

# UCLA

## K-12 Integration and Diversity

### Title

NYC School Segregation Report Card: Still Last, Action Needed Now!

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# NYC school segregation

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**Danielle Cohen**

with a foreword  
by Gary Orfield

**NYC School Segregation Report Card**  
*Still Last, Action Needed Now*

By Danielle Cohen, with a foreword by Gary Orfield

June 2021

Cover art by Taylor McGraw

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## Foreword

New York is a global city, a place where creative people of talent come to reach the height of their arts, a place where the economy of the world is shaped by the financial institutions around Wall Street, a place of resources, creativity, and power. It brings people from everywhere and has launched many to great success. But New York is also a city of biting inequalities and of extraordinary racial and economic stratification. Its school system, the nation's largest, has a large majority of Latino and black students who are highly segregated from white and Asian students. The nation's largest school district contains schools that reach across the spectrum of excellence and disadvantage. Two-thirds of a century after the Supreme Court said that segregated schools are "inherently unequal" New York is a national epicenter of racial segregation in unequal schools, documented in the new data in this report.

The U.S. is a society of profound economic and social inequality that is linked to race, a society where the schools are supposed to provide equal opportunity but, often, do not. Far too often, they offer the least to children from struggling families and the most to those who start with the greatest advantages. Public schools were originally created to help bring together a society of many peoples into a common nation, helping people understand and respect each other, learning how to work and govern together. When schools segregate students by race and income in very unequal schools they severely undermine those goals and weaken our future. When those realities are ignored or denied, they fester.

Racial segregation keeps black and Latino in schools of concentrated poverty. The highest quality education goes mostly to the students who are middle class and white or Asian. The school system denies equal opportunity and helps perpetuate inequality across generations. Segregation denies all groups the opportunity to learn together and to prepare to operate successfully in the extremely multiracial city of their future. One of the worst consequences of segregation is, as Martin Luther King observed, that it creates a false consciousness of superiority among those who have the best educational opportunity and a false consciousness of inferiority among students whose schools offer less. Segregation allows these toxic perceptions to persist.

NYC is one of the few major cities that has never had a citywide desegregation lawsuit or court order. From a civil rights perspective, New York has been treated as if it is "too big to sue," beyond the capacity of any civil rights organization or federal agency to challenge in extremely expensive litigation. Lawsuits must prove a history of discrimination, and obtain an order and a plan to remedy that history of illegal actions. In virtually every big city that has been sued there has been abundant evidence of many forms of racial discrimination over history—location and use of facilities, segregation of faculties, differential curricula and programs, attendance boundary lines drawn to foster racial separation, discriminatory choice mechanisms, lack of key resources and opportunities available in many white schools, and tenanting of subsidized housing in ways that force poor children of color into inadequate schools. Research in the history of race in New York shows that many of these elements exist in the city but no group has had the

resources to challenge the nation's largest system. That is why so few New Yorkers have actually experienced educational integration in their public schools.

There have been protests in New York and talk about doing something serious about problems that have been evident for more than a half century. Promises have been made, but the promises have not been kept. The great African American scholar, Kenneth Clark, whose research helped produce the *Brown* decision and who wrote the book, *Dark Ghetto*, long ago expressed his bitter disappointment in the betrayal of promises for New York schools. For instance, the failure to integrate middle schools produced the huge school decentralization movement that left the basic racial patterns untouched.

The Civil Rights Project reported in 2014, based on 2010 data, that New York State was the most segregated state in the U.S. for black students,<sup>1</sup> far worse than the Southern states that New Yorkers used to look down on. The report stirred articles, investigations, and debates across the state and stimulated the start of some significant but, so far, limited reforms by state and local officials. We were especially moved by the determination of groups of student protesters to fight segregation in New York schools; protesters including students from some of the city's elite schools where there are very few Latino and black students. We were happy to cosponsor a conference in February 2021 with Teens Take Charge and other student activists on these issues. I was deeply impressed by the insights and determination of these students. They are part of a rising generation that recognizes that the only viable future for a profoundly multiracial country is to cross the lines of division and learn to work together. That experience led us to undertake another examination of the city's data to investigate whether or not there was progress. We did not get a grant to do this study. We simply decided to do it because of what the city's young leaders are doing to address a deep problem that has been papered over for generations.

