

The Civil Rights Project



Proyecto Derechos Civiles

School integration efforts three years after *Parents Involved*

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Three years ago this week, the U.S. Supreme Court released its 5-4 decision overturning Louisville and Seattle’s voluntarily implemented integration plans and threatening many voluntary plans across the country, the type of plans courts had encouraged for many years. The *Parents Involved* decision, issued on June 28, 2007, reflected a divided Supreme Court with four justices strongly supporting these voluntary plans and four justices strongly opposed. Justice Kennedy’s opinion decided the issues and explicitly accepted some kinds of desegregation efforts. The divided decision confused many educators and it was somewhat unclear what *did* remain legal. In 2008, the Bush Administration sent a letter to school districts misguidedly interpreting the *Parents Involved* decision in a way that suggested only race-neutral means of pursuing integration would be legal. This was an inaccurate description of Kennedy’s controlling opinion and suggested that school authorities should abandon all efforts to intentionally pursue integration. As President Barack Obama took office, civil rights groups and other stakeholders anticipated that his administration would be more supportive of integration efforts, including issuing new guidance to replace that from 2008. Yet, well into the second year of the Obama Administration (which announced earlier this year that it would reinvigorate the Office of Civil Rights) no such guidance about voluntary integration has been issued. From our contacts with school districts across the country, we believe that this guidance is much needed.

In addition to these legal and policy constraints—in addition to the opportunities and challenges presented by rapidly shifting demographics in the nation’s public schools—districts, like other governmental bodies, face significant financial pressure in the wake of declining revenues stemming from the economic crisis. This economic pressure is forcing school districts to make deep cuts in services, which is another potential constraint for integration efforts.

Ironically, at a time in which districts face these varied constraints and when some districts may be grappling with diversity for the first time, we know more than ever about the importance of preventing racially segregated schools and the benefits that students—and society—receive from diverse schools. In fact, the Supreme Court, in its 2007 decision, acknowledged this evidence as “compelling” reasons for districts to adopt policies to further integration.

This report synthesizes major themes in local policymaking during the last year, as local school districts continue to grapple with legal and economic constraints on policies that are

aimed at creating diverse schools. Our report last year on the second anniversary of *Parents Involved* began to uncover some of the consequences of the difficult economic situation facing many local and state governments in terms of budget cuts that affected integration efforts.¹ There are also a number of ways the federal government is influencing districts' policy efforts.

As part of the Civil Rights Project's initiative on school integration, we have tracked media accounts of school districts' policies that may affect student diversity.² While this is not an exhaustive review, this memo summarizes developments in school districts across the country over the last year. We found nearly 600 articles in 39 states.

We classify the developments into several categories below. First, we review the changing demographics facing districts. Second, we examine the myriad of ways in which the tightening economic climate affects districts' integration efforts. Third, we describe the differing ways in which the federal government is affecting districts' efforts. Fourth, we look at the ways in which communities have mobilized around integration over the last year. Finally, we conclude by describing resources that could be helpful for educators and community members who still seek to further diverse schools.

I. Demographic change

Across the U.S., media outlets ran stories this year on impending or current demographic change in school districts. Several articles concentrated on national trends involving the growing diversity of suburban school systems, but still more took a more local approach in describing school enrollment shifts.³

- A statewide analysis of suburban student enrollment in Tennessee revealed a rapidly diversifying population.⁴
- Reports from the state of Indiana revealed similar trends, with demographers suggesting that increasing suburban diversity was primarily associated with an influx of Latino students.⁵
- In Texas, a rezoning process in Plano was fueled by changing demographics and movement to the east side of the city.⁶ Abilene, Texas reported that for the first time its student enrollment would be “majority-minority,” fueled by a rapid rise in the number of Latino students attending schools in the district.⁷
- Finally, the Skokie, Illinois paper published an article describing a racial mismatch between students and teachers; as the student enrollment grows more diverse in the district, school faculties remain predominately white.⁸

¹ http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/districts_integration_efforts_in_a_changing_climate.pdf

² The Integration Report is a monthly update of the status of integration in our nation's schools. To subscribe, visit: <http://theintegrationreport.wordpress.com/subscribe/>

³ Other articles not discussed below dealt with school demographic change in Kent, WA, Los Angeles, CA, and Orange County, FL.

⁴ http://www.tennessean.com/article/20090427/NEWS04/904270340&usd=2&usg=ALhdy281oEUyFMb9_McV7wiQ3nOXxzVwJw

⁵ http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/article_0643a0e2-9983-5c66-8858-c00a6a0ce638.html

⁶ http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/DN-studentdiversity_17met.ART0.State.Edition1.4b78025.html

⁷ <http://www.reporternews.com/news/2009/dec/12/as-aisd-changes-adapting-is-the-goal-youve-got-a/>

⁸ <http://www.pioneerlocal.com/skokie/news/2116191,skokie-teacher-032510-s2.article>

II. The Continued Impact of the 2008 Economic Crisis on School Districts

After the release of last year's Civil Rights Project memo documenting the state of schools two years after the *Parents Involved* decision, it was clear that the 2008 economic crisis was beginning to have an impact on school districts throughout the country. Unfortunately, the economic crisis that began in 2008 continued to have a tremendous impact on school districts through the 2009-2010 academic year, with even more severe budget cuts proposed throughout the country. In fact, Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan estimated that budget deficits threatened 100,000 to 300,000 teaching jobs this year alone.⁹

Of the hundreds of news articles documented over the past year by the Civil Rights Project, nearly one-third dealt with budget issues faced by school districts. The economic collapse of 2008 led to shrinking state budgets, forcing school districts to make cuts in transportation to magnet schools, teacher positions, school closures, and district consolidation. While it is hard to know at this stage precisely how such changes will affect racial integration, cutting programs like magnet schools and limiting transportation may hamper the effectiveness of any student assignment policy design to integrate students. Though beyond the scope of this memo, it would be helpful to assess whether educational budget cuts disproportionately affect students of color and low-income students. Yet even in the midst of all the economic challenges facing schools, there were glimpses of good news related to the opening of magnet schools and increased funding to programs that promote integration.

This section outlines several themes that emerged within the general budget articles gathered throughout the year. They are: (1) magnet school cuts and closures, (2) transportation, (3) consolidation, and (4) pro-integrative decisions. We provide synopses of articles exemplifying each of these themes. For additional summaries of these themes as well as general budget cuts affecting districts (which may or may not also have civil rights implications) please see Table 1 in the appendix.

A. Magnet school cuts & closures

Magnet schools continue to be the largest set of choice-based schools in the country and are pivotal to many school districts' efforts to create desegregated, high quality educational options for students and their families. While research continues to show numerous positive academic benefits for students attending magnets, magnet schools are among districts' programs threatened by decreasing budgets. The following examples are representative of districts throughout the country faced with either closing magnet schools or seriously considering the closure of their magnet programs.

