

**Closing the student achievement gap:  
The overlooked strategy of socioeconomic integration**

Stephanie Aberger, Blair Brown, Ann Mantil, and Anne Perkins

November 20, 2009

Professor Jal Mehta

TF: Raygine DiAquoi

## Introduction

Large achievement gaps by socioeconomic status appear consistently across standardized assessments of US students. According to the 2007 National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP), 8<sup>th</sup> graders eligible for free- and reduced-price meals scored 24 points lower in reading and 26 points lower in math than their more affluent peers. This gap has remained essentially unchanged since 1996 and mirrors the 4<sup>th</sup> grade results (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007).

Achievement disparities that are this sizeable in magnitude and persistent in duration pose a serious challenge for educators and policymakers. Recent responses include the “separate but equal” high-poverty charter schools trend and the test-centric focus of No Child Left Behind. These approaches have in common a weak research base on their effectiveness at narrowing the gap. A compelling body of evidence is present behind only one alternative, ironically the one that is virtually absent from the current reform debate: integrating US public schools by income. Schools characterized by socioeconomic diversity offer low-income students their best chance of academic success and middle-class students the experience with diversity, critical to 21<sup>st</sup> century success.

The first section of this paper explores the history of race- and income-based school desegregation in the US, while the research, politics, and policy sections focus on the benefits and challenges of creating socioeconomically diverse schools. We focus here primarily on the improvement in student achievement that results from integrating schools; the social benefits, while well-documented, fall beyond the scope of this project. The approach outlined here offers hope for a future in which integrated schools offer all children the opportunity to learn together and maximize their individual potential, regardless of family income or background.

## **Part I: History of U.S. Public School Desegregation, 1954 to Present**

“The effort to desegregate schools is largely over. Mandatory desegregation was a political failure. Many school districts are now undoing the changes they made [from 1964 to 1974], with the blessings of the courts” --Jennifer Hochschild and Nathan Scovronick (2003, p. 26).

### **Racial school desegregation 1954-1973: Success**

With the seminal 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision, the United States Supreme Court made clear that racial segregation of public schools would no longer be tolerated in this country. It was not until President Johnson entered office in 1963, however, that the changes envisioned by *Brown* began to take hold (Hochschild and Scovronick, 2003). The 1964 Civil Rights Act included sanctions to enforce racial desegregation of schools, including withholding federal funds from school districts that ignored *Brown*. The Supreme Court also increased pressure to desegregate schools, and in 1968, with *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, provided guidelines on meeting the standard of a nonracial system of public education (Armor, 2003). Civil rights protestors kept the public eye on the unconstitutional segregation of schools, and finally, the racial makeup of U.S. public schools began to shift.

The results were dramatic. Between 1968 and 1972, the percentage of black students in intensively segregated schools dropped from 64.3% to 38.7% (Harris, 2006). In the South, where discrimination had been most pronounced, the proportion of black students in majority white schools grew from 0% in 1968 to 44% by the end of the 1980s (Hochschild and Scovronick, 2003). The Supreme Court went still further, and in 1973 with *Keyes v. School District No 1 of Denver, Colorado*, reached “the high water mark of federal support for desegregation” by expanding mandatory desegregation to the north and including Latino students as well as blacks (Hochschild and Scovronick in Caldas, 2003, p. 28).

**Racial school desegregation 1974-2007: Reversal**

Ultimately, however, courts reflect the political preferences of those who appoint them, and President Nixon, elected in 1969, made good on his anti-civil rights platform with four conservative appointments to the Supreme Court. In 1974, with the *Milliken v. Bradley* ruling, this reconstituted court took a critical step back from desegregation (Orfield, 2003). In *Milliken*, the Supreme Court overturned a lower-court order to consolidate Detroit public schools with neighboring suburban systems, thus declaring that desegregation efforts ended at the district border. Given the combination of widespread housing segregation and the larger number of small, local districts in the U.S., “this decision effectively took at least one-third—and arguably much more—of segregation off the table. As a result of the *Milliken* decision, those parents who wished to avoid desegregation could . . . [move] to the suburbs” (Harris, 2006, p. 8).

The Supreme Court was not the only regressive force in the 1970s. Mandatory desegregation plans—busing and redrawing school attendance zones—dominated district approaches in this era (Rossell, 2003), and drew outrage by ending neighborhood schools and dictating to parents which school their child could attend. Political backlash followed, and in 1974 Congress prohibited the use of federal funds for busing (Hochschild and Scovronick, 2003).

White flight was another response. When forced to put their child on a bus to a school in another part of town, white families simply moved or enrolled their child in private school. Pasadena, California lost 40% of its white enrollment during the first three years of court ordered busing (Armor, 2003), while white enrollment in Boston fell by half (Katznelson and Weir, 1985). James Coleman’s 1975 study found that, between 1969 and 1973, cities that had school desegregation plans experienced white flight at four times the rate of those that did not (Kahlenberg, 2003).

One positive response to the backlash against mandatory desegregation plans was the development of models that allowed for more parental choice. In the mid-1970s districts began to create specialty schools—magnet schools—in low-income neighborhoods, with a goal of drawing in middle-class students. The 1980s brought the idea of “controlled choice”, in which parents list their top choice schools, and then the district assigns among these choices so as to maintain or improve desegregation among schools. The vast majority of families receive their top choice, thus avoiding the political explosiveness of mandatory plans. (Harris, 2006).

Despite the gains made by these new voluntary approaches, the push for racial school desegregation had all but ended by the 1990s. Support for mandatory desegregation eroded even among the black community, and black leaders from Clarence Thomas to the NAACP “attacked the notion that blacks needed to attend schools with whites in order to achieve” (Caldas and Bankston, 2003, p. xii). In a 1998 poll, blacks and whites both ranked racial diversity 11<sup>th</sup> out of 12 proffered characteristics of a good school (Hochschild and Scovronick, 2003).

The courts continued to retreat, and released school district after school district from judicial oversight. While the 1968 *Green* decision ruled that segregation must be “eliminated root and branch,” the 1991 *Board of Education of Oklahoma City v. Dowell* ruling stated merely that segregation should be “eliminated to the extent practicable.” With this decision and *Freeman v. Pitts* in 1992, the court “made clear that desegregation was allowable only as a temporary means to address historical discrimination, not as a permanent means to provide equal opportunity as housing conditions changed” (Harris 2006, p.8).

For those who believe in the goal of racially integrated schools, the results have been disheartening. In the early 1990s, for the first time since *Brown*, racial segregation in southern schools began to increase (Kahlenberg, 2003) and by 1995, blacks were more likely to attend a majority black school than in 1975 (Caldas and Bankston, 2003). The final death knell to race-

based school desegregation was sounded in 2007 with the Supreme Court's decision on *Parents involved in Community Schools v. Seattle*. Here the court ruled that districts could no longer assign students to schools based on race, thus forbidding the voluntary desegregation plans which had formed the basis of racial school integration in this country (Orfield, 2009).