This report is about segregation. It is not a comprehensive treatment of the ills of the entire system and does not reflect all of the Civil Rights Project's work across areas including dropout prevention, studies of school suspension, studies of immigration and language instruction, examination of inequality in special education, and studies of testing, college access, and affirmative action. Readers can find much of that work at [civilrightsproject.ucla.edu](http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu). This is about segregation because our research convinces us that it is a central tool of racial subordination and that well done desegregation, though far from easy, expands opportunities for students of all races, and is one of the best means we have for bringing together a dangerously polarized society. There are many other components including increasing all forms of resources for schools of concentrated poverty, addressing special needs and assets of immigrant students, focusing on counseling and preparation for college, among them. But this is about the damage caused by segregation and what could be done.

In discussing this data with local experts and with students we know how sensitive these issues are and how easy it is to misunderstand issues in the wake of the racial feelings stirred by the

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<sup>1</sup> Kucsera, J., & Orfield, G. (2014). New York state's extreme school segregation: Inequality, inaction and a damaged future, (March), 155 p. Retrieved from <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norfl-et-report-placeholder>

Trump and Black Lives Matter years. Our statistical analysis does not, of course, mean that all black and Latino students and schools are the same or that there are not differences and complexities within Asian and white communities or that desegregation is a panacea for the schools. What we are describing, mostly through analyzing the city's own statistics, is a striking pattern of racial inequality that is damaging to the city and to all racial and ethnic groups. The data show that there are very important things that could be done in spite of limitations. Integrated schools and fair access to the best schools would open opportunities to many students who are now denied an equal chance.

Choice without equity fosters inequality. New York embraced the theory of school choice in the 1990s and beyond but without the equity policies that make choice fair. Choice depends on information, which is highly unequal, and on transportation if the good choices are not nearby. If the "choice" is actually determined by prerequisites or screening process that are strongly related to prior opportunities, it is often perpetuates advantages. In a city where parents have very different education levels, computer connections, and home languages, understanding complex choice processes is impossible for many. Rather than building high quality magnet schools open to all with civil rights standards, the city embraced market-driven choice without civil rights guarantees, managing to create a large system of charter schools that are even more significantly segregated than its traditional public schools, reaching apartheid levels of racial and class stratification in parts of the city.

New York has a small system of exam schools which are nationally famous, schools which misuse exams in ways that largely exclude black and Latino students who make up a large majority of the city's students. Relying on exams as a measure of "merit" reifies inequality, since research has long shown that exams are deeply influenced by educational and economic inequality among families as well as unequal preparation in unequal schools. The experience of the Ivy League colleges for the last half century shows that there are many students who have lower scores who rise to the occasion and develop very rapidly and successfully in the most demanding schools in the nation when given the chance, context, and structure these schools offer. Having taught students in three of the highest ranking private universities, including Harvard, and three of the top public universities, including UCLA, I have seen many highly motivated students from poor communities of color, who lacked strong preparation, perform very well, and many high testing students who perform poorly. The Civil Rights Project has discussed these issues in reports and in our book, *Educational Delusions: Why Choice Can Deepen Inequality and How to Make Schools Fair*.

New Data. This new report looks at the data eight years later than our earlier report and finds that New York state's segregation of black students remains the worst in the nation and that the segregation of Latino students is almost as extreme. New York City has been home to some of the greatest advocates for civil rights, but the *Brown* decision and the civil rights revolution thereafter left segregation in the largest school system largely untouched. The huge growth of Latino students and the substantial decline of black students since then have changed the city and it requires new plans.

New York's segregation is not just segregation by race but is double segregation by race and poverty, since the city's black and Latino students are in schools that average about three-fourths

poor children. These schools must cope with added burdens, not caused by the schools, deeply affecting children's lives. Sometimes there is a third dimension of segregation – by home language in a city with so many immigrant parents who sacrifice so much for their children who must learn to be fluent both at home and in school. The doubly or triply segregated schools must face many problems that are uncommon in middle-class schools – hunger, untreated chronic health problems, homelessness, neighborhood crime, language issues, parental joblessness, unequal exposure to computers and books at home, and all that comes with these. Many of those differences have been highlighted so dramatically by the pandemic where access to learning has reflected and, often, deepened inequality.