- School Board members in Arlington, Virginia, were debating whether the district should continue paying \$730,000 to keep the magnet school Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology open. Given the cost of nearly \$12,000 per student plus transportation costs, the district and its board members questioned whether or not the magnet school continues to be a good investment.¹⁰
- District officials in Aldine ISD were weighing whether to cut magnet programs earlier

⁹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/21/education/21teachers.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.sungazette.net/articles/2010/02/04/arlington/news/nw259.prt>

this year. Similar to districts throughout the country, Aldine is trying to deal with budget shortfalls and as a result is considering cutting magnet programs. Many parents are extremely upset about the prospect of the district cutting magnet schools and are fighting to keep them open. The district, however, is faced with having to cut \$25 million from its budget.¹¹

- In Ware County, Georgia one of the state's best magnet schools was ordered to close due to a budget shortfall of \$900,000, which is needed to keep the school open.¹² While parents expressed anger over the decision and disapproval, the school board voted to shut down the school, resulting in 475 K-12th grade students being transferred to nearby schools.¹³
- In Hartford, Connecticut two interdistrict magnet schools in the city faced losses of approximately \$750,000, which could force the schools to cut programs, students or both. Both magnet schools have too many students from their home district, which threatens state desegregation funding. If lawmakers approve cuts, schools may be forced to ask for the community's help.¹⁴

B. Transportation

Transportation is a key component to racial integration efforts, especially in districts with highly segregated housing patterns. Transportation is especially critical for the success of magnet schools, which are designed to attract students from across a district. Still, in an era of rising transportation costs and declining budgets school districts, particularly districts with magnet school programs or other school choice programs, are making cuts to transportation. In what is partly an effort to quell rising transportation costs and declining budgets, districts have begun moving away from student assignment plans that promote integrated schools and toward the promotion of neighborhood schools. Policies like neighborhood student assignment plans typically have detrimental effects, often resulting in increased levels of school segregation in areas with high residential segregation.

- Bibb County, Georgia's school board tentatively approved a \$191 million budget for 2011 that includes some jobs cuts and ends bus travel for many magnet school students, with the exception of only one program (Hutchings Career Center). By a 5-3 vote, the board of education approved a cut for about 350 students who attend schools outside their home district. The district believes they will save \$531,000. One board member expressed concern about what this cut will mean for low-income students and African American students, along with the diversity of magnet school programs.¹⁵
- In Las Cruces, New Mexico school board officials decided that public schools will continue bus transportation for middle schools magnet programs next year, but said that it is highly unlikely that transportation will be provided the following year, according to the Superintendent Stan Rounds.¹⁶

¹¹ <http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=news/local&id=7215192>

¹² <http://www.news4jax.com/news/21567083/detail.html>

¹³ http://jacksonville.com/news/columnists/terry_dickson/2009-11-22/story/they_want_to_close_one_of_georgias_best_schools;

¹⁴ <http://www.wfsb.com/education/21778113/detail.html>

¹⁵ <http://www.13wmaz.com/news/breaking/story.aspx?storyid=80663&catid=4>

¹⁶ http://m.lcsunnews.com/lcs/db_12534/contentdetail.htm;jsessionid=142C8D1B1AD03AD5D7ED72D1E60C6EB

- The School Board in Lee County, Florida agreed to conduct a study on how to cut transportation costs for students under the district's school choice plan, in which thousands of students participate. Superintendent James Browder has said he won't reconsider neighborhood schools because it would tear the community apart and could lead to a civil rights lawsuit.¹⁷
- In an attempt to save money, school board members in Fairfax, Virginia are considering eliminating busing for students outside school attendance boundaries next fall. Former PTA President, Richard Kurin, says a cut in transportation would roll back the clock and create the same problems from 18 years ago.¹⁸

C. Consolidation

The most common budget theme found this year had to do with district consolidation. In the articles gathered that focused on school district consolidation, proponents would often argue that consolidation would not only save money but also streamline processes within the district to be more efficient. Opponents, on the other hand, argued consolidation rarely saves money and potentially leads to lack of local school control. School districts that encompass a larger share of the metro's student enrollment may have more opportunity to craft stable, diverse schools.¹⁹ We describe two different types of consolidation-administrative consolidation and educational consolidation. Administrative consolidation refers to streamlining top administrators without affecting the size of schools, while educational consolidation refers to combining two or more schools into one. The examples below illustrate the difficult choices school districts faced as they either considered or decided to consolidate districts as a practical option to cut costs.

- The state of Mississippi faced extreme budget shortfalls with an expected \$1.2 billion deficit by 2012. The governor is, as a result, attempting to consolidate many of the state's school districts. Some communities, however, are against the idea, saying there will likely be majority black and majority white districts that have to be merged, affecting voting rights. This, according to skeptics of the proposal, is a major cause for concern.²⁰
- In Ingram, TX, school board members in both Hunt and Ingram explored the feasibility of consolidating their two small districts in western Kerr County as a way to increase school funding. In favor of this consolidation, Ingram Superintendent JT Stroder argued, "the state [Texas] has designed its funding formulas to make it harder for smaller districts to operate than larger ones." Therefore, according to the Stroder, if Hunt [a small, property-wealthy district] consolidated with Ingram [a larger, less property wealthy district] the resulting district would be less property wealthy, decreasing Hunt's district payments to the state. While the plan to consolidate Ingram and Hunt was seen as a benefit to Ingram, it was expected to be a harder sell in Hunt.²¹
- The school district of Greeley-Evans, CO considered a proposal to consolidate up to nine

?contentguid=iFxdKn6l&storycount=3&detailindex=0&pn=&ps=

¹⁷ <http://www.news-press.com/article/20100126/NEWS0104/100126060/1075/Lee-County-school-s-transportation-costs-will-be-studied>

¹⁸ http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2009/04/23/AR2009042304401_pf.html

¹⁹ See Orfield, Gary. 2001. Metropolitan School Desegregation. In *Pursuit of a Dream Deferred: Linking Housing and Education Policy*, ed. John A. Powell, Gavin Kearney, and Vina Kay, 121-57. Peter Lang: New York.

²⁰ http://www.jacksonfreepress.com/index.php/site/comments/big_budget_wars_112509/

²¹ http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/state/Merger_considered_for_Hunt_Ingram_school_districts.html

schools. There were many parents and students upset about the proposal, even going as far as organizing a march against the possible consolidation. Some of the controversy is due to the feeling that the district is consolidating low-income neighborhoods that are predominately Latino. Parents also feared that bigger school districts would lead to less attention for their kids.²²

- While Maine voted in favor of school consolidation in 2007, which led to the consolidation of 290 school districts into 80,²³ voters gathered signatures (over 58,000) to reverse the measure to consolidate schools. Nevertheless, supporters of Maine's school district consolidation law raised \$241,000 compared to only \$8,323 for those seeking repeal of the consolidation law.²⁴ Many of the opponents say the governor misled voters into believing consolidation would save money, but they claim money has not been saved. Others argue the opposite, citing savings in one district of as much as 1.5 million each year.²⁵ Those in rural communities believed they were targeted, whereas urban areas, they argue, were not required to consolidate.²⁶
- The school district of Oshkosh, WI faced major spending cuts to deal with budget deficits in education (approximately \$5 million). Possible cuts include major attendance boundary changes, food service and recreation department cuts, consolidating media centers in kindergarten, energy savings from an ongoing review of building upgrades, and changes to bus schedule changes. High on the list of possibilities is consolidating a number of school districts.²⁷
- Because the state of Michigan faced a huge budget crisis, many school districts were considering consolidating some of the state's 551 school districts. Opponents, however, made the case that consolidation wouldn't necessarily save money, as many states with fewer school districts do not have lower per-pupil spending. Some are advising that instead of consolidation, the state use incentives and the privatization of some services to save money.²⁸
- In Kansas, the chairman of the House budget committee said he wanted to consolidate Kansas' public school districts. Chairman Kevin Yoder, a Republican, said merging some of the state's 293 districts could make the state's public school system more efficient and reduce the state's costs. Other committee members, however, especially Democrats are skeptical. Andy Tompkins, a former Kansas education commissioner, told the committee the state would likely not save much money unless districts close schools and lay off teachers.²⁹ Lawmakers in favor of consolidation claim that consolidating districts would reduce administrative costs.
- In Tyler, Texas the superintendent detailed the district's academic, financial and facility challenges. He also said school consolidation, school closure and boundary changes may be options to consider. One concept he mentioned was creating 5th and 6th grade centers or single grade campuses. Other options were creating Career & Technology high

