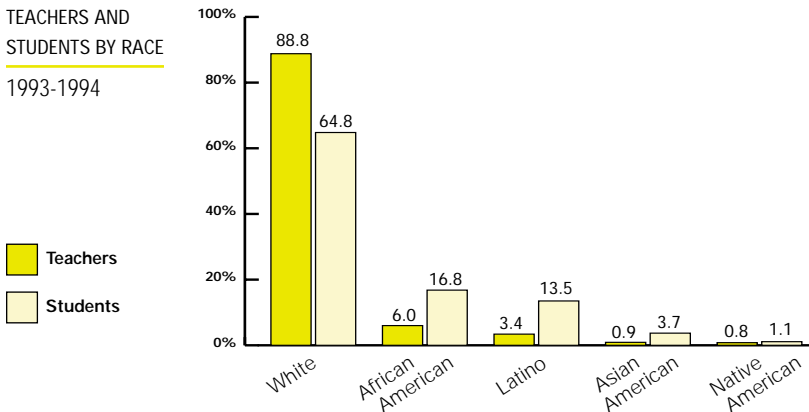
In 1995, 89% of all students attended public school.

Proportionally more white students than children of color attend private school: 78% of all private school students are white, compared to 65% in the public schools. Although 35% of all K-12 students are children of color, they make up only 22% of private school students.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Private School Survey 1995-96

Eighty-nine percent of U.S. public school teachers are white. The graph below compares the racial compositions of the student body and the teaching corps:

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS BY RACE  
1993-1994



Source: U.S. Department of Education, 1996 Condition of Education

**Segregation**

State-imposed school segregation is illegal. The Supreme Court's unanimous decision in the 1954 case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, outlawed school segregation, declaring that segregated schools were "inherently unequal."

### Segregation

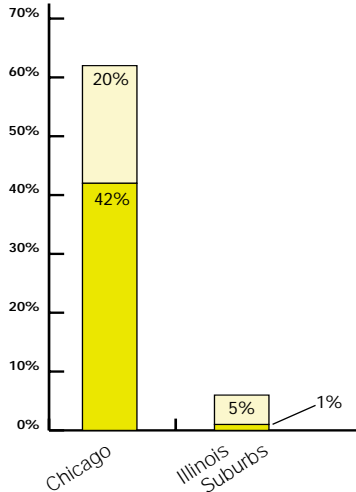
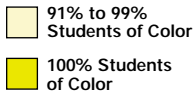
State-imposed school segregation is illegal. The Supreme Court’s unanimous decision in the 1954 case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, outlawed school segregation, declaring that segregated schools were “inherently unequal.”

In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled in *Milliken v. Bradley* that desegregation across school district lines is illegal. In most Northern and Western metropolitan areas, urban core schools and suburban schools lie in separate school districts.

This ruling has dramatically exacerbated segregation between urban and suburban areas. For example, in the City of Chicago:

- 86% of all public schools are segregated, meaning that they have more than 50% students of color.
- 62% of all public schools are *intensely segregated*, which means that they have more than 90% students of color.
- 42% of Chicago’s public schools have student bodies made up entirely of children of color.

CONCENTRATIONS OF STUDENTS OF COLOR IN CHICAGO SCHOOLS COMPARED TO SCHOOLS IN SUBURBAN ILLINOIS

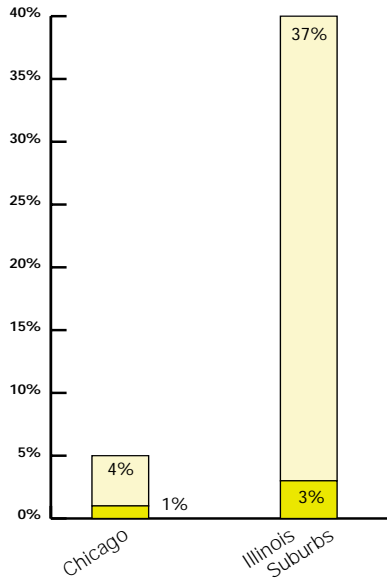
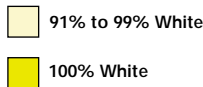


Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Common Core of Data, 1995

Segregation works in the opposite direction in suburban Illinois, however, where:

- 65% of all public schools are more than 75% white.
- 40% are more than 90% white.

CONCENTRATIONS OF WHITE STUDENTS IN CHICAGO SCHOOLS COMPARED TO SCHOOLS IN SUBURBAN ILLINOIS



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Common Core of Data, 1995

Ninety-four percent of African American and Latino students who live in big central cities like Chicago, Detroit, and Los Angeles attend segregated schools. In smaller central cities, 63% of African American students and 70% of Latino students go to segregated schools.

Today public school segregation is not only increasing, but it has reached and exceeded levels of 20 years ago. According to Gary Orfield, Professor of Education and Social Policy at Harvard University, "The proportion of black students in schools with more than half minority students rose from 1986 to 1991, to the level that had existed before the Supreme Court's first busing decision in 1971. The share of black students in intensely segre-

gated (90-100% minority) schools, which had actually declined during the 1980s, also rose.”

Latinos have never experienced a period of declining segregation. Their isolation has only increased since *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954.

Source: Gary Orfield and Susan Eaton, *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education*, New York: The New Press, 1996; statistics from U.S. Department of Education, *1996 Condition of Education*

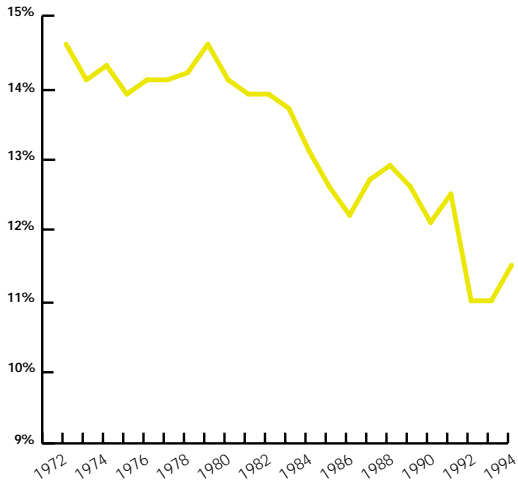
For more information about school segregation, see Key Issues, p.19.

# race CONCEALED

## Dropout Rates

Dropout rates have been going down. Between 1972 and 1994 the percentage of persons aged 16 to 24 who were high school dropouts fell from 14.6% to 11.5%. (See the chart below.)

DROPOUT RATES  
FOR PERSONS  
AGED 16-24  
1972-1994



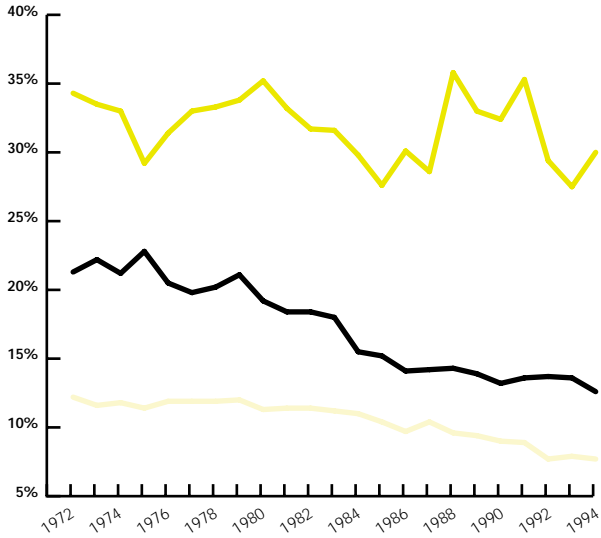
Source: The National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education

**Dropout Rates**

Dropout rates have been going down. Between 1972 and 1994 the percentage of persons aged 16 to 24 who were high school dropouts fell from 14.6% to 11.5%. But dropout rates have been consistently higher for African Americans than for whites, and highest of all for Latinos. (See the chart below.)

DROPOUT RATES BY RACE OF PERSONS AGED 16-24 1972-1994

- Latino
- Black
- White



Source: U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, 1996 *Condition of Education*

During the 22-year period, dropout rates fell by 36.9% for whites, and by 40.8% for African Americans, while Latinos saw only a 12.5% reduction.

However, the 1994 dropout rate for African Americans, 12.6%, was still higher than the 1972 rate for whites, 12.3%.

Sample News Story

# Most Teachers Well Prepared New Study Finds Teachers Trained in Their Fields

WASHINGTON—A federal report issued today says that most public school teachers are well educated in the subject areas they teach.

The report, the 1998 Condition of Education, was released today by the National Center for Education Statistics, an agency of the U.S. Department of Education. Published biennially, the Condition of Education is a compilation of statistical indicators of the state of education in the United States.

“Good teachers are central to a high quality education system,” according to the Commissioner’s Statement accompanying the report. In fact, U.S. public schools have good, well-prepared teachers. “Whether teachers either majored or minored or are certified in the fields they teach” is a good measure of their qualification to teach, the statement continues.

More than three-quarters of all public school students are taught their core subjects by teachers who majored in their class subject. “Core subjects” include English,

mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences.

Health and physical education teachers are the most likely to have majored in their class subject. Over 80% of science teachers either majored or minored in one of the sciences, though not necessarily the science they currently teach.

Math students are least likely to be taught by a teacher who majored in math. The study found that, even in the case of mathematics, more than half of all math teachers either majored or minored in math when they were in college. After math, English is the subject in which teachers are least prepared.

It is often assumed that private schools have better teachers than public schools. But private school teachers are no better qualified than those who teach in the public schools, according to the study. In fact, public school teachers are somewhat more likely on average than private school teachers to be certified in every class subject.

Sample News Story

## Most Teachers Well Prepared Teachers for Students of Color Not Up to Par

WASHINGTON—A federal report issued today says that most public school teachers are well educated in the subject they teach.

The 1998 Condition of Education, released by the Department of Education, is a compilation of statistical indicators of the state of education in the United States. The study found that more than three-quarters of all public high school students are taught their core subjects by teachers who majored in the class subject. Core subjects include English, math, natural sciences, and social studies.

*However, the study also found a wide variation in the quality of teachers. In particular, students of color are less likely to be taught by teachers who majored or minored in the subjects they teach as compared to teachers of white students.*

For all students, health and physical education teachers are the most likely to have majored in their class subject. Over 80 percent of science teachers either majored or minored in one of the sciences, though not necessarily the science they currently teach.

Math students are least likely to be taught by a teacher who majored in math. Nevertheless, the study found that even in the case of mathematics more than half of all math teachers either majored or minored in math when they were in college. After math, English is the subject in which teachers were the least prepared.

*In schools whose students are more than 95% white, 82% of math teachers had either majored or minored in math. Where students of color were in the majority, only 62% of math teachers were similarly prepared. In schools with over 50% students of color, 21% of math teachers were not even certified to teach that subject.*

Private school teachers were found to be no better qualified than those who teach in public schools, according to the study. In fact, public school teachers are somewhat more likely than private school teachers to be certified in every class subject.

*But the opposite was found to be true in the small number of private schools with a majority of students of color. In those schools, 59% of math teachers were not certified to teach math.*

**School Funding** Public school revenues per student vary widely across states, because state governments provide 45% of school funding. The states vary in their capacity and willingness to fund the schools. In addition, there is considerable variation within states, because states delegate authority for operating and funding schools to local school districts, which provide 48% of public school revenues.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, *1996 Condition of Education*

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On average, the wealthiest districts have about 16% more revenue per student (after adjusting for differences in cost of living) than the poorest districts. In practice, the variance can be much wider. School districts serving affluent populations can and do spend much more on public education than districts in poor communities. Most local funding derives from local property taxes. In wealthy districts, property values, and therefore property taxes, are higher. In 1992, for example:

- In New York State, the richest school district spent \$38,572 per student, 7 times what the poorest district spent—\$5,423.
- In Texas, per-student spending ranged from \$3,098 to more than 10 times as much—\$42,000.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, *1996 Condition of Education*

### School Funding

Public school revenues per student vary widely across states, because state governments provide 45% of school funding. The states vary in their capacity and willingness to fund the schools. In addition, there is considerable variation within states, because states delegate authority for operating and funding schools to local school districts, which provide 48% of public school revenues.