School segregation in NYC is also segregation by educational outcomes, with segregated black and Latino schools lagging far behind predominantly white and Asian schools on tests and other outcomes. It is the schools with the best prepared students from the most educated families that often are able to raise the most money and make other contributions to supplement school funding and programs. These schools are often able to attract and hold excellent, experienced teachers and administrators. An equally talented student of color compared to a white student is likely to be in a school that must attend to many other issues and is usually less able to maintain challenging education by experienced teachers who often, when they have seniority, transfer to less demanding schools with better prepared students.

I have worked on these and related issues for a half century and I have never seen a school district that was separate and equal. When I have been testifying in a civil rights case, I have asked experts on the other side to tell me where there is one, but have never received an answer. It is not because there is anything inherently wrong with black and Latino communities. They have the same dreams and hopes as white and Asian areas. Simply put, they do not receive the same opportunities, support, or access to the most successful schools. Many white and Asian people who live in the city believe in diversity but want to be certain that their children's future is protected. They want what all families deserve and they must be a part of solutions. Many educators are working very hard to improve schools segregated by race and poverty, and this report is not denying their efforts, which I praise. Under any conceivable plan, such efforts are crucial. However, only the system that created such unequal burdens and limits key resources in many schools and communities can make effective corrections.

You can't spend time in New York without thinking about the terrible disconnect between the city's great cultural and intellectual resources and terrible, unaddressed, inequalities in its schools. It is not that the inequalities of segregated schools are not widely known. The assumption has spread that nothing can be done. When thinking about the possibility of diversity, most people think about the limited supply of white students and their unwillingness to change existing arrangements. The history of integration in the South was built around the problem of black exclusion from white institutions in a society with a large, more privileged, white majority. The South became less segregated than the North a half century ago because civil rights law was enforced there. Today, New York is multiracial – there are far more Latino than black students, whose share of city schools has dropped significantly. The Asian and white student enrollments are growing. It is a four-race city where white and Asian students, on average, attend middle-class, predominantly white and Asian schools and black and Latino students are increasingly going to school with each other in schools where poverty is the norm. Back during the civil

rights era, the issue of segregation was usually defined as a black-white issue with black leaders demanding access to white schools with better opportunities. Now only about a sixth of the students are white. How could they integrate the vast city? Wouldn't they just leave? Wasn't the city going to become all black and Latino anyway?

Demography does, of course, create limits on what can be accomplished, but the terms need to be redefined in light of a transformed society. It is now a question of the degree to which students in less privileged communities have access to stronger school opportunities that are concentrated in more white and Asian schools. As in many policy arenas, the fact that there is no total solution for the entire city, or that problems are complicated, must never mean that policy should not use the possibilities that do exist in ways that work. The white student enrollment of the New York public, non-charter, schools is still significant and growing, probably because the housing affordability crisis has bought many young professionals back to city neighborhoods where the old housing is being upgraded through gentrification. More importantly, there has been a massive growth of Asian student enrollment, a diverse but, on average, higher income and academically successful population. Asian groups were largely excluded from immigration until the 1965 immigration law, strongly supported by New York leaders. Now Asians are the largest group of new immigrants and New York is one of the most important centers of settlement. Immigrants have always been a strength of the city.

The white student enrollment of the New York City schools is larger than the total enrollment of the Philadelphia schools, one of the nation's largest districts, and the Asian student enrollment is still larger and growing. The share of black student enrollment in the city's schools has been declining for some time. The Civil Rights Project's 2019 report *School Integration in Gentrifying Neighborhoods: Evidence from New York City*, showed very significant levels of gentrification and the return of white and middle-class families to a number of city neighborhoods. In a few there was significant integration taking place in public schools already. In others, there are potentials not yet realized. Compared to many central cities and older suburbs, New York City has choices that many less magnetic cities do not and those choices may be growing. There are islands of integration and there are streams of new families offering new possibilities to the city. It is clear that the belief that the entire city school system would become black and Latino and that the white decline would continue indefinitely was wrong.

To change the attitudes and outcomes there must be leadership and sensible plans and good support for communities working for changes, as a small number of local communities in the city already are. I have seen people, in communities across the U.S. come together to overcome polarization and fear and discover that their dreams are shared – people creating schools that become the beacons of integrated communities. My own children have benefitted from such schools in Washington, Chicago and the Boston area.