²² <http://www.greeleytribune.com/article/20100124/NEWS/100129799/1007>

²³ <http://kennebecjournal.mainejournal.com/news/local/6986690.html>

²⁴ <http://www.bangordailynews.com/detail/126078.html>

²⁵ <http://knox.villagesoup.com/Government/story>

²⁶ <http://www.bangordailynews.com/detail/126927.html>

²⁷ <http://www.thenorthwestern.com/article/20091101/OSH0105/911010368/More-budget-cuts-coming-for-the-Oshkosh-school-district>

²⁸ <http://www.mackinac.org/article.aspx?ID=11240>

²⁹ <http://www.hdnews.net/Story/mergerweb101409>

schools, STEM academies and Recovery programs. The superintendent mentioned that the current desegregation order was an added layer the district has to work with.³⁰

- The Portland Public Schools announced that they would consolidate and restructure all high schools in the district. The new model consolidates the current 10 public high schools into 6 or 7 neighborhood-specific "community" high schools of 1,100-1,400 students each. Transfers out of community school will be prohibited. In addition, the district plans to open six magnet schools citywide.³¹
- While not exactly related to the consolidation of school districts, open enrollment, the practice of letting students attend schools of their choice either within or across district lines, came under discussion in Missouri this past year. Lawmakers discussed a bill that would give students across the state the opportunity to enroll in a school district of their choosing. State representatives in support of the bill argued that it would allow families to access schools closest to their homes, suggesting that homes located in less densely populated areas were occasionally closer to schools in a neighboring district than one in their zoned area. The bill's detractors expressed concerns that the open enrollment policy would only benefit students and families who were able to provide transportation to an out-of-district school. Lawmakers opposing the move also cited the possibility that the bill would force the consolidation of rural school districts, eliminating teacher and administrative positions in the process. The bill is still under discussion.

D. Pro-integrative educational efforts

Despite the devastating effects of the recent budget crisis, there was some good news during the 2009-2010 academic school year. Namely, school districts such as Seattle, Washington are making efforts to open new magnet schools to attract students from across their respective districts. Furthermore, districts in Louisiana and Indiana increased funding for new schools, including new magnets in Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana. While such efforts to open new magnets and increase educational funding are to be commended and signal positive efforts made on behalf of increasing educational equity, reservations among district board members and school officials remained about moving forward with such plans in an uncertain economic climate.

- Earlier this year, in Seattle, Washington plans were underway to turn one of Seattle's public schools into a magnet school, a popular idea among residents. Despite its popularity among Seattle residents, school board members showed concern about whether they would be able to get the necessary funding for the new magnet school, which would focus on science, technology/engineering, and math (STEM). President, Michael DeBell said, "It feels like we're making a pretty big commitment in a difficult fiscal environment." As of January of 2010, the district was still in need of \$180,000 to meet the \$730,000 needed to run the new magnet school. While some school board members shared President DeBell's financial concerns, Board Member Martin-Morris said that if this plan helps expand opportunity and equity throughout Seattle's school district, then how "can we afford not to make this kind of investment?"³²

³⁰ <http://www.tylerpaper.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20091013/NEWS08/910130313>

³¹ <http://portlandsentinel.com/?q=node/4760>

³² http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2010882968_stem25m.html

- In March of 2010, Albany, Georgia’s school board planned to reestablish Lamar Reese Elementary Magnet School of the Arts. As a result, the existing Lamar Reese school zone will be dissolved and those residing there will be rezoned to the Martin Luther King Jr. school zone. Families interested in attending the magnet school must fill out an application and meet admission requirements for the performing arts curriculum. The district is hopeful that the new plan will create some cost savings.³³
- Finally, in March of 2010, a federal court judge approved a desegregation plan developed by Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana that would create new schools, including magnet schools, as a result of nearly \$200 million in new taxes. The Superintendent Mark Kolwe was extremely pleased with the decision. While it was a positive development in favor of the desegregation plan, it remains to be seen whether voters in the parish vote for the new tax, a vote many board members remain skeptical about.³⁴

III. Federal role in desegregation: enforcement, oversight, and incentives

A. Court desegregation orders

School districts with desegregation plans due to court order or negotiated settlements were not directly impacted by the *Parents Involved* decision, nor were these plans as likely to be affected by tightening educational budgets since they were required to comply with court orders and/or settlements. Only once districts are declared “unitary,” signaling that the system of segregated schools has been fully eradicated, are they subject to the legal restrictions of *Parents Involved*. Yet, it is possible that, indirectly, districts under federal desegregation oversight might decide to press ahead for unitary status (or not to) as they see how unitary districts are affected by the Supreme Court’s 2007 decision.

In the past year, districts have continued to be declared unitary, particularly in the South, extending a trend that began nearly two decades ago.³⁵ At the same time, over the course of the year, a number of districts have continued to work with federal courts to modify policies and practices to further comply with prior school desegregation cases. Some districts are also developing and implementing post-unitary plans, which they agree to in return for being declared unitary by the courts. Such plans might include promises to continue certain desegregation programs like magnet schools or controlled choice plans for at least several years after the case has ended.

- One of the common themes emerging for districts required to implement further desegregation efforts is that the courts are granting partial unitary status to districts regarding certain desegregation factors, while requiring continued oversight of others.
 - In particular, several districts faced further compliance with faculty desegregation guidelines and student assignment.³⁶
 - Other districts consulted courts and/or the Justice Department about building or consolidating schools in an effort to more fully integrated students.³⁷

³³ <http://www.mysouthwestga.com/news/story.aspx?id=434481>

³⁴ <http://www.theadvocate.com/news/education/86485472.html?showAll=y&c=y>

³⁵ Boger, J.C. & Orfield, G. (2005). *School Resegregation: Must the South Turn Back?* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

³⁶ Faculty: <http://www.newsday.com/news/nation/judge-orders-hiring-plan-for-school-district-1.1589556>

- In some instances, complying with court orders involved multiple districts. Two districts in Sumter County, South Carolina are merging, and trying to balance maintaining existing boundary lines as much as possible with court orders to pursue diversity. In Alabama, student transfers out of the district made it difficult for Barbour County to achieve unitary status. Such transfers have been prohibited, and the district is closer to ending court oversight.³⁸
- Further, judges in Louisiana and Alabama began urging districts to take a more active interest in moving towards ending court oversight.³⁹
- The federal government has also opposed motions of districts seeking unitary status. For example, in Decatur, Georgia, the U.S. Justice Department joined the plaintiffs in opposing the district's filing to petition for unitary status.⁴⁰
- This year also saw a continued trend towards unitary status for districts, particularly in the South, as well as the termination of federal desegregation oversight. Some districts being declared unitary may have agreed to a settlement with plaintiffs to continue certain desegregation or civil rights provisions after the case formally ended. Because many unitary decisions aren't reported, this list likely under-estimates the number⁴¹:
 - Orange County, FL;
 - Burlington, NC;
 - Chicago, IL;
 - Vermillion Parish, LA;
 - Philadelphia, PA;
 - Crosby ISD, TX;
 - Galveston, TX;
 - Ector County ISD, TX⁴²,
 - Memphis-Shelby County, TN;
 - Bertie County, NC;
 - Little Rock, AR⁴³
- Districts are also working to develop and implement post-unitary status plans. Following a lengthy lawsuit, Tucson, Arizona was declared unitary after developing a post-unitary plan that district officials believe will help them continue integration efforts and reduce the racial achievement gap. On the other hand, plaintiffs question whether the district will continue desegregation efforts without court enforcement.⁴⁴