### **A new approach: Socioeconomic integration**

To date, U.S. efforts to solve income-based student achievement gaps have focused almost entirely on compensatory spending and programs. Title I, begun in 1965 as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, provides supplemental funding to schools with a certain percentage of low-income students. Head Start, begun in 1965 as part of the War on Poverty, provides early childhood education to low-income children. Neither program addressed the growing residential segregation by income within the United States, with the result that the number of high poverty schools rapidly increased.

The idea of closing the achievement gap of low-income students through socioeconomic integration was slower to take hold. "In the 1980s, almost no one was thinking about class as a basis for desegregation," explains Jennifer Hochschild (personal communication, October 30, 2009). One lone example was the exception that proved the rule. In 1981, La Crosse, Wisconsin (7,200 students) became the first school district in the United States to integrate its schools by income rather than race, when it redrew the attendance zones for its two high schools based on socioeconomic status. Ten years later, La Crosse expanded this approach to its elementary schools. By 1996, however, of the 15,000 school districts in the United States, La Crosse was still the only one that integrated its schools based on family income. (Kahlenberg, 2007).

Slowly, other districts began to use family income as a means to integrate their schools. In January 2000, the Wake County North Carolina School District (128,000 students) set a goal of ensuring that no school had more than 40% of its students receiving free or reduced price

lunch, and instituted that change through a combination of attendance zone boundaries, magnet schools, and choice. And in the following year, Cambridge, Massachusetts (6,000 students) instituted an income based integration plan, using controlled choice as the means to achieve it (Grant, 2009; Kahlenberg, 2007). The conversation about socioeconomic school integration was broadened to the national level with the 2001 publication of Richard Kahlenberg's *All together now: Creating middle-class schools through public school choice*. Kahlenberg remains the lead academic researcher on U.S. socioeconomic school integration.

Today, 69 U.S. school districts, educating over 3.5 million students, have integration plans based on socioeconomic status (Kahlenberg, 2009b). One could not call this a groundswell, but it is a significant departure from the 1980s, and represents a larger number of students than are currently educated in charter schools.

### **How the present differs from past debates**

One can summarize the key change in how this nation thinks about school desegregation as follows: Racial school desegregation is no longer viewed as a viable or even necessary policy for achieving educational equality. Today, the lead education policy class at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (A100) does not even include school desegregation as part of its syllabus. As Hochschild and Scovronick have put it, "Most black and white elected officials concur on this point if on nothing else about school desegregation: at the beginning of the new millennium, in the political arena, this game is over" (2003, p. 50).

Beginning in the early 1980s, the national debate about education reform shifted from one of resources—in which desegregation was advocated as a means to ensure that every child had the same chance for a quality education—to one of accountability and educational standards (Katznelson and Weir, 1985). As noted by Harris, the theory of change of *No Child Left Behind*, the apex of the accountability movement, differs markedly from that of desegregation efforts.

With NCLB, “the belief is that students and schools have sufficient resources, but insufficient incentives to use them. The theory of action behind accountability is clearly quite different from the one behind desegregation” (Harris, 2009, p.3).

Even among those who still believe in the importance of racial desegregation, the political will has waned. The Supreme Court’s 1974 *Milliken* decision restricting desegregation efforts to in-district solutions, and the 2007 *Parents Involved* decision forbidding districts from using a student’s race in making school assignments have undermined belief in both the achievability of desegregation and in the role of the courts in achieving such change. “The courts have run out their string. They are no longer the solution” (J. Hochschild, personal communication, October 30, 2009).

Amidst the rubble of the efforts to achieve racial desegregation of U.S. public schools, however, lies the possibility of change. One could not call this a broad shift in thinking. It is more of a murmur at present. But the idea of economic diversity of U.S. schools is a murmur of hope. And that murmur, therefore, is the focus of the rest of this paper.



## Part II: Policy Research

“Forty years of research shows that the single most important predictor of academic achievement is the socioeconomic status of the family a child comes from, and the second most important predictor is the socioeconomic makeup of the school she attends” –Richard Kahlenberg (2007, p. 6).

In a field characterized by dissenting research, the impact of socioeconomic status upon academic achievement remains “one of the most consistent findings in research on education” (Gary Orfield and Susan Easton, 1996, p. 53). Yet, despite this consensus, a review of school demographics demonstrates the persistence of economic segregation. Such segregation is particularly detrimental to the most economically disadvantaged students, whose attendance at high-poverty schools depresses their educational outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Examining the characteristics of such schools suggests that traditional compensatory spending approaches do not substantially reduce class achievement disparities. New approaches that seek to integrate schools by income suggest a more promising direction in the endeavor to equalize opportunity for all students.

### Segregation by income

Although the history of school integration emphasizes racial desegregation, socioeconomic status is actually a better predictor of achievement than race (Coleman, 1966; Kahlenberg, 2001). Nonetheless, significant overlap exists between race and income. More than 60 percent of black and Latino students attend high-poverty schools as compared to 18 percent of white students (Orfield and Lee, 2005). Furthermore, black and Latino students are twelve times more likely than white students to attend 100% free and reduced lunch schools (*Ibid.*) While these statistics represent deep societal inequalities that must be addressed, in considering school outcomes, “our best evidence shows that class is primarily the dimension along which everything else varies, not race. For many years, race was a stand-in for class” (J. Hochschild, personal

---

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this paper, “high-poverty” and “majority low-income” schools refer to schools in which more than fifty percent of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. That the determination of free-lunch eligibility is predicated upon successful completion of necessary paperwork suggests that the number of students who are low-income may be greater than that captured by free or reduced lunch statistics. See Pogash, 2008.

communication, 30 October 2009). That income is more determinative than race in predicting student achievement suggests a new direction in pursuing the integration of schools, particularly given the legal and political challenges accompanying racial desegregation.

American schools are highly segregated by family income. During the 2006-07 school year, the most recent year for which data is available, 38 percent of students attended a school in which more than 50 percent of students qualified for free or reduced lunch; 16 percent attended a school where more than 75 percent of students qualified (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Given that more than half of American families are considered middle class,<sup>2</sup> these results do not reflect overall U.S. demographics. Instead, this division of schools stems from residential segregation<sup>3</sup> and is exacerbated by private school enrollment.<sup>4</sup>

### **Majority low-income schools and students outcomes**

High-poverty schools yield worse outcomes for all students regardless of their family income. Even after controlling for individual characteristics, student achievement is strongly influenced by a school's poverty. The seminal Coleman Report concluded, "Children from a given family background when put in schools of different social compositions will achieve at quite different levels" (1966, p.22). Numerous studies confirm these findings (Mosteller and Moynihan, 1972; Kahlenberg 2009b). Christopher Jencks quantified Coleman's original data, finding that "poor black sixth graders in middle class schools were twenty months ahead of poor

---

<sup>2</sup> "More than half" represents a conservative approach to identifying income categories, utilizing a range from 75% to 150% of the median income (Pew Research Center, 2008, p. 7). Richard Kahlenberg argues that 66% of families are middle class based upon the threshold for receiving reduced school lunch (2001).