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*Schools with a majority of poor students are less well funded than those with mostly middle class or affluent students.* This is in part because most local funding derives from local property taxes. In wealthy districts, property values, and therefore property taxes, are higher.

*Schools with high concentrations of poor students—and by extension, lower revenues—also have high concentrations of students of color.* For 1995 (the most recent year for which data are available), for all schools in the United States there was a very high correlation—.684 out of a possible 1.000—between percentage of poor students and percentage of students of color.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, Common Core of Data 1995

Intensely segregated schools—those that are over 90% African American and/or Latino—are 14 times more likely to have a majority of poor students than schools that are over 90% white.

Source: Gary Orfield and Susan Eaton, *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education*, New York: The New Press, 1996

## **SAT Scores**

The two-part (Math and Verbal) SAT is the nation's oldest and most widely used college entrance exam. Most college-bound high school seniors take the SAT.

It is a multiple-choice test, the results of which form a classic bell curve, with most students' scores clustered at the mean, tailing out to smaller numbers of students at the highest and lowest ends of the curve. The SAT is validated (statistically verified) to predict only one thing—first-year college grades. But in fact other factors, such as high school grade-point averages or class standings, do this better.

In 1997 1,127,021 students took the test. Their average combined score for the two parts of the test was 1016 points out of a possible 1600. Females scored about 60 points lower than males on average, even though their first-year college grades (which the SAT is supposed to predict) are higher.

Source: 1997 Profile of College Bound Seniors, College Board, Fair Test

**SAT Scores**

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The SAT is not a race-neutral testing instrument. The Educational Testing Service, which administers the SAT, acknowledges this, stating, "It is a myth that a test will provide a unitary, unequivocal yardstick for ranking on merit." In fact, Asian American and white students score consistently higher than other students of color on the SAT.

In 1997 1,127,021 students took the test. Their average combined score for both parts was 1016 points out of a possible 1600. But averages differed significantly for test-takers of different races. The table below shows the SAT scores for 1997, broken down by race, where 1600 is a perfect score:

**SAT SCORES BY RACE**

1997

African American	857
Puerto Rican	901
Mexican American	909
Other Latino	934
Native People	950
Other	1026
White	1052
Asians and Pacific Islanders	1056

Source: 1997 Profile of College Bound Seniors, College Board, FairTest

Several factors may explain the racial disparity in test results. These include:

- The continuing effects of unequal education.
- Lack of access to expensive “coaching” courses, on which parents and students spend more than \$50 million each year. These courses have been shown to raise SAT scores by more than 100 points.
- The possibility of cultural bias in the tests themselves, or in the test-taking environment. For example, the ETS is planning to move all testing to PC computer-based exams, which will be a more familiar setting for students who regularly use computers.

There is an accepted method of removing racial bias from standardized tests. This objective technique, known as the “Golden Rule Bias Reduction safeguards,” makes exams more accurate by choosing from pools of equally difficult questions those that produce the least difference in correct answer rates between white people and people of color.

# SEGREGATION



SCHOOLS with more than half students of color are considered to be segregated. Schools with 90 to 100% students of color are considered intensely segregated. By this measure, 27% of all public schools are segregated, and 11% are intensely segregated. For example:

- At almost one-third of all public schools, the students are at least 95% white.
- On the other hand, 5% of all public schools have no white students at all.
- In large urban areas, as defined by the Census Bureau, 13.5% of public schools have no white students.

Source: NCES Common Core of Data, 1995

- By the same measure 86% of all private schools are segregated, and half of them are intensely segregated. Almost 20% of all private schools are completely white.

See the table below for a comparison between public and private school segregation:

**CONCENTRATION OF STUDENTS OF COLOR IN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

	No students of color	1–10% students of color	11–30% students of color	31–50% students of color	Over 50% students of color
% of private schools with	19.4	34.8	23.2	7.1	15.5
% of public schools with	5.8	37.6	20.5	12.9	23.1

Source: NCES, Private Schools in the United States: A Statistical Profile, 1993-94

**Why is school segregation important?** The plaintiffs in *Brown v. Board of Education* argued that attending a segregated school directly affected a student’s achievement, and contemporary studies continue to show that they were right. This is not because something magic happens to children of color when they sit next to white children. Rather it is because, as education scholar Carol Ascher puts it, “Segregated schools are more likely than predominantly white schools to be financially under-resourced and educationally inferior, as measured by pupil/teacher ratios, advanced curricula, computers, laboratory equipment, etc.” (Ascher 1993)

Part of segregation’s damage is done by the almost complete overlap between high poverty levels and highly segregated schools. A 1993 federally commissioned report entitled “Prospects: The Congressionally Mandated Study of Education and Opportunity” was the first to systematically examine the results of federal compensatory (Title 1) funding. The report, which reviewed the effects of five years of Title 1 funding, concluded that students receiving Title 1 services showed no improvement in several important areas of measurement, including test scores, graduation rates, and suspension and absence rates. On the other hand, students of color who received no compensation but attended less impoverished (and by extension less segregated) schools did improve in all these areas.

Unequal access to resources is not the only harm segregation does to students of color. One of the most important predictors of students’ achievement is teacher expectation. Studies have shown that teachers in segregated schools for children of color expect less from their students than do teachers in predominantly white schools.

The Supreme Court outlawed school segregation in 1954, ruling that separate schools were inherently unequal. Yet many school systems remain segregated today. In fact, most students of color attend segregated schools. There are several reasons that school segregation has been so hard to eradicate, among them:

**Residential segregation:** Because most students attend school near their homes, residential segregation translates directly to school segregation.

Unfortunately, residential segregation persists in the major metropolitan areas of the United States. One common measure of Black-white (or Latino-white) segregation in a city is the “dissimilarity index,” which reflects the percentage of a racial group who would have to move in order to achieve a neighborhood-level racial balance that corresponds to the racial composition of the entire city. In a completely unsegregated city, the dissimilarity index number would be zero; in a completely segregated city, it would be 100, meaning that 100% of that group would have to move to create a city of racially balanced neighborhoods. Any city with an index above 60 is considered very segregated.

Perhaps surprisingly, Northern and Western cities are actually more segregated than cities in the South. Below are 1990 dissimilarity index figures for African Americans and Latinos in some key Northern and Southern cities. The study actually examined 18 Northern and 12 Southern cities. Averages are for all cities studied:

**RESIDENTIAL  
SEGREGATION IN  
SOME KEY CITIES**

<b>Northern &amp; Western</b>	Black	Latino	<b>Southern</b>	Black	Latino
Boston, MA	69.4	56.0	Atlanta, GA	67.7	34.5
Chicago, IL	85.5	57.6	Birmingham, AL	52.8	–
Los Angeles, CA	72.8	61.1	Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX	63.1	49.5
New York, NY	81.5	65.8	Miami, FL	69.9	71.8
San Francisco / Oakland, CA	63.8	49.8	Washington, DC	65.9	40.9
<b>Average for 18 cities</b>	<b>77.6</b>	<b>57.1</b>	<b>Average for 12 cities</b>	<b>65.9</b>	<b>43.0</b>

Note: Index figures greater than 60.0 indicate “very” segregated  
Source: Compiled by Applied Research Center based on U.S. census data

**Post-*Brown* Supreme Court decisions:** A number of decisions since *Brown v. Board of Education* have actually inhibited school integration. In 1974 the Supreme Court ruled against desegregation *across* school district lines in *Milliken v. Bradley I*. Because in most regions of the country the inner cities and the suburbs lie in separate school districts, this ruling profoundly reinforces the effects of residential segregation. Southern school districts have historically taken in entire counties, including both cities and their suburbs, so that, until recently, desegregation was more effective in the Southern states than in the North and West.

The Supreme Court's 1977 ruling in *Milliken v. Bradley II* permits states to provide compensatory funding for school districts—in the case of *Milliken*, Detroit, Michigan—that are prevented from desegregating as a result of the first *Milliken* decision. That is, if school districts cannot desegregate, they may sue for state funds to “make up for” the unequal education their students receive. In effect, the two *Milliken* decisions taken together re-instituted a form of “separate but equal” schooling, in which segregation is permitted, while segregated school districts may sue for financial remediation. But as we have seen, money alone does not repair the damage done by segregation.

**Premature declarations of desegregation:** A desegregated school district is called a “unitary” (as opposed to “dual”) district. When a school district is under a court order to desegregate, it must in theory demonstrate that it has eliminated segregation “root and branch” in a number of different areas, including facilities, administration, teaching staff, transportation and extra-curricular activities. These areas are called “*Green*” factors, because they were enumerated in the Supreme Court's 1968 decision in *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*.

Supreme Court decisions in the 1990s have allowed courts to declare school districts “unitary” even when they have met only *some* of the requirements set forth in *Green*, or when they have met some requirements at one time and others later, while backsliding on the

requirements they met earlier. *Once a formerly segregated school system is declared unitary, it is under no obligation to maintain its desegregation programs, no matter how segregated its schools become.* As a result of these decisions, resegregation is increasing in Southern as well as Northern school districts.





**Federal funding priorities:** Federal funds for education provide no incentive to school districts to desegregate. Under *Milliken II*, there is actually federal money available to compensate segregated schools, but there is almost no federal money for school desegregation. The biggest federal education expenditures are Title 1 (formerly Chapter 1) monies. These funds go to schools with high concentrations of impoverished students, which are usually segregated inner-city schools. The only official federal funding program for desegregated schools, known as the Emergency School Aid Act, ended in 1981 after nine years of operation.

**Questions to ask when reporting on racial balance in education:**




1. To what extent are the schools within a particular district segregated? If a school district is relatively homogenous, is there segregation between school districts? (Demographic figures should be available from local school district offices.)
2. Is the school district operating under a court's consent decree to desegregate? If so, what are its conditions? What individuals or entities have oversight responsibility for enforcement of the decree?
3. Has the school district been declared "unitary"? If so, when did this happen? What changes in desegregation policy, if any, have taken place since that time? Is the school district more or less segregated today than it was when it was declared unitary?

## RESOURCES



### Books & Articles

-  Abt Associates, *Prospects: The Congressionally Mandated Study of Education and Opportunity* (Bethesda, MD: Abt Associates, 1993)
-  Ascher, Carol, "The Changing Face of Racial Isolation and Desegregation in Urban Schools." *ERIC/CUE Digest Number 91* (May 1993)
-  Massey, Douglas S., and Denton, Nancy A., *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993)
-  Orfield, Gary, Eaton, Susan E., and the Harvard Project on School Desegregation, *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1996)

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800-424-1616, Fax 202-219-1696  
library@inet.ed.gov

### Web Sites

-  **National Center for Education Statistics**  
(A resource for national education data)  
[www.nces.ed.gov](http://www.nces.ed.gov)
-  **ERIC Digests**  
(Short articles on a variety of subjects, collected by the U.S. Department of Education)  
[www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/index/](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/index/)

# SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

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## DISCIPLINE ISSUES

SCHOOLS encounter a number of discipline problems, the vast majority of which do not involve violence or criminal activity. In 1996, the problem most frequently reported by school principals was student tardiness (reported by 41% of principals), followed by absenteeism (26%) and fighting among students (21%). Fourteen percent of principals reported problems with student tobacco use and 9% with student drug use. Twelve percent said their schools had problems with verbal abuse of teachers, while only 2% had experienced physical abuse of teachers. Only 2% of principals cited student weapons possession as a problem.

Some problems, like tardiness, absenteeism, and fighting, were more pronounced in schools with higher proportions of minority students. Others, like alcohol and tobacco use, declined as the percentage of minority students increased. *Teacher* absenteeism was a problem for 10% of principals overall, but for 18% of principals in schools with more than half minority enrollments.