B. Charter schools interfering with desegregation efforts

³⁷ <http://www.timesdaily.com/article/20090522/ARTICLES/905225017?Title=Single-West-Lawrence-high-school-envisioned>

³⁸ http://www.dothaneagle.com/dea/news/education/article/barbour_county_schools_closer_to_unitary_status/65254/

³⁹ http://www.annistonstar.com/view/full_story/6709943/article-School-systems-are-emerging-from-judicial-oversight-that-once-ensured-compliance-with-integration-guidelines;

http://www.annistonstar.com/view/full_story/6709943/article-School-systems-are-emerging-from-judicial-oversight-that-once-ensured-compliance-with-integration-guidelines;

<http://www.thenewsstar.com/article/20091203/UPDATES01/91203018>; see also Wendy Parker in 2003 NCLR

⁴⁰ <http://www.tradingmarkets.com/.site/news/Stock%20News/2456029/>

⁴¹ Some districts, in fact, aren't sure whether they still remain under order or not. [Houston County, GA]

⁴² <http://www.oaoa.com/news/released-48176-desegregation-order.html> (June 2010)

⁴³ <http://www.arkansasleader.com/2010/02/top-story-judge-will-set-new-hearing.html>

⁴⁴ http://azstarnet.com/news/local/education/precollegiate/article_6ea46393-c145-5fca-af06-f1b070bb29f9.html

Dangling millions of dollars of funding before cash-strapped states, the Obama Administration pressed for the expansion of charter schools this year. However, some districts and communities were reluctant to sign on to the recent push for charters, citing potential conflicts with desegregation goals.⁴⁵ Their concern was borne out in several studies released this past winter that documented stark patterns of segregation in charter schools.⁴⁶

- Arkansas state law prohibits the approval of charter schools that may delay, hamper, or undermine desegregation efforts in a school district. In the midst of Little Rock and nearby Pulaski County's unitary status proceedings, several district officials and lawyers have protested the establishment of new charter schools on the grounds that such action would interfere with efforts to gain unitary status. Perhaps as a result of these objections, this past year the state board of education approved only one of eight new charter school applications. Arkansas' Governor Beebe expressed support for the board's decision, suggesting that before approval, more research was necessary to determine charters' impact on segregation.⁴⁷
- Five school districts in Georgia are suing the state and the Georgia Charter Schools Commission over the establishment of charter programs in their jurisdictions. Several of the school systems filing to block charter programs raised questions about potential conflicts with desegregation mandates—to include whether the student enrollment would result in a racially identifiable school, the racial composition of staff and faculty and how transportation would be provided.⁴⁸
- In East Feliciana Parish, LA the district court recently approved the opening of a charter school in the district, which is still trying to comply with the court's desegregation order while also cutting costs due to a budget shortfall. The charter school will be required to report the composition of students and faculty annually to ensure compliance with the desegregation efforts.⁴⁹
- San Diego district officials approved the expansion of an existing charter school in spite of concerns about school diversity. Black students, including a large number of Somali students, make up 93% of the existing charter, which will expand to serve high school grades. District officials recommended against the expansion due to concerns about racial isolation.⁵⁰

C. Voluntary integration efforts & the legal system

⁴⁵ Charter schools were considered to be in possible conflict with desegregation goals in several communities not discussed below. They are: Monroe, NC, Chino, CA, Beaufort, SC, and East Feliciana Parish, LA. The last two locales are discussed in a separate section exploring the role of the federal government in diversity efforts.

⁴⁶ Frankenberg, E., Siegel-Hawley, G., & Wang, J. (2010). Choice without Diversity: Charter School Segregation and the Need for Civil Rights Standards. UCLA: Civil Rights Project. Miron, G., Urschel, J., Mathis W., and Tornquist, E. (2010) Schools Without Diversity: Education Management Organizations, Charter Schools, and the Demographic Stratification of the American School System. EPIC/EPRU. <http://epicpolicy.org/files/EMO-Seg.pdf>

⁴⁷ <http://arkansasnews.com/2009/11/10/beebe-charter-school%E2%80%99s-impact-on-desegregation-worth-studying/>

⁴⁸ <http://www.times-herald.com/Local/2-more-Georgia-systems-sue-over-charter-schools-1002175>

⁴⁹ <http://www.theadvocate.com/news/96704154.html>

⁵⁰ <http://www.10news.com/news/20285772/detail.html>

In addition to districts that are implementing desegregation to comply with remedial court requirements, in a handful of school districts around the country this year education stakeholders have worked to implement policies to comply with legal decisions or to defend their current integration efforts when challenged in court. Here, we highlight three districts that are voluntarily pursuing integration, with approval from the courts.

- This year marked the first assignments under the new student assignment plan adopted by Jefferson County (metropolitan Louisville), Kentucky to comply with the 2007 *Parents Involved* decision. A legal challenge to the plan last year was eventually dropped by the plaintiffs, although a recent lawsuit has challenged the plan under state law. Despite the district's deliberate rollout process, which included the development of its new information and outreach process, decisions to allow some students to remain in their previously assigned schools, and efforts to educate the community about the new plan and its rationale, newspaper articles reveal the challenges of implementing a new assignment plan. As of last fall, approximately half of the elementary schools were in compliance with the district's guidelines.
- Just this month, a district court judge ruled in favor of Lower Merion, Pennsylvania's redistricting efforts. The district argued that race was only one of several factors that the district considered in reassigning a predominantly African-American neighborhood, and therefore complied with *Parents Involved*. The judge noted that it was likely the decision would be appealed.⁵¹
- In the summer of 2009, the California State Supreme Court allowed a lower court decision to stand regarding the legality of Berkeley, California's voluntary integration plan, ending several years of litigation to defend the race-conscious plan. California is one of several states that have passed referendums banning the use of racial preferences in governmental decision-making.

D. Office of Civil Rights/Federal investigations

Traditionally, the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights has been a major part of the federal government's efforts to enforce school desegregation and monitor compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act.⁵² Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced earlier this year that he would reinvigorate the office which, in recent years under the Bush Administration, had brought few cases. Secretary Duncan announced that OCR plan to begin several dozen investigations of school districts this year. Even before this announcement, however, there were indications of renewed efforts to enforce the civil rights of students. Several such incidents involved school districts operating already under federal oversight regarding desegregation.

- Last summer, OCR found that a new charter school in Beaufort, South Carolina was disproportionately white in comparison to the surrounding district. Beaufort County has operated under a negotiated settlement with the Department of Education since 1970, and part of this agreement requires OCR approval whenever a new school is opened. In order to get approval, the charter school had to immediately offer admission to any non-whites

⁵¹ http://www.philly.com/philly/news/breaking/20100624_Lower_Merion_wins_redistricting_fight.html

⁵² The Integration Report, Vol. 23 accessed on June 18, 2010 at <http://theintegrationreport.wordpress.com/2010/01/13/issue-23/>

on the waiting list, and by 2011-12 needed to have a school enrollment with a racial composition within fifteen percent of the district's composition.⁵³ As of July 2009, the charter school was 76% white while the district itself was 45% white. The agreement also required the charter school to hire more black faculty members, among other stipulations.