<sup>3</sup> Increases in residential segregation by income between 1970 and 1990 are well documented (Jargowsky, 1997). While there was a marked reversal in this trend between 1990 and 2000, with 24% less people concentrated in high-poverty neighborhoods, American neighborhoods remains stratified by income (Jargowsky, 2003).

<sup>4</sup> "Poor and minority children are much more concentrated in high-poverty public schools than they would be if all children attended their local schools" (Saporito, 2007, p. 1).

black sixth graders in schools with high levels of poverty” (1972, p. 87).<sup>5</sup> More recent data from the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress suggests:

Low-income students attending more affluent schools scored almost two years ahead of low-income students in high-poverty schools. Indeed, *low-income* students given a chance to attend more affluent schools performed more than half a year better, on average, than *middle-income* students who attend high-poverty schools (Kahlenberg, 2009a, p. 1).

Summarizing these results suggests that high-poverty schools produce worse outcomes for both low and middle-income students. Moreover, when low-income students attend middle-income schools their performance, relative to their low-income peers in high-poverty schools, improves dramatically. More than forty years of research has resulted in the same conclusion that the overall socioeconomic status of a school affects the achievement of all its students.

### **Explaining the achievement differences in low-income schools**

That high-poverty schools perform worse as a result of poor access to resources remains a persistent misconception. While there are certainly schools suffering from unequal resource allocation, such as those described by journalist Jonathan Kozol, most low performing schools are not underfunded when compared to other schools (Jacob, 2007). David Whitman reports that per pupil allocations are often greater in at-risk schools than elsewhere (2008). Given the high cost-of-living in urban areas where many high-poverty schools are located and the particular challenges facing low-income students, such schools may require additional funding. However, concluding that an influx of resources will improve academic outcomes in high-poverty schools is unjustified by the evidence. Rather than attribute the poor performance of students who attend such schools to funding discrepancies, research suggests that it is the culture of high-poverty schools that inhibits achievement.

High-poverty schools produce worse student outcomes as a result of peer culture, parental

---

<sup>5</sup> Jencks findings for poor white students were similar.

involvement, and teacher quality, among other school factors. As Coleman asserted, “A child’s learning is a function more of the characteristics of his classmates than those of the teacher” (1961, p. 5). Peer culture impacts the effectiveness of group learning, spreads or stifles motivation and career aspiration, and establishes the overall learning environment. Low-income students are more likely to learn in a middle-income school environment where their peers often have large vocabularies, read on grade level, and view education as part of a trajectory toward their greater goals (Kahlenberg, 2001).

Middle and high-income schools report greater parental involvement than high-poverty schools (Orfield, 1997). Parental involvement not only increases educational outcomes for individual children but for the entire school. A 1996 study found that “a child’s academic achievement did not depend so much on whether his or her own parents participated but on the average level of participation of all parents at the school” (Ho-Sui-Chu and Willms, 1996). Furthermore, higher income parents often possess additional political clout and are often more equipped to act as “academic presses” in insisting upon high academic standards, teacher quality, and financial resources (Brantlinger, 2003). Thus, schools serving the children of more affluent families are often held more accountable for their achievement outcomes.

High-poverty schools must also contend with challenges such as the recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers and the promotion of a rigorous curriculum. High-poverty schools not only report lower numbers of certified, experienced teachers but also suffer from more teacher turnover (Allensworth, Ponisciak, and Mazzeo, 2009). This evidence suggests that students in most need of highly qualified teachers often attend schools with the greatest difficulties attracting such a staff. Furthermore, higher-income schools typically assign more homework than in low-income schools and offer more rigorous coursework (Rumberger and Palardy, 2005).

**Other approaches to class achievement disparities**

A number of different policy approaches attempt to reverse the persistence of class achievement differences in high-poverty schools. Research on the effectiveness of these approaches began with and remains focused on compensatory spending, due to the tremendous resources that have been channeled into programs such as Title I and Head Start. The linkages revealed between these programs and improved academic performance for participating low-income students, however, are generally weak. While a meta-analysis of 17 federally commissioned evaluations of Title I found modest overall effects on student achievement, differences in Title I implementation across districts made it impossible to assert a causal relationship (Borman & D'Agostino, 1996, as cited in Weinstein, Stiefel, Schwartz & Chalico, 2009). Two more recent studies of single school districts found no evidence of improved reading or math performance among students receiving Title I services (Van der Klaauw, 2008; Matsudaira, Hosek & Walsh, 2006). A 2009 study concluded that Title I funds in New York City “seen [sic] not to narrow the achievement gaps between poor student and their more advantaged peers and may even reduce school wide average test scores somewhat in elementary and middle schools” (Weinstein et al, 2009, pp. 23-24).

The track record of the largest intervention in place for young children from poor families, Head Start, points to a similar conclusion. Research shows benefits in terms of participants' early academic performance, but these effects disappear over time – except in schools with students of high socioeconomic status (Garces, Thomas & Currie, 2000). Middle-class schools apparently allow program participants to build on their “head start,” whereas consigning these children to high-poverty K-12 schools results in the eventual loss of this advantage.

More recently, compensatory spending on existing high-poverty schools has given way, at least in the public debate, to two approaches for creating new charter schools that serve the

same population but get better student outcomes. One is the “no excuses” model, exemplified by the KIPP network of schools. KIPP enrollment nationwide is over 80% eligible for free or reduced-price meals and 96% African-American or Hispanic ([www.kipp.org](http://www.kipp.org)). A three-year evaluation of the five Bay Area KIPP schools found that students’ academic progress exceeded national norms “in most grades and cohorts,” with four of the five schools scoring better than their district average on the California Standards Test (Woodward, David, Guha, Wang & Lopez-Torkos, 2008). KIPP’s website reports that almost 80% of its 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduates nationally have gone on to enroll in college. However, the Bay Area study also found that 60% of the students who entered in 5<sup>th</sup> grade dropped out of the KIPP program by 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and those that dropped out had significantly lower baseline test scores than those who stayed. Moreover, student proficiency on the state test ranged from 15% to 99% across the five schools. These twin issues of sizeable attrition and dramatic school-to-school variation need further investigation across a wider sample of schools, but cast doubt on the scalability of the KIPP model and the magnitude of its impact on student achievement.

Another approach is the Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ), which is creating new high-poverty charter schools as part of its comprehensive social services for children and families within a designated geographical zone. The HCZ philosophy is essentially a throwback to compensatory spending, advocating that vast amounts of new resources be channeled into low-income communities. A 2009 study found, using state assessment data, that:

Students enrolled in the sixth grade gain more than a full standard deviation in math and between one-third and one-half of a standard deviation in English Language Arts (ELA) by eighth grade. Taken at face value, these effects are enough to reverse the black-white achievement gap in mathematics (HCZ students outperform the typical white student in New York City and the difference is statistically significant) and reduce it in ELA (Dobbie & Fryer, p. 3).