Source: NCES, *1997 Condition of Education*

## DISCIPLINE MEASURES

Schools have available several sanctions with which to enforce discipline. These range from extra academic assignments and after-school detention to suspension, expulsion, and corporal punishment. *Studies in various cities have shown that African American, Native American and Latino students are more likely than white or Asian American students to receive more serious sanctions like suspension and expulsion.*

**Suspension and expulsion:** In most school systems, individual teachers have the authority to suspend students from school, but expulsion requires approval of the local school board. Suspension and expulsion have serious effects on the life chances of students. Students who are already performing poorly in school are most likely to be suspended, although they are the very students who can least afford to miss classes. Many studies have shown that students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to drop out of school altogether. (See DeRidder 1990; Hahn and Lefkowitz 1987; Wheelock 1986; and Wu 1982)

Few studies have examined suspension rates by race on a national level, because many school districts do not keep discipline statistics at all, or do not disaggregate them by race. One exception is data derived from the National Center for Education Statistics' longitudinal study, which tracked students who were eighth-graders in 1988. Four years later, in 1992, this sample was examined to see what proportion of students had ever been suspended. The results appeared in the Department of Education's publication, *The Condition of Education 1997*, and are summarized in the table below:

This table reveals some startling facts:

- Almost 25% of all African American male students were suspended during the four years studied.
- In general, chances of suspension for African Americans were more than twice as high as those for whites or Asians and Pacific Islanders.

- But this relationship did not hold true for the poorest Asians and Pacific Islanders: At 22%, their suspension rate was almost as high as that of the poorest African American students.

PERCENTAGE OF 1988 EIGHTH-GRADERS WHO HAD EVER BEEN SUSPENDED,  
BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SEX, AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

1992

Sex and socio-economic status	Total	RACE/ETHNICITY				
		White	African American	Latino	Asian/Pacific Islander	Native American
Total	11.1	9.7	19.8	11.8	9.8	15.8
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	14.9	13.6	24.4	15.5	9.8	15.8
Female	7.4	5.8	15.5	8.3	9.9	11.8
<b>Socioeconomic status</b>						
Lowest quartile	17.1	14.7	25.7	13.4	21.5	–
Second quartile	12.6	11.7	18.5	9.8	7.5	11.0
Third quartile	10.8	9.8	15.4	12.5	15.4	–
Highest quartile	6.7	6.3	13.6	10.7	2.9	–

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Second Follow-up Survey (1992)

In general, poorer students were more likely to be suspended than wealthier students. However, the *wealthiest* African Americans were suspended almost as often as the *poorest* whites. While the poorest African Americans were twice as likely to be suspended as the wealthiest, the poorest Asians were *more than seven times* as likely to be suspended as the wealthiest Asians.

Local studies reveal similar disparities.

- **Oakland, California:** A 1992 study of discipline in the public schools found that African American students were three times as likely to be suspended as all other students combined. African Ameri-

can males accounted for 28% of enrollment, but for 53% of all suspensions.

Source: *Keeping Our Children in School: Sounding the Alarm on Suspensions* 1992, Oakland, CA: Urban Strategies Council

- **North Carolina:** A study commissioned by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction showed that in the 1995-96 school year, African American students accounted for about 30% of the state's public school population, but received 56% of the suspensions. The study showed that African American students were also suspended for longer periods, an average of 3.6 days, compared to 3.1 days for white students.

Source: *Greensboro, NC News & Observer*, March 16, 1998, p. 3A

- **Michigan:** A state advisory committee assisting the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights conducted a study of suspension and expulsion rates in that state. The panel concluded that minority students in Michigan public schools get expelled at "far greater rates" than their white counterparts. In the Lansing district, for example, African American students made up 37% of students but received 47% of all suspensions and expulsions.

Source: *Detroit News*, March 7, 1996

**Corporal punishment:** The federal Department of Education reported over 470,000 incidents of corporal punishment in the 1993-94 school year. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, students in over 30,000 of those incidents were hurt badly enough to require medical evaluation. As with other sanctions, the federal government and most school districts do not keep statistics on the race of children who receive physical punishments. Corporal punishment is opposed by the NAACP, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Education Association, and the national Parent Teacher Association, among other groups. Nevertheless, 23 states permit its use in their public schools, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, which maintains a web site on the subject (see Resources for URL). Internationally, corporal punishment in the schools is the exception,

rather than the rule. The United States, South Africa, Canada, and Australia are the only industrialized nations that permit corporal punishment, according to the National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools.

Opponents of corporal punishment, including the NAACP, maintain that, like suspension and expulsion, corporal punishment is more frequently applied to students of color than to whites. One of the few local studies that have been conducted on the subject focused on Jacksonville, Florida. Researchers found that during the 1996-97 school year, African American students made up 41% of students, but constituted 68% of those receiving corporal punishment.







Source: *River City News*, Jacksonville, November 1, 1997

### Questions to ask when reporting on issues of school discipline:





1. Does the school district keep records of disciplinary action broken out by race?
2. If so, does any racial or ethnic group receive a disproportionate number of severe sanctions such as suspension or expulsion? What, if any, efforts are being made to address any such disparity?
3. What kinds of offenses are most likely to bring serious sanctions? Are they objective offenses such as fighting, smoking, alcohol, or drug use? Are serious sanctions imposed for subjective offenses as well (e.g., defiance of authority), the definition of which is up to an individual teacher?
4. In individual schools, are records of disciplinary action kept by issuing teacher, as well as by student? (Often one or two teachers in a school will be responsible for the majority of the suspensions and expulsions issued. When discipline decisions are made by individual teachers' subjective criteria, bias can creep in.)
5. Does the school district have a clear discipline code?

## RESOURCES


### Books and Articles

-  Commission for Positive Change in the Oakland Public Schools, *Keeping Our Children in School: Sounding the Alarm on Suspensions* (Oakland, CA: Urban Strategies Council, 1992)
-  De Ridder, L., "How Suspension and Expulsion Contribute to Dropping Out," *Educational Horizons* 68:153-57 (Spring 1990)
-  Hahn, A., Danzerberger, J., and Lefkowitz, B., *Dropouts in America: Enough Is Known for Action* (Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1987)
-  Pressman, Robert, *State Law Challenges to School Discipline: An Outline of Claims and Case Summaries* (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education, 1995)
-  Wheelock, Anne, *The Way Out: Student Exclusion Practices in Boston Middle Schools* (Boston, MA: Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1986)
-  Wu, S., Pink, W., and Moles, O., "Student Suspension: A Critical Reappraisal," *The Urban Review*, Vol. 14 (4) 245-316 (1982)

### Contacts

-  **Urban Strategies Council** (A local policy and research group)  
672 13th St., Suite 200, Oakland, CA 94612  
510-893-2404
-  **NCAS** (A national advocacy organization)  
National Coalition of Advocates for Students  
100 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02116-4610  
617-357-8507
-  **The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation**  
(Funds privatization efforts)  
P.O. Box 510860, Milwaukee, WI 53203-0153  
414-291-9915, Fax 414-291-9991
-  **Family Research Council** (A conservative think tank)  
801 G St., NW, Washington, DC 20001  
202-393-2100, Fax 202-393-2134

### Web Sites

-  **American Academy of Pediatrics**  
[www.aap.org/advocacy/corpchrt.htm](http://www.aap.org/advocacy/corpchrt.htm)

# SCHOOL FUNDING



## REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

THERE are many ways to measure racial equality in public schools, including dropout and graduation rates, teacher-student ratio, class size, and results on standardized tests. One important measure is the amount of money schools receive and spend—their revenues and expenditures.

Disparities in school spending can be quite stark, even within the same state. During the 1993-94 school year, for example:

- In New York State, the richest school district spent \$38,572 per student, compared with \$5,423 in the poorest district.
- In Texas, the spread was even greater, with expenditures ranging between \$42,000 and \$3,098.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education

These disparities among school districts have a high correlation with the racial makeup of their student bodies.

**Revenues:** Public schools receive the vast majority of their revenues from local and state sources. In 1996, public school revenue streams broke down this way:

Local sources	48%
State governments	45%
Federal government	7%

(An exception is schools on Indian reservations, and off-reservation Indian boarding schools, which are funded entirely by the federal government.)

The racial dimension of school funding is not always obvious, but it is there. For example, most local funding comes from the property taxes that individuals and businesses pay on the buildings they own. While property tax formulas can be complex, it is generally the case that in a given state, the higher the value of the property, the greater the tax revenue. Because property values are higher in wealthy communities than in poor ones, wealthy communities have more money to spend on their schools than do poor communities.

Because of the extensive residential segregation that still exists in this country, there is a high degree of correlation between a community's wealth and the percentage of whites in its population. Statistically, students of color are much more likely to go to school in poor districts than in rich districts.

How do we know this? By comparing the poverty rates with racial demographics. The only consistently available measure of the poverty of a school's student body is the proportion of children who receive a federally funded free or reduced-cost lunch. This measure correlates highly with a concentration of students of color.

- For all 90,000 schools in the United States, the correlation between percentage of students receiving free lunches and percentage of students of color is a highly significant .6843, where a score of 1.0 is a perfect correlation.

Source: NCES Common Core of Data, 1995

- In Chicago, Illinois, for example, researchers found a correlation of .895 between the percentage of students in poverty and the percentage of students of color—a level of correlation so high that the two measures are statistically indistinguishable.

Source: Gary Orfield, *Dismantling Desegregation*, New York: New Press, 1996

How do local districts and states raise school revenues?

**Local revenue sources may include:**

- Property taxes
- Occasional sales taxes
- Occasional school fees paid by parents
- Private and corporate donations

**State revenues may include:**

- Sales tax
- Income tax
- Motor vehicle, tobacco, and alcohol taxes
- Lottery proceeds

**Federal revenues include:**

- “Chapter 1” monies designated for schools in high poverty areas
- Funding for bilingual education
- Funding for special education (of physically and mentally disabled students)

**California: A special case.** Differences in property values, and in how a state government allocates its school funding, can create enormous intra-state disparities in funding. In a few states successful court actions have helped ease inequalities in school spending. Often, however, a court will rule in favor of greater equity, only to engage in years of wrangling with a state legislature over acceptable implementation. This has been the case for some years now in New Jersey.

California is one state where a successful suit resulted in major changes in how school funds are allocated. In its *Serrano* decision, the California Supreme Court ruled that in order to provide more equal access to quality

education, all 58 counties must pool their local property taxes. Individual schools receive a per-pupil share of this revenue, based on their average daily attendance. However, school districts have the option of opting out of the pooling system, and funding their schools through other means, such as parents' contributions, which some of California's wealthiest districts, e.g., the town of Ross in Marin County, have done.

**Expenditures:** The United States spent \$255 billion on public education for the 1995-96 school year. These expenditures fell into three categories:

- **Instruction** **62%**  
(including teachers and textbooks)
- **Support services** **34%**  
(including principals, and all other non-teaching staff)
- **Non-instruction** **4%**  
(Including cafeteria and interscholastic sports)

The most common comparison measure of school spending is the "per-pupil expenditure" amount—the total amount spent by a jurisdiction, divided by the total number of students. This can be a deceptive measure, however, because in addition to current expenditures, schools must also make capital outlays, e.g., for the purchase of land or buildings, or for major repairs. Most school districts and/or states must also service the debt on school bonds.

Richer, whiter districts are most often located in suburbs that are newer than the core cities they surround. This means that the infrastructure of their school systems is also newer, so white districts have fewer building maintenance costs and are less likely than poor districts to have to defer necessary maintenance. That means that their per-pupil expenditures can go primarily for immediate needs. Inner-city school districts may even have similar per-pupil expenditures, but find themselves forced to

choose between spending their funds on teachers' salaries or heating system repairs.