- More recently, in December 2009, after a two-year investigation, the Department of Justice (DOJ) filed charges against the Walthall County, Mississippi school district, which had also been operating under a negotiated settlement with the federal government since 1970.⁵⁴ These charges alleged that the district promoted segregation between schools and within schools. The DOJ found that one of the practices the district implemented permitted student transfers—primarily to white students—which led to racially identifiable schools. Further, the district clustered white students in classrooms in a few elementary schools, which resulted in a number of almost all-black classrooms. The district was largely prohibited from granting transfers and required to implement a random assignment of students to schools.

E. Federal incentives for district integration efforts

Under the Obama administration there have been a series of highly-publicized grant opportunities, which have provided incentives to districts and states to alter educational policy in everything from charter school authorization to teacher regulations. Less-noticed—and with fewer resources—were two competitive grant opportunities related to furthering school integration. The first, announced in July 2009, was a program to provide school districts technical assistance to help devise student assignment policies that complied with *Parents Involved*. In fall 2009, eleven districts were awarded funding over a two-year period.⁵⁵ Orange County, Florida, for example, is using the grant funding to develop a post-unitary plan; while Jefferson County, Kentucky's use of the award will augment their efforts in implementing their new student assignment plan.

The second funding opportunity for districts regarding integration was the announcement earlier this year of the new Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) funding cycle. The Obama administration requested an increased appropriation to fund the program, which had remained level-funded for many years, and also re-emphasized reducing racial isolation as a funding priority for grant recipients. To enhance their eligibility, several districts have adopted changes.

⁵³ "Riverview Charter School gets approval, strict caveats to remain open,"

Accessed on June 17, 2010 at <http://www.islandpacket.com/2009/07/18/908787/riverview-charter-school-gets.html#ixzz0r8FleKfK>

⁵⁴ The Integration Report, Vol. 26 accessed on June 17, 2010 at <http://theintegrationreport.wordpress.com/2010/06/09/issue-26/>

⁵⁵ These districts include Champaign, IL; Jefferson County, KY; Portland, OR; Hillsborough County, FL; Boston, MA; St. Paul, MN; San Francisco, CA; Orange County, FL; San Diego, CA; Evangeline Parish, LA; and Rockford, IL. Descriptions of funded activities available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/tasap/awards.html> (accessed on June 22, 2010).

- For example, a Twin Cities-area district is developing plans for three additional magnet schools. The district hopes to reduce racial segregation, in part, by attracting more students living in the district back into the public schools with the new magnet options.⁵⁶
- Champaign, Illinois adopted a voluntary desegregation policy to demonstrate its commitment to integration in the hopes of gaining additional funding to develop magnet programs in three elementary schools. The district had been operating under a consent decree through the 2008-09 school year.⁵⁷
- Wake County, which earlier this year voted to end its socio-economic voluntary integration policy, subsequently adopted a board referendum affirming their commitment to diversity in the hopes of improving their chances of attaining an MSAP grant.
- In June 2010, Mobile, Alabama Superintendent Roy Nichols said he'd like to create three new magnet schools to help meet magnet school demands that currently have 3,800 students on the waiting list. The Superintendent is looking at converting three schools into magnets that would draw students from across the county. Fortunately, school board members are open to the idea of opening the new magnet schools, but do have some concerns about losing neighborhood schools that serve nearby families. In an effort to deal with the cost of the new opening of the schools, Nichols is applying for a \$12 million grant to establish pre-k magnets to feed into elementary and eventually middle schools. Even if funding does not go through, Superintendent Nichols is committed to the idea of opening the new magnets and says he will wait if he has to until funding opportunities improve.⁵⁸
- On the other hand, Philadelphia—which just ended its desegregation case—refused to consider changes to their magnet school admissions process that would have increased diversity and aided their eligibility for MSAP funding. The superintendent declared it not to be a priority.⁵⁹

IV. Community mobilization

Over the past year, communities across the country have raised their voices and, in one way or another, taken a stand on school integration. Parents, community groups, activists and voters mobilized in an effort to preserve, promote or do away with student assignment plans seeking to achieve diverse schools. Community sentiment ran the gamut, from points west like Seattle, Washington, where parents reacted somewhat negatively to a new, neighborhood-based assignment plan,⁶⁰ to midwestern Chicago where activists and the local media opposed the school's race-neutral magnet admissions criteria,⁶¹ all the way to the eastern seaboard city of Wilmington, Delaware where members of the black community marched for more local control of schools.⁶²

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http://www.startribune.com/local/east/90547099.html?elr=KArks:DCiUHc3E7_V_nDaycUiD3aPc:_Yyc:aULPQL7PQLanchO7DiUr

⁵⁷ <http://www.dailyillini.com/news/champaign-urbana/2010/04/12/champaign-unit-4-adopts-desegregation-plan-in-hopes-of-winning-msap>

⁵⁸ http://blog.al.com/live/2010/06/mobile_county_schools_superint_1.html

⁵⁹ <http://www.philly.com/philly/news/homepage/88525442.html>

⁶⁰ <http://www.komonews.com/internal?st=print&id=48491567&path=/news/local>

⁶¹ <http://www.suntimes.com/news/cityhall/1913100,CST-NWS-elite01.article>

⁶² <http://kilroysdelaware.wordpress.com/2010/04/06/markell-needs-to-man-up-and-address-the-racial-concerns/>

In other places, voices were raised on both sides of the issue. A close and contentious school board election in Wake County, North Carolina resulted in a seated majority that voted to end a decades-old school integration policy. In response, however, local community members joined the NAACP to vehemently protest the dismantling of the plan. And further north in Boston, city dwellers continued to wrestle with an assignment plan that allows students to access schools outside of their neighborhoods. Some support the current plan, others would like to scrap it and reduce transportation options available to students. We explore several of these scenarios in more detail below.

- Last year's hotly-contested school board election in Wake County resulted in the election of four Republican-backed candidates who ran on an anti-diversity platform. The rhetoric surrounding the election process highlighted deep divisions within the community in regards to its SES assignment policy. In the aftermath of the election, the five-person majority swiftly moved to dismantle the district's longstanding efforts to maintain diverse schools over the vocal opposition of many—including parents, activists, NAACP officials, members of the religious community and state and local political figures. After voting to strike down the SES-based assignment policy, the school board is now in the process of crafting a plan that prioritizes neighborhood schools. Potential legal challenges to the school board's new plan loom large and community outcry continues. The head of the local chapter of the NAACP, along with several other activists, was arrested this month for staging a sit-in at a school board meeting.⁶³
- To the east of Wake County, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system prepares to launch a rezoning process. After following the unfolding controversy in Wake, in addition to building on a long history of contentious student assignment processes in the district, school board officials plan to solicit community input at several different junctures before making new decisions on school boundary lines. The board plans to seek public commentary on a set of broad guidelines for the rezoning process before proceeding. Currently under discussion are the sometimes competing goals of stability, diversity, schools close to home and logical planning.⁶⁴
- Up north, two streams of community activism emerged in the Boston metro area. Each represented opposing sides of a controversial proposal to redesign Boston Public School's student assignment plan. Last spring, a series of strongly worded editorials highlighted the central issues at stake, including access and equity on one side, and transportation costs and schooling close to home on the other. Largely as a result of community concerns about the implications for diversity and equity, the superintendent's first proposal to scale back out-of-neighborhood transportation to schools failed. Complicating matters, in the fall of 2009 Boston was awarded one of eleven federal TASAP grants designed to help school districts create assignment policies that promote diversity. Civil rights lawyers and activists are now working with the district to develop a new plan that still strives to connect the city's poorest students to high opportunity schools. The situation in Boston continues to unfold.
- Chicago district officials decided to replace a race-conscious magnet program with a design that offered sibling preference to families of children already attending magnet

⁶³ More than 70 articles have been published over the past year regarding changes to Wake County's student assignment plan. See the articles section of The Integration Report, issues 20-26, for additional information.