One caveat here as well is the issue of attrition, since one-third of entering 6<sup>th</sup> graders left the

HCZ charter school by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Tough, 2008). Moreover, HCZ's report of its 2008 8<sup>th</sup> grade scores on a different standardized assessment, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, indicated that students were performing at the 41<sup>st</sup> Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) in math and the 40<sup>th</sup> in reading, which corresponds to approximately the 33<sup>rd</sup> percentile (Harlem Children's Zone, 2008). This finding raises questions about the possibility of score inflation on the state test, perhaps due to intensive test preparation focused on this single assessment. More years of data on additional cohorts are certainly necessary to gain a more complete picture of HCZ student outcomes.

### **School integration strategies**

The three districts of La Crosse, Wake County, and Cambridge demonstrate an alternative approach to class achievement disparities through their utilization of socioeconomic integration. If compensatory spending has proven to be a failed policy approach, the research on integration efforts holds more promise. In La Crosse, Wisconsin, low-income students performed better than their peers statewide on standardized assessments, with math proficiency rates 11 percentage points higher in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 4 points higher in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and 15 points higher in 10<sup>th</sup> grade in 2004-05. Differences in reading are smaller but still positive (Kahlenberg, 2007). In 2006, six years after Wake County, North Carolina adopted its socioeconomic integration policy, 60.5% of low-income students passed the North Carolina High School End of Course exams, compared to a range of 43-52% in four of the state's other urban districts (Kahlenberg, 2007).

Results in Cambridge, Massachusetts are less dramatic but still promising. By the 2009 administration of the MCAS, the students who had begun school under the integration plan were in grades K-6. An examination of the MCAS scores that year reveals that Cambridge's low-income 3<sup>rd</sup> graders scored just above the state low-income average in reading and math. Compared to 14 other urban districts in Massachusetts, they ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in reading and 3<sup>rd</sup> in

math. The results were similar in sixth grade, except that low-income 6<sup>th</sup> graders in Cambridge ranked only 7<sup>th</sup> out of the 15 districts in math (although they were 2<sup>nd</sup> in reading).<sup>6</sup>

### **The impact of school integration on middle-class students**

If low-income students benefit from integration as the La Crosse, Wake County, and Cambridge examples indicate, it is important to consider whether the performance of higher performing students is inhibited. However, there is ample evidence suggesting that integration does not harm middle-class performance. One source of evidence supporting this conclusion is found in the achievement results of white students before and after racial desegregation reforms. Numerous studies consistently demonstrate that white performance was unaffected by racial integration across many districts (Armor, 1995; Jencks and Phillips, 1998 as cited in Century Foundation Taskforce & Chaplin, 2002). Specifically addressing economic integration, David Rusk found that middle class performance was not impeded as long as the majority of students came from middle class households (1998).

Rusk's research suggests that integrating low-income students into middle-income schools is a successful strategy because "the majority culture of a school holds disproportionate influence" (Kahlenberg, 2001, p. 39). That is, schools manifest the academic culture representative of their majority. If students are to benefit from the peer, parental, and school culture effects representative of middle-income schools, then the majority of students must represent these groups. Specifically, researchers suggest that there is a tipping point of fifty percent, implying that the enrollment of a majority of low-income students will reduce or even eliminate the benefits related to integration (Kahlenberg, 2001).

---

<sup>6</sup> Analysis of Massachusetts Department of Education MCAS scores, available online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/>, conducted by author, 11 November 2009. The fifteen districts included Boston, Brockton, Cambridge, Chelsea, Fall River, Framingham, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, New Bedford, Somerville, Springfield, and Worcester.



**Will integrated schools replicate economic segregation within themselves?**

If schools integrate by socioeconomic status yet employ rigid tracking of students, the benefits of integration will be reduced. Evidence from the desegregation efforts of some districts supports this concern. Although Charlotte-Mecklenburg was praised for its racial integration prior to a 2002 court order that ruled against its system, closer investigation reveals that its curriculum re-segregated students (Mickelson, 2005).

Research suggests that school tracking decreases learning for students placed in the lowest levels. Tracking is not the targeted and flexible use of ability grouping, which may be appropriate depending upon the learning objective, but rather the permanent sorting of students into separate classrooms or courses. Lower track students are given rudimentary instruction, which “locks” them into the lowest track since they are not exposed to important prerequisite information (Oakes, Muir and Joseph, 2000). The least effective teachers are often assigned to the lowest tracks (Ingersoll, 1999). Moreover, tracking lowers the self-esteem of lower track students, disproportionately gives the highest performing students access to the best school resources, and prevents integration among tracks (Hallam, 2002). Summarizing this research, Ron Berger of Expeditionary Learning Schools argues, “Tracking divides kids by academic dispositions- it isolates kids in ways that are unhelpful” (Personal communication, 6 November 2009). Socioeconomic integration needs to be accompanied by policies that discourage academic tracking and support the heterogeneous grouping of students.

There are few issues in education in which there is as much evidence as there is regarding the effects of high-poverty schools effects on student achievement. Yet, despite this consensus in the research, compensatory spending and the establishment of “no excuses” schools remain dominant responses to the challenges of closing the achievement gap for low-income students. While a few districts’ efforts to integrate by income have shown promise, the scope of such

efforts remain limited. Such stalled implementation of the research suggests a closer examination of the political challenges of integrating schools by income.

### **Part III: Contemporary Politics**

“The conversation about integration is in a different place than it was 20 years ago. It is now related as much to class as it is to race, and it is less volatile than doing it just on race” -Tom Payzant, (personal communication, November 10, 2009).

#### **Education reform coalitions: Is anyone working for integration?**

Two major coalitions define the present education reform debate in the United States. On one side is the Broader/Bolder Coalition, which calls for significant investment in support structures such as early childhood education, after school care and health clinics ([www.BoldApproach.org](http://www.BoldApproach.org)). On the other is the Education Equality Project, which advocates a test and data driven approach within existing schools ([www.Educationequalityproject.org](http://www.Educationequalityproject.org)). Despite these differing approaches, these two coalitions do agree on one thing: neither is advocating socioeconomic school integration as the means to close the achievement gap.

The most striking aspect of the politics of socioeconomic school integration today is its near absence from the national conversation. “The current focus is on fixing the high-poverty schools where they are, rather than reducing the number of high-poverty schools. We are returning to a system of separate but equal” (R. Kahlenberg, personal communication, November 4, 2009). When asked to rank the importance of education issues in the Massachusetts State Legislature, Representative Tom Sannicandro replied, “If charter schools, the biggest educational issue for us right now, are a ten, then school segregation would be down at the bottom, around a two” (personal communication, November 9, 2009).

