

# The Civil Rights Project



*Proyecto Derechos Civiles*

## **New York State's Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction and a Damaged Future**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **What are the states included in the series you are doing on school segregation trends in the East Coast?**

*Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and Washington, DC.*

#### **When will the remaining reports be released?**

*This year in 2014, some as early as June.*

#### **How was the data gathered?**

*These are our computations from the official enrollment statistics submitted to the federal government from local and state education officials.*

#### **What period of time does this research cover?**

*The statistical work covered 1989 to 2010; the historical work goes back to the 1960s.*

#### **Does the data in the report show an upward or downward trend?**

*Increasing segregation trends.*

#### **Have there been any reports in previous years that also reflect the same data found in the report?**

*We have issued many reports that show segregation at the national regional and state levels but none that have explored New York in great depth. Amy Stuart Wells at Teacher's College has done important work, especially in Long Island and other parts of the greater NYC region.*

#### **What areas in New York State have the highest levels of segregation?**

*The five boroughs of New York City had the highest minority school concentration; up to 85% of all black students and 75% of all Latino students in 2010 attended intensely segregated schools (less than 10% of white students). The entire New York City Metro had the highest white isolation rates, lowest exposure to white students for the typical black and Latino student, and the lowest exposure to poor students for the typical white student in 2010 when the proportion white and poor were taken into account. Syracuse metro had the highest black isolation rates when metro black proportion was considered. Albany metro had the highest exposure to poor students for the typical black student in 2010 when the proportion poor was taken into account. Long Island had the highest exposure to poor students for the typical Latino student in 2010 when the proportion poor was taken into account. Buffalo had the highest uneven distribution of racial students in schools across the metropolitan area in 2010; the average school in Buffalo was 40% less diverse than the entire intrastate metropolitan area, indicating an extreme degree of segregation. New York City had the highest uneven distribution between white and black students in schools across the metropolitan area in 2010, but all the other metros were not far behind. New York City and Albany metros were the only two areas that experienced an increase in white-black unevenness rates since 1999.*

**Does this report highlight any educational or social outcomes related to high levels of segregation?**

*In this report, we provide a synthesis of over 60 years of research showing that school integration is still a goal worth pursuing. Stably diverse schools tend to have higher quality teachers, less teacher turnover, more college prep courses, greater academic achievement and future earnings, and even better health outcomes for minority students as well as the social benefits resulting from intergroup contact for all students – like the possible reduction in prejudice and greater interracial communication skills – we found that “real integration” is indeed an invaluable goal worth undertaking in growing multiracial societies. Can separate be equal? If measured by test scores, a few resegregated schools show high performance. But even if equality can be reached between racially isolated schools, students may never achieve the skills and abilities required to navigate an increasingly diverse nation. In the future, we plan to explore in depth the impact of segregation on educational opportunities and outcomes for the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern states.*

**What are the primary recommendations of the report?**

*At the federal level, our country needs leadership that expresses the value of diverse learning environments and encourages local action to achieve school desegregation. The federal government should establish a joint planning process between the Department of Education, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to review programs and regulations that will result in successful, lasting community and school integration. Federal and state-level choice policies should include civil rights standards or add incentives to such standards. State-level policies could include interdistrict transfer programs, regional magnets, student assignment or choice policies that include civil right standards, and diverse teaching staff, just to name a handful. District boundaries, particularly urban and suburban, must be crossed for any substantial integration to occur in upstate metros, inner and outer ring regions of New York metro, and Long Island. A rather novel approach, referred to as federated regionalism, balances regional approaches to address social stratification with local approaches to address the need for local control. The one metropolitan area where federated regionalism has been employed is Omaha, NE. This “Learning Community” model is designed to achieve equity and socioeconomic diversity between 11 segregated districts. The promotion and support of voluntary interdistrict plans, such as the Learning Community or others that consider racial integration, minority voice and power, and population and demographics of the area, serve as an option for reducing school segregation, as well as housing segregation, in urban/suburban New York metros. Regional magnet programs could also provide unique educational opportunities that would support voluntary integration in the state of New York. Such programs support racial, ethnic and economic diversity, as well as offer a special and high quality curriculum. Connecticut has a system of more than 60 interdistrict, regional magnet schools. In the New York City district, preexisting and new educational programs and policies from 2002 to 2014 failed to address the problem of racial school segregation, and in many cases have exacerbated the problem. We discuss a handful of these policies, their associated limitations, and recommendations for improvement. A thorough discussion of these and other recommendations can be found in the report.*

**Does the report include charter schools, private schools and parochial schools?**

*It focuses on public schools, including charter and magnet schools in the NYC district.*

**What years of education does the report include (e.g., K-12, 6-12, etc.)?**

*K-12*

**What are the main factors contributing to such a high level of segregation in New York?**

*High residential segregation for both African Americans and Latinos, metro areas fragmented into many separate school districts, virtually no significant desegregation plans, and choice plans that increase rather than alleviate segregation.*

**How does the New York state and New York City data compare to that of other states Metropolitan cities?**

*New York has the most segregated schools in the country: in 2009, black and Latino students in the state had the highest concentration in intensely-segregated public schools (less than 10% white enrollment), the lowest exposure to white students, and the most uneven distribution with white students across schools. Heavily impacting these state rankings is New York City, home to the largest and one of the most segregated public school systems in the nation. New York, Illinois, and Michigan have consistently topped the list of the most segregated states for black students, and California joined this list in 2009-10. New York tops the list of states with black students attending 90-100% minority schools (63.6%). A staggering two-fifths of black students in Illinois attend a school where less than 1% of the student body is white. In Michigan, more than a third of black students experience the same situation. These apartheid conditions are similar to those that existed in the South before Brown v. Board of Education. The large and hyper-segregated metropolises of New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles and Detroit, along with the high percentages of minority students who reside in them, likely influence these trends. For more information on how New York compares to other states considered the most segregated for Black students, see [E Pluribus... Separation](#) and other Civil Rights Project reports at [www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu](http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu)*

**Are there any charts or graphs available to show hot spots or main data points?**

*Yes. They can be found with the report at: <https://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norlet-report-placeholder>*

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