⁶⁴ <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2010/06/21/1514283/cms-hopes-to-avoid-student-assignment.html>

schools, and reserved half of the remaining seats for neighborhood schoolchildren. The other half would be distributed based on a tiered set of indicators connected to a student's neighborhood. New factors included census data like income, adult education levels, single-parent households, home ownership rates and the number of non-English speaking households in a given neighborhood. The class-based Chicago plan immediately came under fire from community constituents, especially after the release of a newspaper analysis showing that the new admissions policy would reduce the number of school admission offers to out-of-neighborhood students by roughly 14% overall—and even more at some of the popular magnet programs. Because neighborhood segregation remains extremely high in Chicago, the *Tribune's* figures suggested that the new policy would result in less racial diversity in the city's magnet schools. School district officials responded to the criticism quickly, shifting the percentage of seats open to non-neighborhood children from 50 to 60 percent. The School Board also promised to reevaluate the effectiveness of the admissions policy after one year.⁶⁵

- Due to California's budget crisis, Stockton Unified School District took extreme measures to cut costs, yet school officials are predicting even more cuts. The district laid-off teachers and cut spending across the board, but Superintendent Vaczovsky said the budget crisis is likely to get worse. The Superintendent explained that federal stimulus money helped defray many costs last year, but without that help this year, the district faces a \$20 million dollar deficit. In an attempt to get community feedback, the Superintendent met with parents, asking them which programs are most important to them. The two things parents insisted on keeping in Stockton were transportation for magnets and the International Baccalaureate program.⁶⁶
- Recognition of desegregation efforts also came via the media in some communities. Local newspapers serving several districts wrestling with unitary status proceedings ran series chronicling the history of desegregation efforts in the area. The legacy of desegregation was also explored in Hartford, Connecticut on the twentieth anniversary of the long-running *Sheff v. O'Neill* case. Still other articles focused on desegregation efforts in communities that long ago ceased to engage in proactive efforts to ensure racially diverse schools.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ A number of other communities around the nation weighed in on school diversity issues. They include: Montgomery, AL, Tapiangoa Parish, LA, Minneapolis, MN, Vail, CO, Nashville, TN, and Jefferson County, KY.

⁶⁶ <http://www.news10.net/news/story.aspx?storyid=70586&catid=2>

⁶⁷ Articles looking back at the history of school desegregation efforts appeared in the following communities: Tucson, AZ, Orange County, FL, Hartford, CN, Norfolk, VA and Milwaukee, WI.

V. Going Forward

The CRP is committed to continuously monitoring developments related to school integration across the U.S., and to helping districts think through their options after *Parents Involved*. We are committed to helping to raise awareness about the academic and social benefits of integrated schools, and conversely, the persistent effects of a segregated and unequal education. Social science, the experience of many school districts and the Supreme Court all concur on the benefits of diverse schools and the harms of racially isolated schools for students and their communities.

Resources for schools and communities include:

- ***Still Looking to the Future: Voluntary K-12 School Integration: A Manual for Parents, Educators and Advocates***. The Manual addresses the practical questions of what can be done to promote diversity and the harms of racial isolation in schools. To download the manual, please visit LDF at www.naacpldf.org or the CRP/PDC at www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu.
- ***Preserving Integration Options for Latino Students***, a guide for parents, advocates and educators interested in promoting diversity and addressing the harms of Latino racial isolation in their schools. To download the manual, please visit www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu or www.maldef.org.
- ***Fact Sheets*** about a variety of integration-related topics including the importance of integration, magnet schools, transportation for diversity, and current state of school segregation can be downloaded at <http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/policy/court/voltint.php>
- ***The Integration Report***, a biweekly web bulletin connecting readers to the most up-to-date integration news and illuminating key issues related to diversity in our nation's K-12 schools, can be found at <http://theintegrationreport.wordpress.com>.
- ***Lessons in Integration: Realizing the Promise of Racial Diversity in American Schools*** presents a collection of essays analyzing five decades of experience with desegregation efforts in order to discover the factors accounting for successful educational experiences in an integrated setting. To order the book, go to the University of Virginia Press at: <http://www.upress.virginia.edu/books/frankenberg.htm>

TABLE 1: BUDGET ARTICLES TRACKED BY THE CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT

Issue	Location	Date	Website	Description
District Budget Cuts	Lagrange, GA	12/10/09	http://www.ledger-enquirer.com/news/story/938608.html	In Lagrange, Georgia the school district considered cutting nearly \$4 million from next year's budget of just over \$100 million. Due to the budget cut, the school board was reexamining elementary attendance zones, reducing central office staff, and using an alternative school calendar with fewer days in the academic year as possibilities to deal with possible cuts.
	Jefferson County, KY	12/27/09	http://www.courier-journal.com/article/200912070316	District officials said that the new student assignment plan and the bad economy are stunting enrollment growth and causing large population shifts at some of its elementary schools. Some kids left because their parents lost their jobs and moved outside of the county. Other parents were mad about the new student assignment plan. The superintendent believes loss of jobs is a better explanation than the new assignment plan.
	MI	10/25/09	http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/article/20091025/NEWS05/910250598/1006/NEWS05	The state legislature cut state aid to school districts by \$165 per student in early October and Gov. Jennifer Granholm cut another \$127 more per student. Because of Proposal A, the state does not fund its public schools using local property taxes. Instead, the state capped the rate of local property taxes for schools, increased the sales tax from 4 to 6 percent and incorporated income tax revenue into the school aid fund. The current spending scheme, however, is not working, especially after the downturn in the economy. As a result, the state is working to

				incorporate a new way to fund schools.
	Three Rivers, MI	10/13/09	http://www.wlkm.com/?cat=17	Superintendent of Three Rivers, Roger Rathburn, discussed a report revealing the impact of Michigan's sagging economy at the Board of Education meeting. The report identifies spending reductions to a total nearly 2 million dollars. The K-12 spending bill passed by the Michigan Legislature included a \$165 per student cut. The Superintendent also said that consolidation is highly likely and is something he is looking into.
	Jenks, OK	11/12/09	http://www.jenksjournal.com/articles/2009/11/05/news/doc4af2df8d34354943685160.txt	Jenks Board of Education members were told that the state's budget deficits are having an effect on the school's budget and are likely to get worse. In fact, for the month of December there will likely be a cut in state funding allocation in education of 10%.
School Closures	San Diego, CA	6/8/10	http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/jun/08/school-board-oks-43-million-cuts/	With a budget deficit of 58.9 million, the San Diego Unified School Board on Tuesday approved cutting \$48.3 million in spending, including eliminating adult education and reducing funding for magnet programs.
	New London, CT	5/18/10	http://www.theday.com/article/20100518/NEWS01/305189913/1019&town=	New London public schools in Connecticut discussed the possibility of closing a landmark 19 th century building as part of a plan to cut the 2010-2011 education budget by \$1.3 million.
	Dallas, TX	4/23/09	http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/042409dnmetdisd.3cada13.html	The Dallas school board postponed a controversial vote on cutting learning-center funding after hearing concerns from some trustees and angry members of the public. District administrators told trustees earlier in the month that funding would have to be cut at