There is, though, the opportunity for a third, less visible education coalition to pick up the mantle of socioeconomic school integration. The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills is focusing on broadening school curricula to include such skills as collaborating with and leading others, adaptability, and initiative (Wagner, 2008). For students of all backgrounds and income levels, the ability to collaborate across lines of difference is seen as a critical 21<sup>st</sup> century skill, and

school integration across socioeconomic levels will facilitate that. If the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills were to embrace this as part of their platform, they could be a critical leader that is now missing – and bring this issue back into the public debate.

### **Socioeconomic integration within districts**

The political viability of socioeconomic school integration within districts is demonstrated by the 69 school districts that currently take this approach, beginning with La Crosse, Wisconsin. In 1981 La Crosse, a politically conservative city with 37% low income students, became the first district to integrate schools by family income after its school board passed a redistricting plan for the city's two high schools by a tense 5-4 vote. The deciding vote was cast by a parent who knew that the plan would shift her own child from the predominantly middle-class high school to what had been the low-income school. Eleven years later, the school board voted 8-1 to expand its socioeconomic integration approach to its elementary schools. The vote this time led a recall election of three school committee members, in which three members lost their seats. However, after the new members took office, parents converged on a school committee meeting to show their support for the integration plan, forcing the school committee to go ahead with it. La Crosse's schools remain integrated by income today (Kahlenberg, 2007).

Wake County, North Carolina, with 28% low-income students, is the largest district to have integrated its schools along socioeconomic lines. The school board's unanimous 2000 vote to cap low-income enrollment at 40% at any given school initially found broad support (ibid). However, as urban sprawl expanded bus rides up to two hours in this 864 square mile district, support for bringing back neighborhood schools began to grow. In the Wake County October 2009 school board elections, candidates who campaigned on returning the Wake County schools to neighborhood schools won seats and formed a majority that threatens the district's integration policy (Hui, 2009).

The experience in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a politically liberal city with 44% low-income students, has gone more smoothly. In 2001 the school committee voted unanimously to refocus the goal of its controlled choice plan using socioeconomic status as a diversity factor. Despite earlier concerns, the number of middle class families in the district remained stable (Kahlenberg, 2007).

### **Socioeconomic integration between districts**

For a significant number of school districts, the in-district socioeconomic integration achieved in La Crosse, Wake County, and Cambridge is not an option, as the proportion of low-income students in the district as a whole exceeds 50%. “I would put my eggs in the basket of metropolitan solutions, of broad cross-district changes based on class. That’s where the real point of transformation would be. The leverage lies across districts, not within them” (J. Hochschild, personal communication, October 30, 2009).

Two options exist for such cross-district changes: school district consolidation and interdistrict choice. District consolidation has been occurring gradually across the country, as the number of US school districts has dropped from 130,000 in 1930 to 15,000 today (Wirt and Kirst, 2005). Further district consolidation could increase the socioeconomic diversity of individual school districts. Since school districts are the legal creations of state legislatures, states have the power to redraw school district lines. Legitimacy may not readily translate into feasibility, however, even if the current economic climate provides an incentive for district consolidation because of savings through economies of scale (J. Hochschild, personal communication, October 30, 2009). “Even though the state legislature may have the power to consolidate districts, there’d be tremendous pushback on this,” explains Massachusetts legislator Tom Sannicandro. “It’s not politically viable as a result” (personal communication, November 9, 2009).

Inter-district choice may prove more politically palatable, and a number of precedents exist to support this strategy. In the 1990s, a movement among states to use market forces to improve schools resulted in the creation of charter schools and inter-district choice programs, and such approaches remain popular today. Districts that have implemented inter-district choice have found support from communities, the political establishment, and parents in both sending and receiving schools. Boston's METCO program, Hartford's Project Choice program, and St. Louis' voluntary inter-district program have all faced funding challenges over the years, but have maintained their support (Holmes & Wells, 2008). "In the near term, inter-district choice is a more promising approach than district consolidation," notes Richard Kahlenberg. "The lesson from earlier attempts here is that if you can make it fiscally beneficial for the suburbs, you are more likely to increase success" (personal communication, November 4, 2009).

No Child Left Behind provides another potential path for increasing the socioeconomic diversity of individual schools. NCLB allows students in schools that do not meet Adequate Yearly Progress for two consecutive years to transfer to any non-failing school within the school district that has room. Given the lack of real options within failing school districts, however, few have taken advantage of this provision (Holmes & Wells, 2008). Expanding NCLB's strategy of school transfer by providing incentives to encourage cross-district transfers should be strongly considered.

### **The politics of the middle class**

While the benefits of socioeconomic school integration are clear for students currently educated in high poverty schools, one possible political concern is the response of middle class parents. The decision of where to send one's child to school is a deeply personal one for parents, and the ramifications of changing the system are often fraught with peril for elected officials

(Hess, 2004). While there is a recognition that students in high-poverty schools need better educations, more affluent parents tend to prioritize the interests of their own children:

“Many issues then in education policy have then come down to an apparent choice between the individual success of comparatively privileged students and the collective students as a whole. Efforts to promote the collective goals of the American dream have run up against insurmountable barriers when enough people believe (rightly or wrongly with evidence or without) that those efforts will endanger the comparative advantage or their children or children like them” (Hochschild & Scovronick, 2003, p.2).

Not all middle-class parents oppose a diverse environment for their children. "This is a collective action problem. There is a large constituency of middle class parents who would send their children to a moderately integrated school. Those schools just don't exist right now" (J. Mehta, personal communication, October 15, 2009). Across the country, 69 districts have implemented some form of socioeconomic integration plan without significant backlash and often with support from middle-class parents (Kahlenberg, 2009b).

Accomplishing diverse groupings *within* schools may prove more controversial than creating socioeconomically diverse schools themselves. “Most high schools sort students by perceived or measured ability, and well-off children almost always dominate the high groups” (Hochschild and Scovronick, 2003, p. 23). Even without issues of integration, heterogeneous groupings can be controversial. When Tom Payzant moved to eliminate tracking as superintendent in Boston, he found that “in elementary schools, it’s easiest, and it’s less so in middle school and people are really opinionated in high school” (personal communication, November 10, 2009).

### **The Obama Administration**

Ten years ago, the federal government might not have even been included in an analysis of the politics of a proposed education policy. But with upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the unprecedented \$4.35 billion in funding for the Race to the Top educational innovation program, the Obama administration will

be playing a key role in whatever education reform occurs in the next few years. To date, the Administration has, through its support of charter schools and the Harlem Children's Zone model, focused on improving schools where they are and stayed away from the issue of reducing the number of high-poverty schools via integration.

One signal that the Obama Administration may be open to change on this issue, however, came in Education Secretary Arne Duncan's brief comment on the continued racial segregation of many US classrooms in a September 24, 2009 speech (Duncan, 2009). Still, the Administration's commitment to school integration remains unclear. While Democrats for Education Reform supports providing incentives to encourage middle-class districts to take transfer students from failing schools across district lines as part of the upcoming reauthorization of ESEA, its president, Joe Williams, does not see a lot of effort coming from the Administration on that provision. "A lot of the backlash on No Child Left Behind came from suburbs, not from the urban areas. The Obama Administration may be trying to avoid the suburban politics" (personal communication, November 10, 2009).