**Questions to ask when covering issues of school revenues and expenditures:**

1. How do per-pupil expenditures differ between nearby urban and suburban districts? How does the racial makeup of the student body differ?
2. If revenues and spending in fact seem fairly equal across districts, how does the condition of the physical plants differ? Does one district spend a greater proportion of its budget on maintenance and upkeep than the other? What other areas of expenditure are reduced to make up the difference?
3. If a state lottery helps fund the schools, how are the monies allocated that are raised in the lottery? How does that allocation compare to the demographics of the people who purchase lottery tickets? Does a lottery in effect transfer monies from poor school districts with high concentrations of students of color to whiter, more affluent districts?

## VOUCHERS

The term “vouchers” covers a broad array of programs under which parents can opt out of public schools, and receive a government-funded voucher, with which they can pay for private school. Vouchers are not a new concept. Over 40 years ago the conservative economist Milton Friedman first proposed supplying parents with vouchers for each child of school age, to be spent on tuition at the school of their choice. In Friedman’s original proposal, parents would be able to augment the value of the voucher from their own financial resources, which would allow the children of more affluent parents to attend more expensive schools.

**Vouchers then:** Friedman made his proposal shortly after the Supreme Court outlawed school segregation in 1954. At that time voucher programs’ main supporters were white parents who did not want their children to attend integrated schools. The best-known “school choice” program during that period was instituted in Prince Edward County, Virginia, where rather than integrate the public schools, the county actually shut them down for five years. Parents received vouchers for private schools, the majority of which only served white students. Many African American children received no formal education during those five years, while most white students attended all-white private schools.

Source: J. Harvey Wilkinson III, *From Brown to Bakke: The Supreme Court and School Integration, 1954–1978*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1979

**Vouchers now:** The best-known contemporary experiment with school vouchers has taken place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with support from the conservative Bradley Foundation. Prior to its involvement with vouchers, the Foundation was perhaps best known for its \$1 million contribution to the writing and publication of Charles Murray’s book, *The Bell Curve*.

The initial program was quite small and egalitarian, involving fewer than 1,000 poor Milwaukee students and seven local private schools. Participants, who were to be low-income families chosen by lottery, would receive vouchers worth \$2,500, and these seven non-religious

schools agreed to accept any participating student, regardless of academic record.

Just as important as its egalitarian features was the kind of record-keeping and accountability required by the private schools in return for the voucher money. Voucher schools were required, for example, to keep statistics and report on the racial composition of their student bodies.

State revenues are usually awarded to schools on a per capita basis, in accord with the “average daily attendance” of their student bodies. For this reason, when schools lose students, they also lose money. Because the Milwaukee Parent Choice Program, as it was called, was so small (in its first year, 1990-91, only 341 students ultimately took advantage of the vouchers), it did not drain significant revenues from public schools.

Because the program had so many conditions placed on it, this experiment was almost worthless in predicting how the large-scale, condition-free voucher programs that proponents advocate would actually work.

Milwaukee has since expanded its voucher program to cover up to 15,000 students at state expense, increasing the voucher amount to \$5,000, raising the family income level for participants and extending the program to religious schools. Significantly, the new program contained none of the accountability measures in the pilot program. Voucher schools would no longer have to accept all comers, nor would they have to keep statistics and report on the demographics of their students.

In response, the Milwaukee teachers' union and the ACLU filed suit on the grounds that state support of religious schools violates the constitutional separation of church and state. The plaintiffs won in 1997 at the State Appeals Court level.

On June 10, 1998, the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned the Appeals Court ruling and declared that expanding the Milwaukee private school voucher program to include religious schools is constitutional. It is estimated that in its first year of operation the new

voucher program will result in a transfer of \$75 million from public to private schools in Milwaukee.

In November 1998, the U.S. Supreme Court chose to let the Wisconsin Court's decision stand. This decision will probably lead to a proliferation of local voucher programs in other states.

**Arguments in favor of vouchers include:**

- Parents have a right to choose where to send their children to school.
- Giving parents the choice of sending their children to private school creates competition among schools, which will strengthen good schools and drive bad ones—whether public or private—out of business.
- In market terms, public schools have a monopoly on K–12 education. Because they don't have to compete, they don't improve.

**Arguments against vouchers include:**



- Not all students will be able to choose the schools they want, because unlike public schools, private schools do not have to accept all applicants.
- Private schools have historically discriminated against students of color.
- There are not enough private schools operating in the United States to make private school a real option for most students. Currently, only 9% of secondary school students attend private schools.
- Voucher programs operating on a massive scale will drain off substantial revenues from public schools, and transfer them to private schools, leaving the students with the greatest need behind in public schools with fewer resources.
- Vouchers for religious schools may engender conflicts, both over the separation of church and state, and among various religious groups competing for voucher money.

### Questions to ask when covering stories about proposed local voucher programs:





1. How many students will the program cover? What proportion of the public school population is that? How will recipient students be chosen?
2. Is there a family income cap, or will all students receive vouchers, regardless of income?
3. Will students have the choice of attending any school they wish, or will schools have the right to reject applicants?
4. What are the demographics of existing private schools? What commitment have local private schools demonstrated to acquiring and/or maintaining a diverse student body?
5. What are the estimated costs to the local public school system of the proposed program?

## RESOURCES

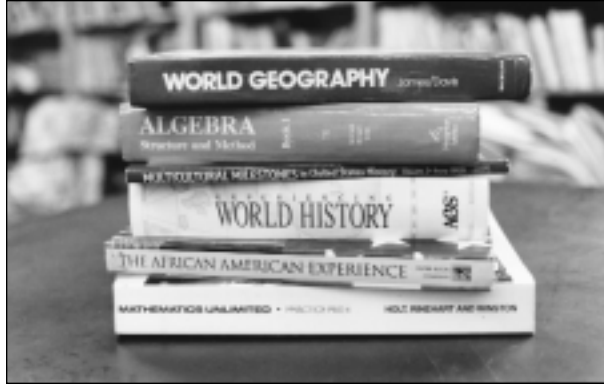
### Reports

-  Chubb, John E., and Moe, Terry M., *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1990)
-  Rethinking Schools, *Selling Out Our Schools: Vouchers, Markets, and the Future of Public Education* (Milwaukee WI, 1996)

### Contacts

-  **Robert Peterson**  
Rethinking Schools  
1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212  
414-964-9646
-  **The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation**  
(Funds privatization efforts)  
P.O. Box 510860, Milwaukee, WI 53203-0153  
414-291-9915, Fax 414-291-9991
-  **National Education Association**  
(Nation's largest teachers' union)  
Earl Jones, Director of Human and Civil Rights  
1201 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036  
202-833-4000  
manderson@nea.org (Put "Help, I'm on deadline!" in subject field for immediate response)  
[www.nea.org/info/press](http://www.nea.org/info/press)
-  **The Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation**  
(Supporter of school privatization)  
One American Square, Suite 2440, P.O. Box 82078  
Indianapolis, IN 46282  
317-681-0745  
[www.friedmanfoundation.org](http://www.friedmanfoundation.org)

# CURRICULUM



MANY scholars argue that traditional public school curricula are not adequate for students of color, nor even for white students. This is more than a question of equity or student self-esteem, they argue. History and social studies courses that omit the experiences of people of color are also incomplete, and therefore inaccurate. This recognition formed the genesis of what has come to be known as multicultural curriculum.

**Inclusive, or multicultural, curriculum:** There are many definitions of multicultural education. In 1982 the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education used this formulation: “preparation for the social, political and economic realities individuals will experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters providing a process for individuals to develop competencies for perceiving, evaluating, and behaving in different cultural settings.” (Source: Oliver, Jenny Penney, and Howley, Craig, “Charting New Maps: Multicultural Education in Rural Schools,” Department of Education, *ERIC Digest*, August 1992) In general, the goal of multicultural education is to provide a curriculum and teaching approach that is appropriate in a culturally and racially mixed society like the United States.

Experts differ on the meaning of multicultural education. Writing for an *ERIC Digest* piece prepared for the ERIC

Clearing House on Urban Education in June 1994, Gary Burnett outlines three different approaches:

**Content-oriented programs:** As the name implies, the primary goal of these programs is the inclusion of information about different ethnic and racial groups in curricula and teaching materials. These programs vary in quality from a “sidebar” approach, in which information about minority individuals and/or groups is appended to the main curriculum, to a more integrated approach, in which information about diverse cultures is integrated throughout the curriculum.

**Student-oriented programs:** These programs directly address the particular learning needs of students, based on their race, ethnicity, or gender. Such programs may include bilingual or bicultural classrooms or special math classes for girls or students of color, who historically have done less well in mathematics than white male students.

**Socially oriented programs:** These programs are designed to increase and improve the contact among students and teachers of different races and ethnic groups. They may include desegregation or de-tracking efforts and anti-bias programs for students and teachers. Less common and more controversial programs may include a conscious critique of forms of discrimination such as racism and sexism, and the examination of issues from multiple points of view, rather than teaching from a single, normative, point of view.

**Arguments in favor of multicultural education include:**

- It provides a setting in which children of all races can see their cultures reflected in the curriculum they study. This produces an increased interest in school, along with self-esteem and confidence about learning, especially among minority students, whose history and culture have not been reflected in traditional curricula.

- It introduces many white children to cultural experiences they might otherwise miss. Such knowledge of other cultures is an important—and useful—component of education for students who live, as all Americans do, in a multicultural society.
- It improves race relations within individual classrooms and schools.

**Arguments against multicultural education include:**

- It exacerbates tensions by dividing students along racial and cultural lines, rather than uniting them around their common heritage as Americans. (Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., among others, is a proponent of this view, which he expressed in his opinion about New York City’s Children of the Rainbow curriculum.)
- It dilutes the canon of American education through the introduction of second-rate works by non-white authors and artists. While culturally relevant to some students, these works do not measure up to the standards of the classics traditionally taught in American schools.

**Textbooks:** School textbooks are a \$1.7 billion business, in which about 20 major publishers vie for a share of the market. McGraw Hill, Harcourt Brace and Houghton Mifflin are the biggest three. Others include Glencoe, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, and Prentice Hall.

In half the states, textbooks are adopted on a statewide basis, with selection made by a small state textbook board. The enormous amount of money involved and the closed nature of adoption boards makes textbook adoption a conservative process. Textbook companies are reluctant to rock the boat by introducing new, and potentially controversial, multicultural materials.

Adoption board members are often political appointees, whose pedagogical tastes may not reflect the ethnic or racial composition of their own state, let alone of the United States as a whole.

Four of the “adoption” states, California, Texas, Florida, and North Carolina, make up 25% of the entire textbook market. For this reason, decisions made by these four states, and especially by the California and Texas state boards, influence what books are available, not only to other states with adoption boards, but to school districts in the rest of the states, whose choices are limited by what the adoption states select.

Most state adoption boards are small committees, volunteers who are usually appointed by the governor or the state superintendent of schools. The adoption board’s staff sets up and orients rating committees for the various subject areas.

Most textbooks are not written by scholars but by professional writers, who may not be experts in the subjects about which they write. It is not uncommon for scholars to lend their names (for a fee) to textbooks they did not write. (Harriet Tyson-Bernstein, “The Academy’s Contribution to the Impoverishment of America’s Textbooks” in *Phi Delta Kappan* 70, No. 3, November 1988)

### Questions to ask about textbook adoption:

1. What criteria are used for the adoption of textbooks? Do the criteria include full inclusion and accurate portrayal of the histories of various peoples of color?
2. Who makes textbook selection decisions? How is that body chosen? What is the racial composition of that body?
3. How much influence do publishers’ sales representatives have over textbook selection?
4. How much money do sales representatives spend in their efforts to have their publishers’ books adopted?