What the city and the state need now are steps to understand and identify possibilities, to spur community-based efforts, to reach out to newcomers into city neighborhoods, and to support the transformation of weaker schools into excellent alternatives for students from all backgrounds. The city's system of school choice has potential for moving beyond segregated neighborhoods to stably integrated schools, where lasting positive diversity is understood by all to be part of the school's mission and a solid educational advantage for all students. Up until now, however, it has

had the opposite effect. The city's history shows that the default has been expanding segregation. That will not change without a serious and thoughtful goal and policies to make it happen. Segregation is a self-sustaining system based on a history of failure and a fear of change. Integration is hard to start because of the need to overcome fears but it is a win-win solution.

Desegregation struggles have a typical history. It begins with neglect, worsening conditions, and the tacit hope that the issue will go away. Then comes analysis and mobilization, demanding some answers to documented inequalities. Then comes either a voluntary effort to make progress or attempts to force change through protest or civil rights enforcement. Once the issue becomes serious and actual plans are under consideration, opponents mobilize, fears and stereotypes are stirred, and officials come under often ugly pressure. This is the period of maximum risk, where efforts are often abandoned. If leaders have a good plan and they persist, they learn that after the stormy passage there is often a period of calm when the new policy becomes a reality and opposition based on what area usually false fears, rapidly recedes. Getting the policy in place and training the staffs are difficult. Actual classroom diversity often becomes normal rapidly.

As soon as serious desegregation becomes a public issue there are predictable attacks that advocates must be ready to face and answer. There are always fears of racial change and political or community leaders can use the issues to build support by triggering stereotypes and fears. Operators of segregated schools may angrily defend the status quo. Often opponents use misleading fear tactics. For example, they will compare the academic scores of the school they want to preserve to those of schools from which students of color might transfer, and claim that their children's education would suffer. A half century of research shows that middle class children's test scores are not harmed by integration while the scores of black and Latino children generally increase (because middle class achievement is more linked to the home and disadvantaged children depend more on the school). Images of the most highly charged examples in the history of desegregation, such as the violence in a Boston high school 50 years ago, are treated as the typical example, while all the other much more successful models are not mentioned. The basic desegregation methods of the last 40 years using mostly voluntary efforts are ignored and critics act as if we are talking about the mandatory plans in the South in the 1960s and 1970s. Nothing is said about the usually positive experiences reflected in surveys of students and parents in desegregated schools. Opponents treat choosing students for excellent schools solely on the basis of test scores as the essential definition of academic quality even though virtually none of America's great colleges use test scores in that way and the testing profession rejects sole reliance on tests for such purposes.

The greatest challenge to leaders comes during the period between the creation of a plan and its actual implementation. Typically, once students begin to attend desegregated school, attitudes change rapidly because most of the fears are based on inaccurate stereotypes and the actual experience turns out to be positive. In our divided society, successfully crossing racial lines is often a deeply positive experience. The crucial need during difficult periods of transition is for leaders and educators to hold firm, respecting everyone, answering all questions and circulating information about real experiences elsewhere. Leadership in that period can make a great difference.

Facts are important. Our report is based largely on analysis of the city's school statistics, the official reports to the state and federal government. These statistics are not political, they are simple facts. The changes in births and school enrolments by race are facts that must be faced. The schools are extremely segregated and segregated schools have much worse actual outcomes. Those are facts. Untangling causation is complicated and reaching solutions require decisions about values, but everyone should start with facts. We find that most communities publicly try to ignore segregation, and school districts repeatedly claim to have tools that can make segregated schools equal but look for actual evidence. With rare exceptions, they fail because of the many inequalities linked with race.

Doing nothing lets segregation, resegregation, and destructive gentrification spread and provides very few opportunities for New Yorkers to enroll in substantially integrated schools, which would have the diversity that great colleges work hard to achieve. An option many would like is usually not available. An effort to change the outcomes and create integrated options requires clear goals and leadership. Beyond school efforts, geographic segregation should be addressed, for example, by using housing subsidies for long term residents to preserve residential integration in neighborhoods facing middle class gentrification pressures. The city could, on another dimension, greatly help by operating its vast system of subsidized housing and city planning powers in ways that foster diversity and access to excellent schools for students of color living in subsidized housing.