Nonetheless, we are at a unique moment in education reform in the United States. The federal government is prepared to pour billions of dollars into targeted reforms. As the Administration and Congress begin to rewrite ESEA, specific and targeted strategies to achieve socioeconomically diverse schools is a critical component in meeting the nation's goal of closing the achievement gap for low-income students.



#### **Part IV: Policy Recommendations**

“Taken together, the emphasis on school integration -- through voluntary incentives rather than compulsion, with an emphasis on economic status rather than race -- dovetails nicely with Barack Obama's winning vision of "One America." Obama's centrist education agenda to date -- charter schools, performance pay for teachers, and accountability -- has its place, but simply supplementing what was essentially the Bush administration's platform with more money is not bold enough for the challenges we face. If the Obama administration wants to make real inroads on breaking the cycle of poverty, it needs to do better than *Plessy v. Ferguson*” –R. Kahlenberg (2009a, p. 3).

The issue of what to do about persistent class-based disparities in student achievement can be framed as a debate between two camps: integrationists, who advocate for enrolling low-income students in better-performing, middle class schools, and community organizers, who view integration as politically infeasible and focus instead on improving high-poverty schools (Kahlenberg, 2009a). The 2007 *Parents Involved* decision barring the use of race as a factor in school assignment, even under voluntary plans, has effectively closed off public debate about integration. However, the use of socioeconomic status remains a legal means of promoting school integration. Furthermore, research has more convincingly demonstrated the beneficial effects of desegregating schools by class than the effectiveness of compensatory spending and efforts to create new but better high-poverty schools. While the politics of school integration are vastly more complicated than traditional compensatory approaches, the potential for narrowing the achievement gap at scale is correspondingly greater. In order to realize this potential, the next reauthorization of ESEA should explicitly promote the socioeconomic integration of students within and across districts. However, it is critical that the federal approach to this issue be based on incentives and choice as opposed to coercion, in order to avoid provoking the kind of political backlash on which many race-based integration attempts historically foundered.

**Recommendation 1: Encourage school districts to compete in the creation and implementation of controlled choice plans using socioeconomic status as a diversity factor.**

Such plans, like the one currently in effect in Cambridge, Massachusetts, convert all schools to magnets and allow parents to rank their preferences. District officials set a target goal for the proportion of low-income enrollment in each school and assign students accordingly, with other possible factors such as proximity and sibling preference also taken into consideration. ESEA should offer districts within a certain range of low-income enrollment the opportunity to create new controlled choice plans and compete for federal money to fund their implementation. Key components of these plans would include transportation arrangements and an outreach program to assist all parents with researching and ranking their school choices, as well as program improvements or redesigns of low-performing, high-poverty schools to make them more attractive to families (Fiske, 2002; J. Maloney, personal communication, November 13, 2009).

**Recommendation 2: Provide incentive funds through the ESEA reauthorization to promote regional integration, including inter-district choice plans and consolidation of school districts.**

At least 14% of school districts have a majority low-income population, which makes socioeconomic integration impossible to achieve without some means of allowing children to cross district lines (Kahlenberg, 2001). Metropolitan plans to integrate schools could involve a state-level consolidation of school districts, which often results in substantial cost savings but can be a difficult political sell. More feasible is an inter-district choice plan, in which middle-class suburban schools receive incentive funds for the low-income students they enroll. Of course, eligibility criteria for metropolitan incentive funds would need to be established, in order to prevent affluent districts from simply swapping students.

The current NCLB law does contain a provision calling for “cooperative agreements” between districts to facilitate low-income student transfers out of schools that do not make

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years. However, the lack of funding and the voluntary nature of this provision have resulted in very few such cooperative agreements to date. (Holme & Wells, 2008) The NCLB reauthorization should therefore require the provision of inter-district choice options, in order to give students a true opportunity to escape failing schools, but include a number of incentives to make this more palatable for suburban districts. First, the new legislation should grant receiving schools a grace period before low-income transfer students would “count” for AYP purposes, so that suburban AYP status would not be jeopardized (Kahlenberg, 2006). Second, it is critical to provide a secure stream of funding for the transportation of inter-district transfer students (T. Sannicandro, personal communication, November 9, 2009). Finally, metropolitan integration plans must be evaluated to ensure program improvement and quality control across all participating schools, including the creation of attractive magnet programs in urban areas.

**Recommendation 3: Fund research into the academic integration of students *within* schools.**

The integration policies described above will have limited impact if students from different socioeconomic and ethnic groups are simply segregated into different courses or tracks within the same school building. While it is difficult for federal legislation to reach inside classrooms, the government can play an important role in funding and disseminating research about the effects of tracking on the achievement levels of all students. Similarly, teachers need access to more professional development strategies on meeting student needs in the context of a diverse classroom. For example, training on differentiated instruction, flexible ability groupings, and cooperative learning would all likely help educators face the challenge of heterogeneity with more confidence and a stronger belief that it can really work to everyone’s benefit.

**Alternative approaches**

This policy direction runs counter to the reform agendas of two major coalitions in public education described in the previous section. The Education Equality Project approach focuses on improving high-poverty schools through existing vehicles, such as replicating successful charter schools and turning around failing schools, instead of attempting to eliminate high-poverty schools altogether via integration. Proponents of this approach argue that the political constituencies lined up against integration, such as middle class parents and wealthier school districts, make its attainment an impossible dream. A realistic approach, the argument goes, must therefore entail working within the existing system to get results.

However, the isolated successes of some of the “no excuses” charter schools cannot address the persistent and widespread socioeconomic achievement gap. Some of the latest research is even raising doubts about how some of the success stories, like KIPP, are obtaining their results. Even if these gains are taken at face value, however, the slow pace of expansion among the “no excuses” networks and the tremendous commitments of time and talent they require mitigate their potential impact. We must instead look for a system-level solution that can make a difference at scale. Socioeconomic school integration, by breaking down the barriers that keep low-income students out of already existing successful schools, is just such a solution. Achieving integration by offering parents choices about where their children will attend school, as opposed to mandating school desegregation, should neutralize middle-class opposition and provide financial incentives to enlist the voluntary participation of suburban districts.

A second alternative approach to the socioeconomic achievement gap is that of the Broader/Bolder Coalition and involves the provision of community-based, wrap-around services to low-income students and families. The argument from this side is that that low-income and minority families want and benefit most from services provided within their own communities,

targeted at their specific needs (W.J. Wilson, personal communication, October 28, 2009).

Integrated middle-class schools might deal with the challenge of low-income students' academic deficits by tracking them into remedial classes. Therefore, the argument contends, policy solutions should focus more resources on early learning readiness, health services, after-school programs, etc. to address deficits in a comprehensive way in each high-poverty community. The Broader/Bolder strategy is the latest incarnation of compensatory spending, which gave rise to programs like Title I and Head Start in the 1960s.