## RESOURCES

### Books



Banks, A.J., *An Introduction to Multicultural Education* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1994)

Loewen, James W., *Lies My Teacher Told Me* (New York, NY: New Press, 1994)



Schlesinger, Jr., Arthur M., *Report of the Social Studies Syllabus Review Committee: A Dissenting Opinion*, in New York State Social Studies Review and Development Committee, *One Nation, Many Peoples: A Declaration of Cultural Interdependence* (New York, NY: Author, 1991)



Sleeter, C. E., and Grant, C. A., *Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class and Gender* (2nd ed.) (New York, NY: Merrill, 1993)

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## TRACKING AND TESTING



### TRACKING

TRACKING is the practice of placing students in different classes, based on perceived differences in their abilities. A related practice, “ability” grouping, refers to the separation of students within the same classes into different groups, again based on perceived—though not necessarily real—differences in their abilities. Tracking takes a variety of forms, such as remedial and special education programs, as well as programs for gifted and talented students. At the high school level, many school systems distinguish among college preparatory, general, and vocational tracks.

Programs for students described as “gifted and talented” generally provide an enriched curriculum, with an emphasis on development of higher cognitive skills. “Remedial” programs focus more on basic skills and generally involve more routinized learning formats, such as arithmetic drills. While there is little doubt that students who have been placed in programs for the gifted benefit from an enriched curriculum, there is significant evidence that students in other tracks would benefit equally from this teaching approach, and from the expectation of high achievement that accompanies it.

Tracking can begin as early as second or third grade, and is usually based on some combination of standardized testing, teacher recommendation, or parental intervention. Studies show that it is very difficult for children assigned to a lower track to move into a higher one, in large part because students in lower tracks fall further behind their upper-track peers every year they are in school.

Because each level of schooling builds on earlier prerequisites, students assigned to lower tracks in elementary or middle school have little opportunity to take the advanced courses, especially in math and science, required for acceptance by most major universities. For example, whether or not a student takes algebra in the eighth grade determines whether he or she will qualify to study calculus in the twelfth grade.

- By seventh grade, two-thirds of all schools have so-called ability grouping in some classes.
- By seventh grade, 20% of schools have tracking or grouping in every subject.
- Tracking is more common in schools with significant numbers of African American and/or Latino students than in primarily white schools.

There are few national studies of the racial implications of tracking, although numerous local studies exist. The most extensive major survey was conducted by researchers Jomills Henry Braddock II and Marvin Dawkins (Braddock and Dawkins 1993). Braddock and Dawkins analyzed data contained in the National Center for Education Statistics' 1998 Longitudinal Study, which follows a cohort of students who were eighth-graders in 1988.

They examined tracking practices at both the middle school (eighth grade) and senior high (tenth grade) levels. They devised a "parity index" which uses white students as the norm and then compares their placement in tracked classes against students of color. Normal parity is set at 1.00. Any higher number signifies an over-representation of an ethnic group compared to white students. A lower

number signifies an under-representation compared to white students. Their middle school findings follow:

#### MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACKING BY RACE

##### ENGLISH

Ethnic Group	High Track %	Parity	Middle Track %	Parity	Low Track %	Parity
African American	15	.47	38	.95	34	2.43
American Indian	9	.28	44	1.10	35	2.50
Anglo American	32	1.00	40	1.00	14	1.00
Latino	18	.56	42	1.05	29	2.07

##### MATH

Ethnic Group	High Track %	Parity	Middle Track %	Parity	Low Track %	Parity
African American	15	.43	35	.87	35	2.33
American Indian	10	.29	46	1.15	34	2.27
Anglo American	35	1.00	40	1.00	15	1.00
Latino	18	.51	41	1.02	25	1.67

Parity below 1.00 indicates disproportionately low share; Parity above 1.00 indicates disproportionately high share.

Their analysis shows that in high tracks, all other students (excepting Asian Americans) were under-represented compared to white students. Middle tracks were more balanced except in math, where both African American and, surprisingly, Asian American students were significantly under-represented. In the lower tracks, all students of color were over-represented, especially African Americans, Native Americans and Latinos. Proportionally more than twice as many African American as white students were assigned to lower tracks in English and Math, while less than half as many were placed in higher tracks.

In the same study, Braddock and Dawkins examined mixed-ability classes (i.e., non-tracked classrooms) and found that in general, “students who experience low eighth-grade ability-group placements are significantly less likely to enter high school college preparatory programs than are *eighth-graders who were placed in mixed-ability classes.*” In high school, African American, American Indian and Latino students were highly

over-represented in the vocational tracks and under-represented in the academic tracks.

Local studies in Selma, Alabama, Rockford, Illinois, Boston, Massachusetts, Johnston, North Carolina, and San Jose, California, among others, have produced similar results. As a result of this research, and in response to the disproportionate ill effects of tracking on students of color, tracking is less universally accepted as a “common sense” teaching method than was true 20 years ago.

**Arguments in favor of tracking include:**

- Gifted students benefit from the superior education they receive in special classes. They will be bored and uncooperative in heterogenous (mixed) classes.
- Slower students who can't keep up get frustrated in mixed classes. They do better in classes designed for less able students.

**Arguments against tracking include:**

- Tracking decisions, which profoundly affect a student's school and life chances, are often based on subjective criteria, such as an individual teacher's impression of a student's abilities.
- Students of color are consistently under-represented in higher tracks and over-represented in lower tracks.
- Students with poor grades, or whom teachers have labeled less able, have been shown to benefit from participating in the higher expectations and more challenging atmosphere of mixed classes.
- Students who have an easier time in school—and may have been labeled “gifted”—also benefit from a cooperative learning environment, in which they assist students who are having more trouble. This is not simple repetition; the activity of teaching what they have learned requires gifted students to organize that learning differently, and actually improves their knowledge and understanding of a subject.

## TESTING

Standardized tests are generally employed for two purposes: to measure the performance of a group of students in the aggregate, (e.g., in a single school, a school district, a state, or the nation) or to measure the performance of individual students. Generally, a test that has been validated for the first purpose should not be employed for the second. For example, a test designed to measure the progress of an entire class of third-graders is not validated to determine tracking for an individual third-grader.

Many states have instituted statewide testing as a means of comparing the performance of students in different school districts, and of tracking statewide performance over time. California, for example, has just completed its first round of testing under its new Standardized Testing and Reporting program, or STAR, using the Stanford Achievement Test, 9th Edition (the SAT 9) to test all students in grades 2 through 11.

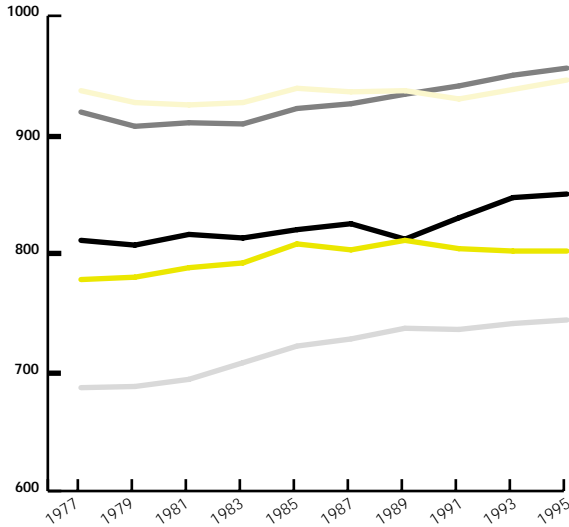
Tests that can determine the outcome of a student's academic career are known as "high stakes" tests, because their results are so significant for the individuals who take them. There is considerable controversy about the value of using standardized, multiple-choice tests by themselves, either as predictors of a student's future performance, or as yardsticks for educational institutions. Many experts now favor examining a combination of grades, open-ended tests, teachers' impressions, and portfolios of student work, to gain a more complete picture of a student's (or a school's) performance.

**Outcome bias:** One unequivocal fact about almost all standardized tests, including IQ tests and college admissions exams, is that they have a statistical "outcome bias" against African Americans. That is, African Americans consistently score measurably lower than do white test takers. Although the gap has narrowed over time, it is still significant. For example, on the 1997 SAT tests, out of a possible combined score of 1600 (for verbal and math portions), the average score for African Americans was 857 and for whites, 1052—a difference of 195

points. With the exception of Asians and Pacific Islanders (whose scores were virtually identical to those of whites), scores for all other minority groups were also lower than for whites. See the charts below:

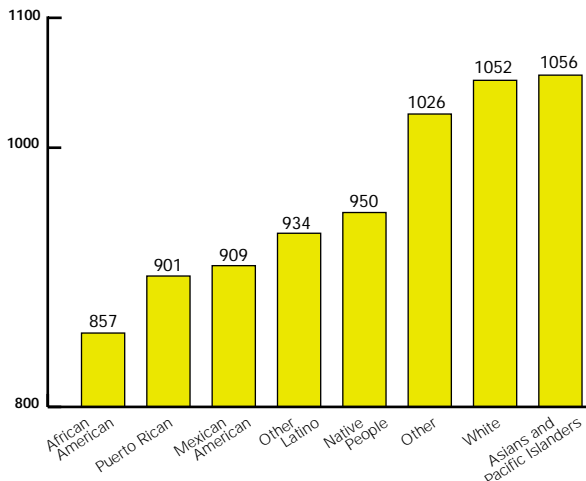
COMBINED MATH AND VERBAL SAT SCORES BY RACE  
1977-1995

- White
- Asian American
- African American
- Latino
- Native American



Note: The SAT test was recalibrated in 1996, raising average scores by about 100 points. Comparison between pre- and post-1996 scores are not valid.

COMBINED MATH AND VERBAL SAT SCORES BY RACE  
1997



Source: 1997 Profile of College-Bound Seniors, College Board; from Fair Test

Standardized tests can be made accurate without producing an “outcome bias.” There is a recognized method of reducing cultural bias in testing known as the “Golden Rule Bias Reduction” safeguards. This objective technique makes exams fairer by drawing from pools of equally difficult test items those questions that produce the least difference in correct answer rates between whites and people of color.

The SAT, which is administered by the nonprofit Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey, is probably the best-known standardized academic test. Colleges first began considering the SAT in their admission decisions in the 1920s, in an attempt to bring some objectivity into the admissions process. The original SAT consisted of open-ended exams, which were intended as tests of scholastic aptitude. They were modeled on early IQ tests, which are now generally considered to have been culturally biased against African Americans and most immigrants.

In fact, the SAT’s original designer, psychologist Carl Bingham, was a committed eugenicist, who believed in the natural inferiority of Southern and Eastern Europeans, Jews, and African Americans. Of the latter group, he once wrote, “The decline of American society will be more rapid than the decline of intelligence of European national groups owing to the presence here of the Negro.” Full multiple-choice tests were introduced after World War II, in order to further standardize results and to improve scoring efficiency.






**Removing race bias:** The SAT is validated (statistically verified) for one purpose: predicting first-year college grades. In fact, the ETS concedes that high school grades are a better predictor of first-year college grades than the SAT. In 1988, professors James Crouse and Dale Prushein performed a careful academic study comparing two college admissions strategies—one using high school records alone and the other using high school records in combination with SAT scores. More than 90% of admissions decisions were the same under both strategies, *but reliance on SATs resulted in rejection of many more otherwise academically qualified stu-*

*dents of color.* In fact, some colleges and universities have stopped considering SAT scores in their admission processes.


Almost 300 four-year colleges have dropped the SAT as an admissions requirement for at least some of their students, and some, like Bates and Bowdoin, have seen increased diversity in their student bodies. State university systems in Texas, Oregon, and California have also dropped SAT requirements, either partially or completely.