Desegregation, moving toward genuinely integrated schools, where students and faculty reflect and respect the diversity of the city and learn to live and work together across the lines of division, would help lead to a less divided, more desirable, and more powerful city. Stably integrated neighborhoods with genuinely integrated public schools provide the kind of opportunities many families of all racial and ethnic groups desire and enjoy.

School integration, of course, is not a cure-all for the city's racial problems. Racial inequality is built into the housing market, differential incomes and wealth, inequitable access to health and medical care, criminal justice discrimination, and many other dimensions. Help is needed from many institutions.

The city, with state support, could also reach out as central cities have done in Connecticut through the creation of regional magnet schools voluntarily bringing together city and suburban students in powerful specialized schools. One great advantage of good choice programs is that they can cross boundaries. Such schools could be sponsored by the state or the great colleges and universities in the city. Once a serious goal is established, the possibilities would be multiplied.

When we look at the statistics in the years since our last report it is easy to be discouraged. When we listen to the voice of students demanding justice, and we examine more closely the possibilities of a city experiencing major changes, it is not hard to imagine something much better. Many years of working on civil rights issues across the country have shown me that powerful gains are possible in places with long histories of neglect and fear. Nothing this important is easy, but it is worth it. Students and families who reach across the racial lines are preparing themselves for a changing society, learning very important lessons about each other, helping the community, and moving across barriers that generations have failed to cross. We are

a society that has always struggled with the realities of racial division and unequal opportunities. They are obvious in the statistics in this report. With the right vision and leadership, I know that much could be done to enable students to come together successfully in this great city.

*-Gary Orfield*



# **NYC School Segregation Report Card**

## ***Still Last, Action Needed Now***

### **Executive Summary**

Eight years ago, in 2014, The Civil Rights Project issued a report that raised awareness about the dire state of segregation in New York State (NYS) and, in particular, New York City (NYC) schools. That report spurred substantial activism, primarily led by student groups, parents, teachers, and administrators, which has been influential in the current integration efforts underway in NYC.

This report serves as an update to the 2014 report on NYC segregation, which analyzed data up to 2010.<sup>2</sup> The analysis of recent data in this report reveals trends from 2010-2018 in school segregation at the state, city, borough, and community district level.

A number of findings resulted from the analysis. First, NYS retains its place as the most segregated state for black students, and second most segregated for Latino students (after California).<sup>3</sup> Segregation patterns have persisted since 2010, and attendance in segregated schools has intensified for black students. More black and Latino students are attending schools with high levels of poverty. We found great disparities in racial/ethnic isolation between charter and traditional public schools. Charter schools have proliferated since 2010 and these remain the most highly racially isolated schools. We found slight decreases in the share of charter schools that are intensely segregated since 2010, except for in Queens where there has been a sharp increase in the share of segregated charter schools. There is great variation among racial/ethnic isolation among city boroughs and community school districts. Black and Latino students experience the greatest isolation in the Bronx, and white and Asian students have the highest isolation on Staten Island. Three community school districts have experienced modest diversification in their school enrollment: District 2 in Manhattan, District 15 in Brooklyn and District 31 in Staten Island.

Other specific findings include:

#### **Demographic Shifts**

At the state level, growing demographic changes in NYS that were outlined in 2010 persist. White students are no longer the state's majority group as they were in 2010 (just over 50% at that time), and Latino and Asian populations continue to increase. The ongoing national changes in population are clearly present in the state, which is experiencing overall declining enrollment: shrinking shares of white and black students and rising shares of Latino and Asian students.

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<sup>2</sup> Kucsera, J., & Orfield, G. (2014). New York state's extreme school segregation: Inequality, inaction and a damaged future, (March), 155 p. Retrieved from <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norfl-et-report-placeholder>.

<sup>3</sup> Based on highest shares of segregated schools and lowest exposure to White students.

With the growing population of nonwhite students, more students are attending diverse schools, but shares of predominantly nonwhite schools are increasing. If all schools were perfectly proportional in the city, all schools would be predominantly nonwhite; however, the share of intensely segregated schools (>90% students of color<sup>4</sup>) is increasing. On the other hand, there has been a steep decline in extremely segregated schools (>99% students of color), consistent with national trends. All racial/ethnic groups but Latino students have experienced declining contact with white students in NYS; this has been supplanted with growing exposure to Latino students. Black students have seen a 10 point increase in their contact with Latino students since 1990 (21% to 31%).