				34 campuses, many of which are learning centers because per pupil spending at the schools is not equitable.
Magnet School Cuts & Closures	Danbury, CT	11/18/09	http://www.newstimes.com/news/article/State-freezes-funds-so-Danbury-magnet-school-will-256660.php	Because state funding for magnets was cut, superintendents around the state will now have to pay more per student than they were expecting.
	Hartford, CT	12/1/09	http://www.wfsb.com/education/21778113/detail.html	Two magnet schools in the city could lose as much as \$750,000, which could force the schools to cut programs, students or both. Both of these schools have the problem of too many students from the home district, which threatens state funding. If lawmakers approve cuts, schools may be forced to ask towns for help, but a tight budget is likely to make this difficult.
	DeKalb County, GA	1/20/10	http://www.ajc.com/news/dekalb/dekalb-schools-propose-cuts-279298.html	Because of DeKalb County's \$56 million deficit, the Superintendent (Crawford Lewis) said there are not many options other than to consider cutting pre-k, magnet schools, and art classes to offset the deficit.
	South Bend, IN	2/24/10	http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/southbendtribune/access/1957798361.html?dids=1957798361:1957798361&FMT=ABS&FMTS=ABS:FT&date=Feb+6%2C+2010&author=JOSEPH+DITS&pub=South+Bend+Tribune&edition=&startpage=B.1&desc=South+Bend+schools+prepare+for+cuts	Indiana is expected to make \$300 million dollars in cuts. Because of these cuts, the district is considering restructuring schools, including the elimination of magnet schools.

Transportation	Sacramento, CA	2/17/10	http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100217/A_NEWS/2170313	Transportation for students who attend magnet schools will be cut in an attempt to decrease the \$28.5 million budget deficit. The board also agreed to increase most K-3 classes from 20 students to 30 but rejected to eliminate 33 custodial positions.
	San Francisco, CA	12/4/09	http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/Some-school-buses-face-budgetary-ax-78572817.html	Some school buses face elimination due to budget cuts in San Francisco's public schools. The school board has decided to cut their \$21 million annual budget for transportation in an effort to prevent cuts in the classroom. There isn't a final decision on the amount that will be cut, however, because many board members want to wait until student assignment plans are finalized.
	Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC	6/23/09	http://www.charlotteobserver.com/597/story/796417.html	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools expects to cut back on field trips and busing and eliminate 38 more jobs—but not teachers—under a new “best-case scenario” due to the state’s shrinking state budget.
	Charleston County, SC	6/8/10	http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2010/jun/08/school-board-still-trying-to-cut-budget/	School officials were trying to find ways to cut spending for next year, but were still about \$7 million short from balancing the budget. As a result, cuts discussed included increasing the number of furlough days to five for teachers and 10 for administrators, freezing out of state travel spending, and negotiating reductions in transportation, custodial and grounds contracts.
	Charleston, SC	7/23/09	http://www.postandcourier.com/news/2009/jul/23/school_bus_fee_unfair90119/	School district officials introduced the idea to the school board as a way to generate revenue. The district is struggling to operate schools on a budget that has been cut dramatically. Any bus fees would occur in 2010-2011, not

				this academic year.
Consolidation	Santa Rosa, CA	12/9/09	http://lakeconews.com/content/view/11662/919/	The Lake County Board of Supervisors and Lake County Board of Education discussed a report on the feasibility of consolidating all of the county's seven school districts. The report concluded that there would be a gain of \$1,075, 166 in revenue if they consolidate all the districts. The school board is now discussing whether to call for a formal study for consolidation.
	Delta, CO	6/9/10	http://www.deltacountyindependent.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=15582:school-district-cuts-17-teaching-positions&catid=34:delta&Itemid=347	The school board has decided to cut \$850,000 from the 2010-2011 budget through intra-school consolidation, which has resulted in 17 teacher cuts.
	DE	12/8/09	http://www.delawareonline.com/article/20091208/OPINION11/912080313	While the state auditor has recommended consolidating school districts because it would save money, reduce paperwork and increase efficiency, skeptics argue the idea is brought up every year for consideration but there's never a workable plan. There are often contentious issues, including layoffs, etc. that are politically unpopular.
	DE	12/1/09	http://www.delawareonline.com/article/20091201/NEWS03/912010336	According to the state auditor, consolidating Delaware's 19 school districts could save the state \$50 million a year by cutting approximately 700 jobs. Most of the savings comes from cutting administrative positions.
	Augusta, GA	11/17/09	http://www.wesh6.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=111262&catid=2	Georgia's Department of Education was trying to meet a \$38 million budget cut this year and was preparing for a \$36 million cut next year. As a result, educators met with legislators to discuss the

				upcoming budget cuts and growing concerns with the School District Consolidation Law.
	ID	11/15/09	http://www.idahostat.esman.com/Opinion/story/973864.html	In Idaho, forced consolidation isn't likely to happen because Idaho citizens, especially those in smaller towns, don't want it. Many of the schools in rural towns are small and the community likes it that way because of the close-knit community small districts offer. Legislators are aware of this fact and as a result, are often hesitant when it comes time to decide.
	ID	11/12/09	http://www.idahostat.esman.com/education/story/970027.html	While the Idaho's State's Office of Performance Evaluations recommended that legislators consider studying school district administrative salaries and consolidation, many legislators and educators doubt that district consolidation would yield worthwhile savings in administrative salaries. Furthermore, legislators are reluctant to force consolidation, as they believe it would take local control away from small towns
	ID	11/8/09	http://www.magicvalley.com/news/opinion/editorial/article_5af98d4d-a99e-56e1-aa3e-7548e3ab3978.html	The Idaho Legislature's nonpartisan Office of Performance Evaluation issued a report saying that if Idaho wants to save serious money on public education it must time administrative salaries or consolidate its school districts. However, many in the legislature don't have the political will to take such a chance on this contentious issue.
	ID	11/1/09	http://www.magicvalley.com/news/local/article_ea673bbe-c69e-11de-b193-001cc4c03286.html	State revenues in Idaho are down and as a result the state legislature is being forced to make cuts in education. One cost saving measure the state is

				considering is consolidating smaller school districts. Many lawmakers, however, are against the measure as they believe it won't allow enough local control of schools.
	Newport, KY	10/7/09	http://www.kypost.com/content/wcposhare/d/story/Newport-Schools-May-Face-Consolidation/Gbz0GXZDFUef4tStsKBNtw.csp	Officials in Newport School District are continuing to discuss consolidation. They hope to reconfigure schools by closing one to two schools. Financial troubles have led to the discussion about consolidation.
	East Feliciano, LA	3/6/10	http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/state/Merger_considered_for_Hunt_Ingram_school_districts.html	In East Feliciana, LA, the school board voted to consolidate the parish's two high schools and two middle schools. Superintendent Beauchamp said his district faces a two million dollar deficit and consolidating high schools and middle schools would save approximately 2 million dollars. The district's budget problems have worsened because of a declining enrollment, decreased state sales tax revenue and increased maintenance and payroll costs.
	Lunenburg, MA	1/22/10	http://www.nashobapublishing.com/townsend_news/ci_14245947	Lunenburg and North Middlesex school districts are considering consolidating after the DOE's school building division learned that both school systems have aging high school buildings that each planned on renovating using state funding. Both districts are looking over their budgets to see if they will be able to work something out.
	ME	10/27/09	http://www.bangordailynews.com/detail/126927.html	While school consolidation in Maine was supposed to save money, many are arguing it has not saved money and instead has cost money for a total of \$4 million thus far. Furthermore, the article argues, rural