## RESOURCES

### Books and Articles

-  Ascher, Carol, "Successful Detracking in Middle and Senior High Schools," *ERIC Digest* No. 82 (October 1992)
-  Braddock, Jomills Henry, and Dawkins, Marvin, "Ability Grouping, Aspirations and Attainments: Evidence From the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988," *Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (1993)
-  Oakes, Jeannie, "Two Cities' Tracking and Within-School Segregation," *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 96, No. 4 (Summer 1995)
-  Wheelock, Anne, *Crossing the Tracks: How Untracking Can Save America's Schools* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1992)
-  Wheelock, Anne, *Alternatives to Tracking and Ability Grouping* (Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1994)

### Contacts

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 **ACORN Schools Project**  
(Supports school-related work by ACORN local community organizations)  
Helaine Doran  
88 Third Ave., 3rd Floor, Brooklyn, NY 11217  
718-246-7900, Fax 718-246-7939



**Educational Testing Service**

(Organization behind the SAT)

Rosedale Road, Princeton, NJ 08541

609-921-9000, Fax 609-734-5410



**FairTest**

(National center for fair and open testing)

Monty Neill or Karen Hartkee

342 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139

617-864-4810, Fax 617-497-2224

# STUDENTS

The proportion of students of color increased from 24% to 35% from 1976 to 1995:

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY  
AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, BY RACE/ETHNICITY

1976-95

Race/ethnicity	1976	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1993	1994	1995
White	76.0	71.2	70.4	70.7	67.8	66.7	66.1	65.6	64.8
Total students of color	24.0	28.8	29.6	29.3	32.1	33.3	34.0	34.4	35.1
African American	15.5	16.2	16.1	15.2	16.2	16.5	16.6	16.7	16.8
Latino	6.4	9.1	9.9	10.1	11.5	12.3	12.7	13.0	13.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.2	2.5	2.8	3.1	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7
Native American	.8	.9	.9	.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1

Source: NCES, *1998 Condition of Education*

Over time, the concentration of students of color in central city schools has increased. Between 1972 and 1993, the proportion of students of color increased in all public schools, but became most concentrated in central cities and other metropolitan areas. For example, between 1972 and 1993, the central city school population shifted from 42% to 54% students of color—an increase of 12%. The table on the next page illustrates this progression.

PERCENTAGE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ARE BLACK OR LATINO,  
BY METROPOLITAN STATUS

1972-1993

Year	Total	Central Cities	Other Metropolitan	Non-Metropolitan
1972	20.5	42.0	10.6	14.9
1973	20.3	41.8	10.1	14.6
1974	21.5	44.0	10.9	16.2
1975	22.0	44.5	12.0	15.9
1976	22.4	44.9	13.4	15.3
1977	21.9	47.0	12.6	15.5
1978	22.3	47.4	13.3	15.3
1979	22.7	49.5	14.1	14.4
1980	—	—	—	—
1981	24.6	51.4	15.6	16.0
1982	24.7	51.0	15.5	16.1
1983	25.2	51.5	16.6	15.6
1984	—	—	—	—
1985	26.8	56.7	18.1	16.8
1986	27.1	52.4	16.5	18.3
1987	27.1	51.7	17.5	16.7
1988	27.4	51.1	18.6	16.9
1989	27.8	51.8	20.0	15.3
1990	27.8	52.1	19.5	16.4
1991	28.1	52.9	19.6	15.9
1992	28.3	52.6	20.4	15.5
1993	28.4	53.8	20.2	16.0

Note: Figures for 1980 and 1984 are unavailable.

Source: NCES, *1995 Condition of Education*

# TEACHERS

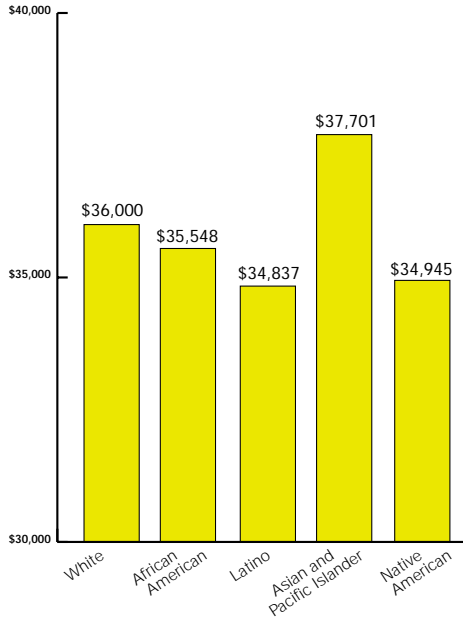
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White teachers and Asian teachers make higher salaries than other teachers of color.

## AVERAGE TEACHER SALARIES BY RACE

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1995



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *1996 Condition of Education*

Teachers in schools with higher percentages of students of color are less likely to have majored in or minored in, or to be certified in, most subject areas.

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS WITHOUT SELECTED QUALIFICATIONS,  
 COMPARED BY RACIAL COMPOSITION OF STUDENT BODY

1994

	Percentage of Teachers Without Selected Qualifications			
	Percentage of Students of Color in School			
	0-4%	5-19%	20-49%	50-100%
<b>Teacher did not major in class subject</b>				
English	21.9	20.9	26.5	28.3
Social sciences	14.0	13.2	15.8	15.7
Mathematics	25.4	28.6	34.4	39.1
Science	18.6	12.9	21.7	23.3
Foreign languages	18.5	19.9	22.2	13.3
Visual and performing arts	10.8	12.8	13.3	20.5
Health and physical education	9.0	7.5	8.7	9.8
Vocational education	13.8	16.8	22.7	26.6
<b>Teacher did not major or minor in class subject</b>				
English	15.8	14.0	18.1	17.4
Social sciences	7.3	7.2	8.1	10.4
Mathematics	18.0	19.3	22.3	27.7
Science	9.1	6.9	12.1	11.2
Foreign languages	7.7	11.1	14.3	8.7
Visual and performing arts	10.2	11.3	12.0	18.6
Health and physical education	6.4	5.5	6.9	8.4
Vocational education	11.7	15.8	21.7	22.1
<b>Teacher not certified in class subject</b>				
English	7.9	7.9	10.2	12.3
Social sciences	10.0	9.2	13.9	12.7
Mathematics	10.3	12.6	13.7	20.9
Science	7.4	7.3	6.7	14.5
Foreign languages	8.6	10.9	11.5	15.1
Visual and performing arts	10.4	12.0	12.3	16.6
Health and physical education	7.7	7.7	8.4	9.6

Source: NCES, 1996 *Condition of Education*

# DROPOUT AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

The percentage of people who dropped out of high school and have never gone back to finish fell for whites, African Americans, and Latinos from 1972 to 1994. Latinos have seen the least improvement, with a decline of only 4.3%. African American rates declined by twice as much—8.7%—but were still higher in 1994 than rates for whites in 1972.

**STATUS DROPOUT RATES—PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS 16-24 WHO HAD NOT COMPLETED AND WERE NOT ENROLLED IN HIGH SCHOOL**

Year	White	African American	Latino
1972	12.2	21.3	34.3
1973	11.6	22.2	33.5
1974	11.8	21.2	33.0
1975	11.4	22.8	29.2
1976	11.9	20.5	31.4
1977	11.9	19.8	33.0
1978	11.9	20.2	33.3
1979	12.0	21.1	33.8
1980	11.3	19.2	35.2
1981	11.4	18.4	33.2
1982	11.4	18.4	31.7
1983	11.2	18.0	31.6
1984	11.0	15.5	29.8
1985	10.4	15.2	27.6
1986	9.7	14.1	30.1
1987	10.4	14.2	28.6
1988	9.6	14.3	35.8
1989	9.4	13.9	33.0
1990	9.0	13.2	32.4
1991	8.9	13.6	35.3
1992	7.7	13.7	29.4
1993	7.9	13.6	27.5
1994	7.7	12.6	30.0

Source: NCES Dropout Rates

Not only do African Americans have higher dropout rates than whites, the economic consequences of not finishing high school are much more severe for them.

In 1995 African American high school dropouts aged 20-24 were more than twice as likely to be unemployed as white dropouts. At every education level, unemployment rates were higher for African Americans than for whites, but the differential was most profound for high school dropouts.

Similar data were unavailable for Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans.

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR WHITES AND AFRICAN AMERICANS,  
BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION ATTAINED**

1995

	16 to 24 year-olds			25 years old and over
	Total	16 to 19 years	20 to 24 years	
<b>White</b>				
All education levels	10.2	14.5	7.7	3.9
Less than a high school graduate	17.2	17.7	15.9	8.3
High school graduate, no college	10.0	11.9	9.2	4.2
Some college, no degree	10.0	11.9	9.2	4.2
Associate degree	4.8	8.5	4.7	3.1
Bachelor degree or higher	5.1	—	5.1	2.3
<b>Black</b>				
All education levels	23.9	35.7	17.7	7.4
Less than a high school graduate	39.1	40.4	35.8	12.4
High school graduate, no college	22.5	31.8	19.3	8.2
Some college, no degree	13.0	18.7	12.2	7.5
Associate degree	10.7	66.4	8.5	4.6
Bachelor degree or higher	8.7	—	8.6	3.2

Source: NCES, 1996 *Condition of Education*

# DISCIPLINE

**School discipline problems are not getting worse.** Each year public school principals complete a survey on discipline problems in their schools. This table compares their responses for two school years, 1991-92 and 1996-97. Some reported problems such as attendance issues, worsened slightly between the two years. Other problems such as possession of weapons and fighting, declined slightly. Overall there was little change between the two years.

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS REPORTED BY PRINCIPALS

SCHOOL YEARS 1991-92 AND 1996-97 COMPARED

Type of Problem	Percentage of School Principals Reporting Problems	
	1991-92	1996-97
<b>Substance abuse</b>		
Alcohol use	10	7
Tobacco use	13	14
Drug use	6	9
Drug sales	1	2
<b>Weapons and violence</b>		
Student possession of weapons	3	2
Racial tensions	5	3
Physical conflicts among students	23	21
<b>Disrespect of teachers</b>		
Verbal abuse of teachers	11	12
Physical abuse of teachers	1	2
<b>Property offenses</b>		
Robbery or theft	7	5
Vandalism	12	8
Trespassing	7	4

Source: NCES, 1998 Condition of Education

**Although students of color are suspended and expelled more often than white students, schools with more students of color do not necessarily have more discipline problems.** In both years, the incidence of some reported offenses, such as vandalism or fighting, rose with the percentage of students of color. Many other offenses, such as drug use and physical attacks on teachers, were essentially equally frequent for all percentages of students of color. And some offenses, such as alcohol and tobacco use, were worse in schools with fewer students of color.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS REPORTED IN SCHOOL YEAR  
 COMPARED BY PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS OF COLOR

1996-97

	Percentage of School Principals Reporting Problems			
	Percentage of Students of Color in School			
	<5%	5-19%	20-49%	50-100%
<b>Substance abuse</b>				
Alcohol use	10	10	5	3
Tobacco use	16	19	15	7
Drug use	9	14	7	7
Drug sales	1	4	1	3
<b>Weapons and violence</b>				
Student possession of weapons	1	2	2	17
Racial tensions	1	5	3	4
Physical conflict among students	12	19	23	31
<b>Disrespect of teachers</b>				
Verbal abuse of teachers	9	11	13	17
Physical abuse of teachers	1	2	3	1
<b>Property offenses</b>				
Robbery or theft	4	5	6	7
Vandalism	6	6	6	16
Trespassing	2	6	3	7

Source: NCES, 1996 Condition of Education

# SEGREGATION

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## LEADING COURT DECISIONS ON DESEGREGATION, 1895-1995

Reprinted with permission from *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education*, Gary Orfield and Susan Eaton, editors, New York: The New Press, 1996.

### ***Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896)**

This case involved a challenge from Homer Plessy, a Black man, to a Louisiana state law requiring that Blacks and whites use separate train car facilities. The Supreme Court concluded that racial segregation did not constitute discrimination under the Fourteenth Amendment, so long as the separate facilities were equal. The doctrine of “separate but equal” meant that the federal government sanctioned segregation. Subsequently, laws requiring racial segregation in education and other social and political domains were enacted throughout the South.

### ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954)**

In this decision, the Supreme Court unanimously concluded that state-imposed segregated schools were “inherently unequal” and must be abolished. This decision, regarded by many as the landmark Supreme Court decision of this century, struck down the “separate but equal” doctrine.