NYS has experienced declining poverty among children under 18, from 21% in 2010 to 19% in 2018. Poverty among white children is the lowest in the state (12%) and highest among black and Latino children (27-28%%). The poverty level for Latino children was 28% in 2018, a decline from the high and roughly stable share of 34% from 2010-2015.<sup>5</sup> Despite overall declines in poverty, dual segregation of race/ethnicity with low-income status has worsened over the past 10 years. The average black, Latino, and American Indian student attends schools with 78% low-income students, a sharp rise from 68% in 2010 (may be over-estimated due to free-reduced lunch data collection change, explained in the Data and Analysis section). In a highly multiracial state, it is important to realize that most schools combine significant shares of low-income and nonwhite students; issues that arise will need attention by those concerned with successful race relations. This data, of course, does not reflect the surge of poverty during the pandemic, which has disproportionately impacted families of color.

NYC has experienced large demographic shifts as well over the past 30 years. The largest change is the increase in the Latino population, from 35% in 1990 to 41% in 2018. This is the largest racial/ethnic group in the city's schools. The Asian proportion has also increased sharply, more than doubling in the same time frame (from 8% in 1990 to over 17% in 2018). Asian students now surpass the number of white students. Since, on average, Asian students attend strong schools, are high achieving, and fewer shares are low-income, the growth of Asian student enrollment has become an important factor in integration, race relations, and language policy. At the same time, there have been significant declines in the black student population; once the largest racial/ethnic group in the city with a 37% share of the population in 1990, it declined to 25% in 2018. For the first time in 30 years, white student enrollment has increased (14.5% to 15.1% from 2010-2018), potentially signaling a small beginning of their return to urban schools.

In NYC, an increasing trend in shares of schools with *intense* segregation (>90% nonwhite student enrollment) declined slightly from a high of 72% in 2010 to 70% in 2018. The share of *apartheid schools* (>99% nonwhite student enrollment) has been declining since 1990, but over the past 10 years, NYC saw an even steeper rate of decline than previous decades (31% to 17%). This could reflect the return of white families to historically nonwhite communities. Still, 94% (934,043) of students in NYC attend predominantly nonwhite schools and the share of these schools has been increasing for 30 years. Although overall shares of intensely segregated schools declined since 2010, attendance in segregated schools has intensified for black students, while

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<sup>4</sup> Students of color include students of any nonwhite race/ethnicity.

<sup>5</sup> Children in poverty in New York State, 100% poverty threshold. Source: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>.

white and Asian attendance in these schools has been relatively stable and much lower than that of underrepresented minority students.<sup>6</sup> Essentially *all* students of color attend predominantly nonwhite schools, whereas two-thirds of white students do the same. Roughly 85% of black students, and three-fourths of Latino students attend intensely segregated schools while only 11% of white and 43% of Asian students do. Twenty-one percent of NYC schools are comprised of a majority (>50%) of white and Asian students. The racial/ethnic composition of these schools is heavily skewed by white and Asian students: 73% white students, 67% Asian students, 7% black students, and 16% Latino students comprise these schools.

Poverty levels of students in NYC schools have fluctuated since 2014, but in 2018 the poverty rate was the same as it was in 2014 (73%). Black and Latino students disproportionately attend schools that have more than a 75% rate of poverty. Latino students increasingly attend these schools, their share up from 66% in 2014 to 73% in 2018, and black students from 66% in 2014 to 71% in 2018. White and Asian students also attend schools with higher poverty in higher shares than they did in 2014, but the increases are much more modest (19% to 22% for white students, and 37% to 42% for Asian students).

Achievement gaps by race/ethnicity and poverty go hand-in-hand with segregated schools. We found wide disparities in achievement gaps between underrepresented minority students and white and Asian students as well as by income status in NYC schools. White and Asian students in both math and English Language Arts (ELA) are overwhelmingly in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> quintiles of achievement; 91% of students in these groups score in the top 20% of all scores. The majority of black and Latino students score in the lowest 20% of all scores. Results for ELA scores for low-income students show that 26% are in the bottom 20% of scores and 42% are in the top 20% of scores. These are disconcerting results compared to the majority (87%) of advantaged students scoring in the top 20% of scores and only 6% in the bottom 20%. Similar patterns exist in math scores, but the disparities are even greater. It would be wrong, of course, to attribute these vast gaps wholly to schools since the city is very stratified by race and class; the associated family and community inequalities are strongly related to test scores.