The Harlem Children's Zone, as the most publicized example of this approach, recently inspired President Barack Obama to commit to replicating the HCZ model in 10 other cities. As noted in Part II, however, the evidence of effectiveness is again mixed. Only 1,300 children have attended the HCZ charter schools, and attrition is a serious issue among the middle school population (Tough, 2008). Moreover, HCZ has received tremendous support and infusions of funding thanks largely to its charismatic leader, Geoffrey Canada, who is *not* a replicable component of the model. There is little in the HCZ example, at least to this point, to demonstrate that this approach will be successful in other areas and at a larger scale. Socioeconomic school integration, by contrast, would cost much less, impact a potentially much larger percentage of schoolchildren, and would not rely on one dynamic personality to advance its progress.

Ultimately, education reformers and policymakers can continue casting about for the next new solution for high-poverty schools, or they can return to a remedy with 40 years of evidence behind it. There are propitious signs that this might be the right time to refocus on the integration of schools by socioeconomic status. The 2007 *Parents Involved* Supreme Court decision circumscribed the options for integrating schools by race, but research continues to demonstrate that family income and school SES are more determinative of a student's academic achievement than race anyway. NCLB has focused public and political attention on the achievement gap and

on the low-income subgroup of students, which was frequently overlooked in previous data analyses of school performance. The Obama administration is injecting enormous amounts of new federal funding into public education and influencing state and district policies through Race to the Top eligibility restrictions. The growing attention to 21<sup>st</sup> century skills is enhancing public awareness of the benefits of diverse learning environments for all students. Creating financial incentives for districts and metropolitan regions around the country to finally integrate their schools is a policy lever that would build on NCLB's already existing transfer provision, draw on a sound body of research about how to improve student outcomes, and reject once and for all the "separate but equal" approach to educating America's children.

## References

- Allensworth, E., Ponisciak, S., & Mazzeo, C. (2009). *The schools teachers leave: Teacher mobility in Chicago Public Schools*. Chicago Consortium for School Research. Retrieved from [http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/content/publications.php?pub\\_id=134](http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/content/publications.php?pub_id=134).
- Armor, D. (2003). Reflections of an expert witness. In S. Caldas & C. Bankston III (Eds.), *The End of Desegregation?* (3-24). New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc.
- Brantlinger, E. (2003). Dividing classes: How the middle class negotiates and rationalizes school advantage. *Education Week*, 22.
- Broader Bolder Approach to Education. (2008). Statement. Retrieved from: <http://www.boldapproach.org/>
- Caldas, S. & C. Bankston III. (2003). Introduction: The current crisis in desegregation. In S. Caldas & C. Bankston III (Eds.), *The End of Desegregation?* (xi-xviii). New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc.
- Century Foundation Task Force on the Common School, & Chaplin, D. D. (2002). *Divided we fail : Coming together through public school choice*. New York: Century Foundation Press.
- Coleman, J. S. (1966). *Equality of educational opportunity*. Washington: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education.
- Dobbie, W. & Fryer, R.G. (2009). Are high quality schools enough to close the achievement gap? Evidence from a bold social experiment in Harlem. Retrieved from: <http://www.economics.harvard.edu/faculty/fryer/files/hcz%204.15.2009.pdf>.
- Duncan, A. (24 September 2009). Reauthorization of ESEA: Why we can't wait. Retrieved from: <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/2009/09/09242009.html>

Education Equality Project (2008). Statement of principles. Retrieved from

<http://www.educationequalityproject.org/>

Fiske, E.B. (2002). Controlled choice in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In Century Foundation Task Force on the Common School, & Chaplin, D. D. (Eds.), *Divided we fail : Coming together through public school choice*. New York: Century Foundation Press.

Garces, E., Thomas, D. & Currie, J. (2000). Longer term effects of Head Start. RAND Working Paper Series 00-20, DRU-2439-NICHD/NSF. Retrieved from:

[www.rand.org/labor/DRU/DRU2439.pdf](http://www.rand.org/labor/DRU/DRU2439.pdf).

Grant, G (2009). *Hope and despair in the American city: Why there are no bad schools in Raleigh*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Harlem Children's Zone (2008). Charter school annual report 2007-08. Retrieved from:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/E54DBC8D-CEAC-41F2-A491105A3FA25949/0/HCZPAI.pdf>

Harris, D. (2006). Ending the blame game on educational inequity: A study of 'high flying' schools and NCLB," Arizona State University: Education Policy Studies Laboratory, 20.

Harris, D. (2009). Educational outcomes of disadvantaged students: From desegregation to accountability. In H. Ladd and E. Fiske. (Eds.), *AEFA Handbook of Research in Education Finance and Policy*. Hillsdale.

Hallam, S. (2002). Mixed up? the pros and cons of ability grouping. *Education Journal*, (64), 24-26.

Hess, F. (2004). *Common sense school reform*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ho-Sui-Chu, E. & Willms, J. (1996). Effects of parental involvement on eighth grade achievement. *Sociology of Education* 69(2), 126-141.

Hochschild, J. & Scovronick, N. (2003). School desegregation and the American dream. In S. Caldas & C. Bankston III (Eds.), *The End of Desegregation?* (25-50). New York: Nova



Science Publishers Inc.

Hochschild, J. & Scovronick, N. (2003). *The American dream and the public schools*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Holme, J. & Stuart Wells, A. (2008). School choice beyond borders. In Kahlenberg, R.D. (Ed.), *Improving on no child left behind: Getting education reform back on track*. New York: Century Foundation Press.

Ingersoll, R. (1999). The problem of underqualified teachers in American secondary schools. *Education Researcher*, 28, 26-37.

Jacob, B. (2007). The challenge of staffing urban schools with effective teachers. *The future of our children: Excellence in the classroom*. 17(1). Retrieved from:  
[http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/future\\_of\\_children/v017/17.1jacob.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/future_of_children/v017/17.1jacob.html)

Jargowsky, P (1997). *Poverty and place: Ghettos, barrios, and the American City*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Jargowsky, P. (2003). *Stunning progress, hidden problems: The dramatic decline of concentrated poverty in the 1990s*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute.

Jencks, C. (1972). The Coleman report and conventional wisdom. In Mosteller, F., & Moynihan, D. P. (Eds), (69-115). *On equality of educational opportunity: Non-racial approaches to integration*. New York: Vintage Books.

Kahlenberg, R.D. (2001). *All together now: Creating middle-class schools through public school choice*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute Press.

Kahlenberg, R.D. (2003). Economic school integration. In S. Caldas & C. Bankston III (Eds.), *The End of Desegregation?*(149-176). New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc.