### ***Brown II*, 349 U.S. 294 (1955)**

Coming a year after *Brown I*, this was the Supreme Court’s first attempt to define how and when school desegregation would be achieved. In *Brown II*, the Court hedged on *Brown I*’s powerful antisegregation stand, setting no standard or deadline for desegregation to occur. Desegregation, the Court said, should occur with “all deliberate speed” in plans developed in federal district courts. Consequently, desegregation was delayed in many Southern districts.

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

This case challenged “freedom of choice” plans that had been implemented by school districts throughout the South. Such plans gave the students the option of transfer from a Black to a white school. Such plans placed the burden of integration on Blacks, who were reluctant to transfer in the face of intimidation. In *Green*, the Supreme Court ruled that schools must dismantle segregated dual (or segregated) systems “root and branch” and that desegregation must be achieved with respect to facilities, staff faculty, extracurricular activities, and transportation. Subsequently, courts used these “*Green* factors” as a guide in crafting desegregation plans. More recently, however, the factors have become a standard by which to determine whether school districts have achieved “unitary status,” or fully integrated schools.

***Alexander v. Holmes County [Mississippi] Board of Education*, 396 U.S. 19 (1969)**

Weary of the South’s evasion of its obligation under *Brown I*, the Supreme Court unanimously declared that desegregated school systems be achieved “at once” and “...operate now and hereafter only unitary schools.”

***Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenberg Board of Education*,  
402 U.S. 1 (1971)**

This decision struck down “racially neutral” student assignment plans that produced segregation by relying on existing residential patterns in the South. The Court in *Swann* ruled that desegregation must be achieved in each of a district’s schools to the greatest possible extent and approved busing as a means to do so.

***Keyes v. Denver School District No. 1*, 413 U.S. 189  
(1973)**

This was the first ruling on school segregation in the North and West, where there were no explicit statutes requiring segregation. Under *Keyes*, school districts were responsible for policies that resulted in racial segregation in the school system, including constructing schools in racially isolated neighborhoods and gerrymandering attendance zones. Once intentional segregation was found on the part of the school board in a portion of a

district, the whole district was presumed to be illegally segregated. This case also recognized the right of Latino, as well as African American students, to desegregation.

***Milliken v. Bradley*, 418 U.S. 717 (1974)**

In this decision, the Supreme Court blocked efforts for interdistrict, city-suburban desegregation remedies as a means to integrate racially isolated city schools. The Court prohibited such remedies unless plaintiffs could demonstrate that the suburbs or the state took actions that contributed to segregation in the city. Because proving suburban and state liability is often difficult, *Milliken* effectively shut off the option of drawing from heavily white suburbs in order to integrate city districts with very large minority populations.

***Milliken v. Bradley II*, 433 U.S. 267 (1977)**

In this case, the Supreme Court faced the challenge of providing a remedy for the Detroit schools, where *Milliken I* made long-term integration impossible. The Supreme Court ruled that a court could order a state to pay for educational programs to repair the harm caused by segregation.

***Riddick v. School Board of the City of Norfolk, Virginia*, 784 F.2d 521 (4th Cir. 1986)**

This was the first federal court case that permitted a school district, once declared unitary, to dismantle its desegregation plan and return to local government control.

***Board of Education of Oklahoma v. Dowell*, 498 U.S. 237 (1991)**

The Oklahoma City school district had been ruled unitary by a federal court. The school board subsequently voted to return to segregated neighborhood schools. The Court held that “unitary status” released the district from its obligation to maintain desegregation.

***Freeman v. Pitts*, 503 U.S. 467 (1992)**

The Court ruled that school districts could be partially released from their desegregation responsibilities even if integration had not been achieved in all the specific areas outlined in the *Green* decision.

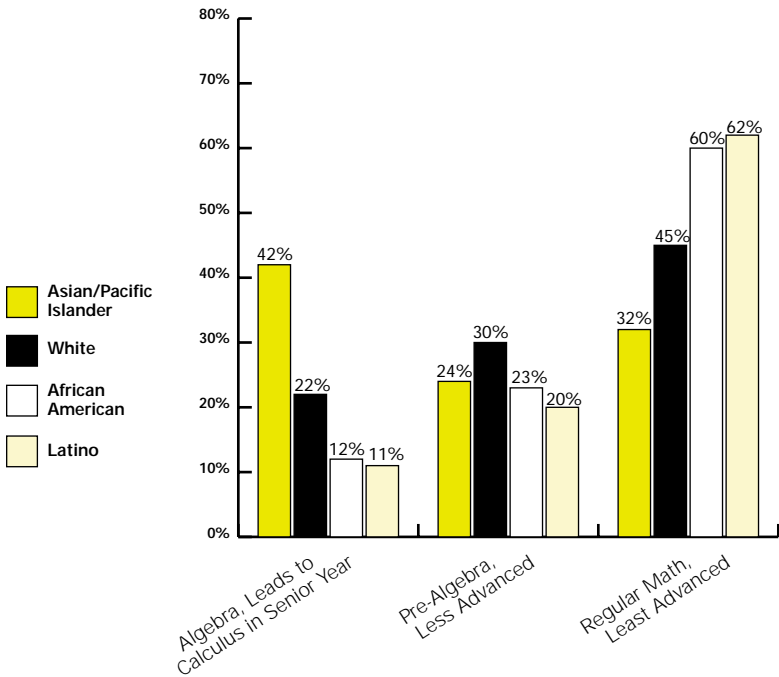
***Missouri v. Jenkins*, 115 S. Ct. 2038 (1995)**

The Supreme Court ruled that *Milliken II* equalization remedies should be limited in time and extent and that school districts need not show any actual correction of the educational harms of segregation. The Court defined rapid restoration of local control as the primary goal in desegregation cases.

# TRACKING AND TESTING

The math classes students take in eighth grade determine which math track students will follow in high school. Except for Asian Americans, students of color are underrepresented in advanced math and overrepresented in the least advanced classes.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EIGHTH GRADE MATH BY RACE





## GLOSSARY OF COMMONLY USED EDUCATION TERMS

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**Alternative Education School:** A public elementary/secondary school that addresses students' needs which typically cannot be met in a regular school; provides nontraditional education; serves as an adjunct to a regular school; and falls outside of the categories of regular, special education, or vocational education.

**Average Daily Attendance (ADA):** Average Daily Attendance is defined as the aggregate days of attendance by students of a given school during a given reporting period, divided by the number of days in session during this period; or attendance determined in accordance with state law. Since some states use their own definitions and others use the NCES definition, the data on average daily attendance are not completely comparable across states. As a result, the expenditures per pupil in attendance may not be comparable.

**Current Expenditures:** Current expenditures for the categories of instruction, support services, and non-instructional services include fixed charges (employee benefits, rent, interest). They do not include expenditures for debt service and capital outlay.

**Diploma, High School:** A High School diploma is a formal document certifying the successful completion of a secondary school program prescribed by the state education agency or other appropriate body.

**Dropout:** A dropout is a student who was enrolled in school at some time during the previous school year, was not enrolled at the beginning of the current school year, has not graduated from high school or completed a state- or district-approved educational program; and does not meet any of the following exclusionary conditions: has transferred to another public school district, private school, or state- or district-approved educational program; is temporarily absent due to suspension or school-approved illness; or has died.

**Education Agency:** An education agency is defined as a government agency administratively responsible for providing public elementary and/or secondary instruction or educational support services.

**Elementary:** A general level of instruction classified by state and local practice as elementary, composed of any span of grades not above grade 8; preschool or kindergarten included only if it is an integral part of an elementary school or a regularly established school system.

**Facilities Acquisition and Construction:** Facilities acquisition and construction is defined as expenditures for equipment for facilities, facilities acquisition, and construction services, both property and non-property—including expenditures for buildings built and alterations performed by Local Education Administration (LEA) staff or contracted out by the LEA; the purchase of land and land improvements; the initial, additional, and replacement items of equipment, such as machinery, furniture and fixtures, and vehicles.

**Federally Operated Education Agency:** A federally operated agency is charged, at least in part, with providing elementary and/or secondary instruction or support services.

**Fiscal Year:** A fiscal year is defined as the 12-month period beginning July 1 and ending June 30.

**Fixed Charges:** Fixed charges include employee benefits paid on behalf of employees, including employer contributions to retirement systems, FICA, health and life insurance premiums, workers' compensation, and other personnel benefits; and other fixed charges, such as payments for liability and casualty insurance premiums, rental, interest on short-term current loans, and judgments against local agencies.

**Free Lunch Program:** The free lunch program is defined as a program, under the National School Lunch Act, that provides cash subsidies for free lunches to students based on family size and income criteria.

**Full-time Equivalency (FTE):** FTE is defined as the amount of time required to perform an assignment stated as a proportion of full-time position, and computed by dividing the amount of time employed by the time normally required for a full-time position.

**General Education Development (GED) Test:** General education development test is defined as a comprehensive test used primarily to appraise the educational development of students who have not completed their formal high school education, and who may earn a high school equivalency certificate through achievement of satisfactory scores.

**Graduate, High School:** A high school graduate is defined as a person who has received formal recognition from school authorities, by the granting of a diploma, for completing a prescribed course of studies in a secondary level school. This term does not include other completers, or high school equivalency recipients, or GED recipients.

**Graduate, Regular High School:** A regular high school graduate is defined as an individual who received a regular diploma recognizing the completion of secondary school requirements during the previous school year and subsequent summer school. It excludes high school equivalency and other diploma recipients, and other high school completers (e.g., those granted a certificate of attendance).

**High School Completion Count:** A count of graduates and other high school completers, including regular diploma recipients, other diploma recipients, other high school completers, and high school equivalency recipients.

**Hispanic:** A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

**Individualized Educational Program (IEP):** IEP is a written instructional plan for students with disabilities designated as special education students under IDEA-Part B. This includes statement of present levels of educational performance of a child; statement of annual goals, including short-term instructional objectives; statement of specific educational services to be provided and the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular educational programs; projected date for initiation and anticipated duration of services; appropriate objectives, criteria, and evaluation procedures; and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved.

**Instructional Aides:** Instructional aides are defined as staff members assigned to assist a teacher with routine activities associated with teaching, i.e., activities requiring minor decisions regarding students, such as monitoring, conducting rote exercises, operating equipment, and clerking. Includes only paid staff, and excludes volunteer aides.

**Instructional Coordinators and Supervisors:** Instruction coordinators and supervisors supervise instructional programs at the school district or subdistrict level and are defined as educational television staff; coordinators and supervisors of audio-visual services; curriculum coordinators and in-service training staff; Chapter 1 and home economics supervisors; and staff engaged in the development of computer-assisted instruction. School-based department chairpersons are excluded.

**Instructional Expenditures:** Instructional expenditures are expenditures for activities dealing directly with the interaction between students and teachers (salaries, including sabbatical leave, employee benefits, and purchased instructional services).

**LEA:** Local Education Administration, the local unit of school administration, e.g., a school district.

**LEA Administrators:** LEA administrators are chief executive officers of the education agencies, including superintendents, deputies, and assistant superintendents; other persons with district-wide responsibilities: e.g., business managers, administrative assistants, professional instructional support staff, Chapter I coordinators, and home economics supervisors. Exclude supervisors of instructional or student support staff.

**Membership:** Membership is defined as the count of students on the current roll taken on the school day closest to October 1, by using either: The sum of original entries and re-entries minus total withdrawals; or the sum of the total present and the total absent.

**Non-instructional Expenditures:** Non-instructional expenditures are defined as expenditures for food service operations and other auxiliary enterprise operations (bookstore and interscholastic athletics), excluding community services (e.g., child care or swimming pool).

**Other Diploma Recipients:** Other diploma recipients are individuals who received a diploma from other than a regular school program during the previous school year and subsequent summer school.

**Other High School Completers:** Other high school completers are individuals who have received a certificate of attendance or other certificate of completion in lieu of a diploma during the previous school year and subsequent summer school.