				communities have been the target, whereas urban areas have not been required to consolidate. The current law is too rigid and thus the law should be repealed.
	ME	10/23/09	http://knox.villagesoup.com/Government/story.cfm?storyID=180019	More than 200 Maine voters gathered over 58,000 signatures to ask Maine residents whether to reverse the measure to consolidate schools. Many of the opponents say the Governor misled voters into believing consolidation would save money, but they claim money has not been saved. Others argue the opposite citing savings in one district (RSU 1) of as much as 1.5 million each year.
	ME	10/21/09	http://www.bangordailynews.com/detail/126078.html	Supporters of Maine's school district consolidation law have raised \$241,000 compared to only \$8,323 for the group seeking to repeal the consolidation law.
	Kennebec County, ME	10/19/09	http://kennebecjournal.mainetoday.com/news/local/6986690.html	In 2007, Maine consolidated its 290 school districts into 80. On November 3rd voters will decide whether to end the consolidation program. The main reason given in favor of consolidation was saving money. The Brookings Institute saved \$25 million annually. Many opponents, however, argue that the savings aren't there.
	Kennebec, ME		http://kennebecjournal.mainetoday.com/news/local/6962115.html	A Waldoboro lawmaker is proposing to keep \$37.4 million in cuts to state education subsidy, even if Maine voters repeal the school district consolidation mandate that put those cuts in place. In 2007, when Maine's school district consolidation mandate went into place, 290 school districts merged into 80 as a way to cut costs of school administration.

				Trahan believes its unlikely legislators won't back his proposal as a time when state funds are tight.
	Detroit , MI	10/5/09	http://www.detnews.com/article/20091005/OPINION01/910050375	Detroit is considering consolidating their school district. Michigan has more than 550 school districts, but the amount of school revenue is declining due to the recession in the economy. Advocates say combining school operations from busing to administrative functions such as payroll and purchasing would save money. Opponents of this plan say that some may lose their jobs if consolidation is passed and parents and community members fear the loss of school traditions and local control.
	Jackson County, MI	10/14/09	http://michiganmesseenger.com/28086/jackson-county-schools-might-consider-consolidation	Some school board members in Jackson County are proposing that all the districts in the county consider consolidating services and possibly districts to save money because of Michigan's bad economy. Jackson County Association of School Boards decided in their Oct. 3 meeting that districts should explore the option before Lansing mandates the consolidation.
	New Haven, MI	12/8/09	http://www.voicenews.com/articles/2009/12/08/news/doc4b1e96513c38b394286033.txt	The school board is considering consolidating school districts as a cost savings measure.
	MS	11/16/09	http://www.sunherald.com/pageone/story/1749682.html	In an attempt to deal with budget shortfalls, the Governor of Mississippi is proposing reducing the overall number of school districts in the state by 52. School districts along the Coast, however, are likely to be the least affected by consolidation because of good financial management and high academic standards.

	MS	11/25/09	http://www.desototimes.com/articles/2009/11/25/opinion/editorials/doc4b0d9ce45552c616920510.txt	While most people in Mississippi agree that 152 districts in 82 counties is too many, when it comes to consolidation, people are against it. There will likely be political ramifications if the Governor consolidates school districts just as there was political fallout in 1955 after there was major consolidation.
	MS	11/22/09	http://www.sunherald.com/news/columnists/geoff_pender/story/1758991.html	While Governor Barbour insisted he was not in favor of consolidating school districts four years ago, today it seems he is open to the idea. It is politically unpopular for officials to even speak of the issue, however, due to the current economic problems; politicians and schools officials are forced to at least consider it.
	Jackson, MS	11/11/09	http://www.jacksonfreepress.com/index.php/site/comments/consolidation_the_same_olds_story_111109/	Rep. George Flaggs (D) spoke of waste and excessive spending going to administrators, which he says is preventing students from receiving necessary resources. He insists one way to reduce this cost is to consolidate two school districts. Opponents argue consolidation will not save money as district level administrative costs only makes up 5% of the state's total education budget.
	Jackson, MS	11/3/09	http://www.mlive.com/news/jackson/index.ssf/2009/11/jackson_public_schools_official_1.html	Jackson public school officials are spearheading efforts to look at consolidating school districts to help schools countywide save money as state funding declines.
	Jackson, MS	11/1/09	http://www.myfoxmemphis.com/dpp/news/local/111809_barbour_s_budget_to_merge_state_agencies	Governor Haley Barbour's budget proposal focuses on merging universities, consolidating school districts and closing mental health centers. However, the most far-reaching proposal is restructuring several areas of

				state government.
	Ilion & Mohawk Schools, NY	2/28/10	http://www.uticaod.com/news/x593981534/Ilion-Mohawk-schools-look-to-each-other	In an effort to cut costs, Ilion and Mohawk schools are considering consolidation. The Superintendent of Ilion said they will be able to save some programs by consolidating.
	Sumter County, SC	10/15/09	http://www.theitem.com/article/20091015/ITNEWS01/710159881/-1/ITNEWS	Sumter County's two school districts are merging, but there remains to be financial questions. The primary question is who will pay for the salaries of the employees hired by the consolidated school district before July 1, 2011, as well as other operating costs before that date. Current law does not specify who pays for start up costs before the new district opens in July 2011. This was the central question the Sumter Consolidation Transition Committee subgroup discussed at their latest meeting.
	VT	1/20/10	http://www.timesargus.com/article/20100120/NEWS01/1200337/1002/NEWS01	The Vermont Board of Education voted to approve a proposal to consolidate the nearly 300 individual school districts around the state. The main reason for consolidation, according to the board's vice chairman, is to give students more educational opportunities. Many on the Board believe the path to consolidation won't be easy, but is worth fighting for.
	VT	11/9/09	http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/article/20091122/NEWS02/91121005/Vermont-schools-told-to-tighten-belts	Vermont schools told to tighten belts Vermont Education Commissioner Armando Vilaseca is calling for more frugal school budgeting and a new look at school-district consolidation due to the state's budget problems.
Pro-Integrative Efforts	San Diego, CA	6/24/09	http://www3.signonsandiego.com/stories/2009/jun/24/1m24cuts234015-schools-	The budget for SDUSD finally voted to close an \$80 million deficit without getting rid of favorite programs, including

			budget-okd-cuts-loom/?education&zIndex=121700	transportation to magnet schools. But projections show that the future may show cuts in the areas that were saved this year.
	Indianapolis, IN	7/11/09	http://www.ibj.com/html/detail_page.asp?content=41362	While legislators deserve praise for at least slightly increasing overall education funding, because of a flawed funding formula, urban districts such as Indianapolis Public Schools actually will lose money in the next two years. The district currently serves 34,000 children who cannot afford to take additional losses in education funding.