- Kahlenberg, R.D. (2006). Helping children move from bad schools to good ones: Harnessing the potential of No Child Left Behind. Education Week. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2006/06/21/41kahlenberg.h25.html?r=185139274>.
- Kahlenberg, R.D. (2007). Rescuing *Brown vs. Board of Education*: Profiles of twelve school districts pursuing socioeconomic school integration. The Century Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://www.tcf.org/publications/education/districtprofiles.pdf>.
- Kahlenberg, R.D. (2009a). Can separate be equal? *The American Prospect*. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=can\\_separate\\_be\\_equal](http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=can_separate_be_equal).
- Kahlenberg, R.D. (2009b). Turnaround schools that work: Moving beyond separate but equal. Retrieved from: <http://www.tcf.org/list.asp?type=PB&pubid=700>
- Kahlenberg, R.D. (2009c). Does Obama believe in school integration? *Taking note: A Century Foundation group blog*. Retrieved from: <http://takingnote.tcf.org/2009/11/does-obama-believe-in-school-integration.html>
- Katznelson, I. & Weir, M. (1985). *Schooling for All: Class, Race and the Decline of the Democratic Ideal*. New York: Basic Books.
- Keung Hui, T. (31 March 2000). Wake adopts student plan. *Raleigh News & Observer*.
- Keung Hui, T. (17 November 2009). Departing Wake County board members stand by their decisions. *Raleigh News & Observer*.
- Kirst, M. & Wirt, F. (2005). *Political Dynamics of American Education*. Richmond, CA: McCutchan Publishing Corporation.
- Kozol, J. (2005). *The shame of the nation: The restoration of apartheid schooling in America*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Mickelson, R. (2005). How tracking undermines race equity in desegregated schools. In

Petrovich, J. & Wells, A. (Eds.), *Bringing equity back: Research for a new era in American educational policy*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Mosteller, F., & Moynihan, D. P. (1972). *On equality of educational opportunity: Non-racial approaches to integration*. New York: Vintage Books.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2007). About the nation's report card. Retrieved from:

[http://nationsreportcard.gov/about\\_nrc.asp](http://nationsreportcard.gov/about_nrc.asp).

Oakes, J., Muir, K., & Joseph, R. (2000). *Course taking and achievement in math and science*.

Paper presented at the NISE Conference, Detroit. Cited in Mickelson, 2005.

Orfield, G. & Eaton, S.E. (1996). *Dismantling desegregation: The quiet reversal of Brown v.*

*Board of Education*. New York: The New Press.

Orfield, G. (1997). City-suburban desegregation: Parent and student perspectives in

metropolitan Boston. Cambridge: Harvard Civil Rights Project.

Orfield, G., & Chungmei, L. (2005). Why segregation matters: Poverty and educational

inequality. Retrieved from:

[http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/Why\\_Segreg\\_Matters.pdf](http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/Why_Segreg_Matters.pdf)

Orfield, G. (2009). Forward. In L. Chavez & E. Frankenberg (Eds.) *Integration Defended:*

*Berkeley Unified's strategy to maintain school diversity*. (iii-v.) Berkeley: The Chief

Justice Earl Warren Institute on Race, Ethnicity and Diversity, University of California,

Berkeley Law School. Retrieved from:

[http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/integration\\_defended\\_report\\_2009.pdf](http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/deseg/integration_defended_report_2009.pdf)

Pew Research Center (2008). Inside the middle class: Bad times hit the good life. Retrieved

from: <http://pewsocialtrends.org/assets/pdf/MC-Middle-class-report.pdf>.

- Pogash, C. (2008). Free school lunch isn't cool, so some students go hungry. *New York Times*, 1.
- Rossell, C. The evolution of school desegregation plans since 1954. In S. Caldas & C. Bankston III (Eds.), *The End of Desegregation?*(51-72). New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc.
- Rumberger, R. W., & Palardy, G. J. (2005). Does segregation still matter? the impact of student composition on academic achievement in high school. *Teachers College Record*, 107(9), 1999-2045.
- Rusk, D. (1998). To improve public education, stop moving money, move families. *Abell Report* (11). Retrieved from: <http://www.abell.org/publications/detail.asp?ID=29>.
- Saporito, S., & Sohoni, D. (2007). Mapping educational inequality: Concentrations of poverty among poor and minority students in public schools. *Social Forces*, 85(3), 1227-1253.
- Tough, P. (2008). *Whatever it takes: Geoffrey Canada's quest to change Harlem and America*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- U.S. Department of Education (2001). Elementary and Secondary Education. Retrieved from: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Education (2009). *The Condition of Education 2009*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.
- Wagner, Tony. (2008). The global achievement gap: Why even our best schools don't teach the new survival skills our children need-and what we can do about it. New York: Basic Books.
- Weinstein, M., Stiefel, L., & Schwartz, A. (2009). Does Title I increase spending and improve performance? IESP Working Paper #09-09. New York: NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development.
- Whitman, David. (2008). *Sweating the small stuff: Inner-city schools and the new paternalism*. New York: Fordham.

Woodworth, K.R., David, J.K., Guha, R., Wang, H. and Lopez-Torkos, A. (2008). San Francisco Bay Area KIPP Schools: A Study of Early Implementation and Achievement, Final Report. Eugene, Ore.: Center for Educational Policy and SRI International. Retrieved from: <http://policyweb.sri.com/cep/projects/displayProject.jsp?Nick=kipp>.

### Interviews

1-10/15/09: **Jal David Mehta**. Harvard Graduate School of Education. Assistant Professor. Jal Mehta teaches the Education School's Introduction to Education Policy class.

2-10/28/09: **William Julius Wilson**. Harvard Kennedy School. Lewis P. and Linda L. Geysler University Professor. Director, Joblessness and Urban Poverty Research Program.

3-10/30/09: **Jennifer Hochschild**. Harvard College. Henry LaBarre Jayne Professor of Government and Professor of African and African American Studies. Jennifer Hochschild's area of expertise includes class and race-based segregation within and among schools.

4- 11/04/09: **Richard Kahlenberg**. Senior Fellow, the Century Foundation. Richard Kahlenberg is the leading researcher on U.S. socioeconomic school integration.

5-11/9/09: **Tom Sannicandro**. Massachusetts State Representative, 7<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District. Of the 7<sup>th</sup> Middlesex residents, 37% live in Ashland (school district 9% low-income) and 63% in Framingham (school district 27% low-income).

6-11/10/09: **Tom Payzant**. Harvard Graduate School of Education. Professor of Practice. Former superintendent of the Boston Public Schools (1995-2006).

7-11/10/09: **Joe Williams**. President of Democrats for Education Reform and President of the Board of Education Equality. Education Equality is one of the two leading education reform movements in the U.S.

8-11/13/09: **Jim Maloney**. Chief Operating Officer, Cambridge Public Schools. Since 2001, the Cambridge schools have used a controlled choice plan to achieve socioeconomic integration.

9-11/06/09: **Ron Berger**. National Director of Program, Expeditionary Learning Schools. Expeditionary Learning Schools advocate heterogeneous grouping of students.

10-11/13/09: **Alice Wolf**. Massachusetts State Representative, 25<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District—Cambridge (school district 44% low-income). Cambridge School Committee Member and Chair of the Desegregation Committee when the controlled choice plan was developed.