**Public School:** A public school is defined as an institution that provides educational services and has one or more grade groups (PK-12) or is ungraded and has one or more teachers to give instruction; is located in one or more buildings; has an assigned administrator; receives public funds as primary support; and is operated by an education agency.

**Regional Education Service Agency:** Agency providing services to a variety of local education agencies, or a county superintendent serving the same purposes.

**Regular Diploma Recipients:** Graduates who received a regular diploma during the previous school year and subsequent summer school.

**Regular School:** A regular school is defined as a public elementary/secondary school that does not focus primarily on vocational, special, or alternative education.

**Revenues from Federal Sources:** Revenues from federal sources include direct grants-in-aid from the federal government; federal grants-in-aid through the state or an intermediate agency; and other revenue that, in lieu of taxes, had the tax base subject to taxation.

**Revenues from Intermediate Sources:** Revenues from an educational government agency, which should have independent fund-raising capability; that is, not a local education agency or state agency, e.g., New York's Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

**Revenues from Local Sources Include:** Taxes levied or assessed by an LEA; revenues from a local government to the LEA; tuition received; transportation fees; earnings on investments from LEA holdings; net revenues from food services (gross receipts less gross expenditures); net revenues from student activities (gross receipts less gross expenditures); and other revenues (textbook sales, donations, property rentals).

**Revenues from State Sources:** Revenues from a state government source, including those that can be used without restriction, those for categorical purposes, and revenues in lieu of taxation.

**School District:** A school district is an educational agency or administrative unit that operates under a public board of education.

**Secondary:** Secondary is defined as the general level of instruction classified by state and local practice as secondary and composed of any span of grades beginning with the next grade following the elementary grades and ending with or below grade 12.

**Special Education School:** A special education school is defined as a public elementary/secondary school that focuses primarily on special education, including instruction for any of the following: hard of hearing, deaf, speech-impaired, health impaired, orthopedically impaired, mentally retarded, seriously emotionally disturbed, multi-handicapped, visually handicapped, deaf, and blind, and adapts curriculum, materials, or instruction for students served.

**State Education Agency:** State education agency is defined as an agency of the state charged with primary responsibility for coordinating and supervising public instruction, including setting of standards for elementary and secondary instructional programs.

**Student Support Services Staff:** Student support services staff are staff members whose activities are concerned with the direct support of students, and who nurture, but do not instruct, students. Includes attendance officers; staff providing health, psychology, speech pathology, audiology, or social services; and supervisors of the preceding staff and of health, transportation, and food service workers.

**Supervisory Union:** An educational agency where administrative services are performed for more than one school district, by a common superintendent.

**Teachers:** Teachers are defined as individuals who provide instruction to pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, grades 1 through 12, or ungraded classes; or individuals who teach in an environment other than a classroom setting, and maintain daily student attendance records.

**Ungraded Students:** Ungraded students are defined as individuals assigned to classes or programs that do not have standard grade designations.

**Vocational Education School:** A vocational educational school is defined as a public elementary/secondary school that focuses primarily on vocational education, and provides education and training in one or more semi-skilled or technical occupations.

Source: NCES Common Core of Data



## Contacts and Experts



### **American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO**

**Topic:** National teachers union, against privatization  
555 New Jersey Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001  
[www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org)



### **Applied Research Center**

**Topic:** Race and Education  
Gary Delgado or Libero Della Piana  
3781 Broadway, Oakland CA 94611  
510-653-3415, Fax 510-653-3427  
[arc@arc.org](mailto:arc@arc.org)  
[www.arc.org](http://www.arc.org)



### **California Tomorrow**

**Topic:** Education of immigrants, English as a Second Language  
436 13th St, Suite 820  
Oakland, CA 94612  
510-496-0220



### **Center for Commercial-Free Public Education**

Marianne Manilov  
1714 Franklin St., Suite 100-306  
Oakland, CA 94612  
510-268-1100  
[unplug@igc.org](mailto:unplug@igc.org)  
[www.commercialfree.org](http://www.commercialfree.org)



### **Educational Testing Service**

**Topic:** Organization behind the SAT  
Rosedale Road  
Princeton, NJ 08541  
609-921-9000, Fax 609-734-5410  
[etsinfo@ets.org](mailto:etsinfo@ets.org)



### **FairTest**

**Topic:** Standardized testing  
342 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-864-4810, Fax 617-497-2224



### **The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation**

**Topic:** Supporter of vouchers  
P.O. Box 510860  
Milwaukee, WI 53203-0153  
414-291-9915, Fax 414-291-9991



**Erwin Flaxman**, Director  
**Wendy Schwartz**, Managing Editor  
ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education  
Institute for Urban and Minority Education  
**Topic:** Curriculum issues  
Box 40, Teachers College, Columbia University  
New York, NY 10027  
212-678-3433



**Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)**  
**Topic:** National civil rights organization  
634 S. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90014  
213-629-2512, Fax 213-629-0266



**Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation**  
**Topic:** Supporter of school privatization  
One American Square, Suite 2440  
P.O. Box 82078  
Indianapolis, IN 46282  
317-681-0745  
[www.friedmanfoundation.org](http://www.friedmanfoundation.org)



**Barbara Miner or Robert Peterson**  
**Topic:** Vouchers, discipline, tracking and testing  
Rethinking Schools  
1001 E. Keefe Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53212  
414-964-9646



**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**  
**Topic:** National civil rights organization  
1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 1120  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-638-2269  
information hotline: 410-521-4939  
[www.naacp.org](http://www.naacp.org)



**National Association of Multi-Cultural Educators (NAME)**  
**Topic:** Multi-cultural education, curriculum development  
733 15th Street, NW, Suite 430  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
202-628-6264

**National Center for Education Statistics**

**Topic:** Repository of vast quantities of data on U.S. education  
U.S. Department of Education  
555 New Jersey Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20208-5574  
800-424-1616, Fax 202-219-1696.  
Library@inet.ed.gov

**NCAS (National Coalition of Advocates for Students)**

**Topic:** Access to public education for  
under-served populations  
100 Boylston St., Suite 737  
Boston, MA 02116-4610  
617-357-850, 800-441-7192, Fax 617-357-9549  
ncasmfe@aol.com

**National Coalition of Education Activists**

**Topic:** Multi-cultural education, classroom practice, school  
reform  
P.O. Box 679  
Rhinebeck, NY 12572  
914-876-4580  
NCEA@aol.com

**National Education Association**

**Topic:** National teachers union, against privatization  
1201 16th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
202-833-4000  
www.nea.org

**Jeannie Oakes**

**Topic:** Tracking and testing; serves as expert witness in  
tracking litigation  
Professor and Vice-Dean, UCLA  
2052 Moore Hall Box 951521  
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1521  
310-825-2494  
oakes@ucla.edu

**Gary Orfield**

**Topic:** Desegregation  
Professor of Education and Social Policy  
Harvard University  
442 Gutman Library, 6 Appian Way  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
617-496-4824  
orfielga@hugse1.harvard.edu

**People for the American Way****Topic:** Multiculturalism, tolerance, civil rights

2000 M Street, NW, Suite 400

Washington, D.C. 20036

202-467-4999 or 800-326-7329

pfaw@pfaw.org

**Political Research Associates****Topic:** Research on extremist groups and candidates

120 Beacon

Somerville, MA 02143

617-661-9313, Fax 617-661-0059

www.publiceye.org

**Beverly Tatum**, Dean of Students and expert on multicultural education**Topic:** Curriculum issues

Mt. Holyoke College

32 Pioneer Knolls

Florence, MA 01062

413-538-2086

btatum@mtholyoke.edu

**Teaching for Change Catalogue****Topic:** Multi-Cultural books and audio-visual materials

P.O. Box 73038

Washington, D.C. 20056-3038

202-239-2379 or 202-238-2378

necadc@aol.com

www.teachingforchange.org

**Urban Strategies Council****Topics:** School discipline; publishers of report on discipline in Oakland, CA schools

672 13th St., Suite 200

Oakland, CA 94612

510-893-2404

**Kimberly West-Falcon****Topic:** Tracking, magnet schools, desegregation

NAACP Legal Defense Fund

315 W. 9th St., #208

Los Angeles, CA 90015

213-624-2405

westfalcon@earthlink.net



### Anne Wheelock

**Topic:** Tracking; nationally recognized expert and author of several books on tracking issues.

18 Cranston St.

Boston, MA 02130

617-524-7324

wheelock@shore.net

### Periodicals



#### *Education Week*

6935 Arlington Rd., Suite 100

Bethesda, MD 20814-5233

301-280-3100, Fax 301-280-3150 editorial



#### *Rethinking Schools*

1001 E. Keefe Ave.

Milwaukee, WI 53212

414-964-9646

### Books and Articles



Ascher, Carol, "Successful Detracking in Middle and Senior High Schools," *ERIC Digest* No. 82 (October 1992)



Banks, J.A., *An Introduction to Multicultural Education* (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1994)



Braddock, Jomills Henry, "Ability Grouping, Aspirations and Attainments: Evidence From the National Educational Longitudinal Study of 1988," *Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 62, No. 3 (1993)



Chubb, John E., and Moe, Terry M., *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1990)



Commission for Positive Change in the Oakland Public Schools, *Keeping Our Children in School: Sounding the Alarm on Suspensions* (Oakland, CA: Urban Strategies Council, 1992)



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Hahn, A., Danzerberger, J., and Lefkowitz, B., *Dropouts in America: Enough Is Known for Action* (Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1987)



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- ☰ Massey, Douglas S., and Denton, Nancy A., *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993)
- ☰ Oakes, Jeannie, "Two Cities' Tracking and Within-School Segregation," *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 96, No. 4 (Summer 1995)
- ☰ Orfield, Gary, Eaton, Susan E., and the Harvard Project on School Desegregation, *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1996)
- ☰ Pressman, Robert, *State Law Challenges to School Discipline: An Outline of Claims and Case Summaries* (Washington, DC: Center for Law and Education, 1995)
- ☰ Pressman, Robert, *Rethinking Schools, Selling Out Our Schools: Vouchers, Markets, and the Future of Public Education* (Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, 1996)
- ☰ Schlesinger, Arthur M. Jr., *Report of the Social Studies Syllabus Review Committee: A Dissenting Opinion*, in New York State Social Studies Review and Development Committee, *One Nation, Many Peoples: A Declaration of Cultural Interdependence* (New York, NY: Author, 1991)
- ☰ Sleeter, C. E., and Grant, C. A., *Making choices for multicultural education: Five Approaches to Race, Class and Gender* (2nd ed.) (New York, NY: Merrill, 1993)
- ☰ Wheelock, Anne, *Crossing The Tracks: How Untracking Can Save America's Schools* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1992)
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- ☰ Wheelock, Anne, *The Way Out: Student Exclusion Practices in Boston Middle Schools* (Boston MA: Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1986)
- ☰ Wu, S., Pink, W., and Moles, O., "Student Suspension: A Critical Reappraisal," *The Urban Review* Vol. 14 (4) 245-316 (1982)

## Websites



### **Applied Research Center**

[www.arc.org](http://www.arc.org)



### **Bradley Foundation**

[www.townhall.com/bradley](http://www.townhall.com/bradley)



### **California Department of Education**

[goldmine.cde.ca.gov](http://goldmine.cde.ca.gov)



### **Education Week**

[www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)



### **Educational Testing Service**

[www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)



**ERIC Digests** (short articles on a variety of subjects, collected by the U.S. Department of Education)

[www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC\\_Digests/index](http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/index)



### **National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)**

[nces.ed.gov](http://nces.ed.gov)



### **National Coalition of Advocates for Students**

[www.ncas1.org](http://www.ncas1.org)



### **National Education Association**

[www.nea.org/info/press](http://www.nea.org/info/press)



### **Rethinking Schools**

[www.rethinkingschools.org](http://www.rethinkingschools.org)



### **U.S. Department of Education**

[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