### **Expanded School Choice**

In 2002, Mayor Bloomberg took control of the city's schools and greatly expanded the school choice system. Bloomberg billed school choice as a way to even the playing field for low-income students and students of color students by giving all students access to the city's schools. In theory, choice programs can facilitate desegregation; however, the expanded choice in NYC was void of diversity goals and rife with exclusionary admissions methods that have had the opposite effect. During Bloomberg's administration, Schools Chancellor Klein closed roughly 150 schools that were deemed to be failing and, in their place, encouraged and aided in opening charter schools by offering them free space in public school buildings. Charter school expansion has continued under Mayor de Blasio. Magnet schools, conceived to promote voluntary integration, fell out of favor, and magnet grant funding ceased in 2010. We explore segregation metrics between charter and traditional public schools to understand how different school types may contribute to segregated schools. A variety of Civil Rights Project studies have shown that choice not linked to equity policies can easily reflect and even increase inequalities, since the

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<sup>6</sup> Underrepresented minority students include black, Latino, American Indian students.

most educated and affluent parents usually have better information and contacts and are more successful in obtaining the best opportunities.

NYC's choice system includes eight highly selective high schools enrolling 2% of the city's students. These schools provide exceptional opportunities to students who attend. From the 1930s the specialized high schools boast a long history of fourteen Nobel laureates and numerous Pulitzer-Prize winners. In 1971, the Hecht-Calandra Act was passed, requiring one test, the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), to be the sole factor in determining entry to one of the specialized high schools.<sup>7</sup> However, research shows that exam performance is highly correlated with parental educational attainment and socioeconomic status, thus tests, such as the SHSAT, used as a single measure of "merit" contribute to inequities. Attendance in the specialized high schools is highly skewed with heavy white and Asian student enrollment, and has been highlighted as extremely inequitable as very few black, Latino, and American Indian students gain entry. We found that in 2018, on average, 82% of enrollment in these schools is white and Asian and only 15% is black, Latino, and American Indian. At the far extreme, Stuyvesant High School and Staten Island Technical High Schools each have 92% of enrollment white and Asian students, only 1% black and 2%-3% Latino students. Our results showed that with so few black, Latino, and American Indian students, exposure among white and Asian students to these groups is also very low. Typical white or Asian students attend these schools with only 4% black students and 6% Latino students. Black and Latino students in the exam schools have high contact with white and Asian students as these comprise the majority of students with whom they attend.

### ***Segregation in Charter vs. Traditional Schools***

Charter schools have proliferated in NYC in the past 10 years, almost doubling in numbers (they now comprise 16% of all schools). They are overwhelmingly intensely segregated for black and Latino students, more so than the traditional public schools. Ninety-five percent of black students and 91% of Latino students attend intensely segregated charter schools, compared to 80% of black and 70% of Latino students attending intensely segregated traditional public schools. Whereas 15% of black students attend apartheid traditional public schools, over half (51%) of black students in charter schools are in apartheid charter schools. The shares for Latino students are also astonishingly high: 13% in apartheid traditional public schools versus 41% in apartheid charter schools. Civil Rights Project studies have consistently pointed to the lack of diversity policies in most charter schools. The fact that the charters are relatively new in the city shows that the city made a large commitment to creating new schools without addressing this basic issue, creating a system even more segregated than the traditional schools.

### ***Segregation in NYC Boroughs: Charter vs. Traditional Schools***

The number of charter schools has increased most markedly in the Bronx and Queens, accompanied by an increase in those that are intensely segregated. In the Bronx, 100% of the charter schools are intensely segregated in 2018, compared to 93% in 2010. As such, black and Latino students in Bronx public and charter schools, where close to all their peers are black, Latino, or American Indian, experience the greatest degree of isolation. In Queens, shares of

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<sup>7</sup> LaGuardia High School is a ninth specialized high school, not included in the analysis on specialized high schools here as admissions are determined by audition.

charter schools that are intensely segregated increased from 59% in 2010 to 82% in 2018. All other boroughs have experienced a decline in intensely segregated schools from 10 years ago. Most boroughs have no charter schools with more than 50% white student enrollment; Brooklyn has less than 3% of charter schools that are predominantly white. Staten Island has the most predominantly white traditional public schools (42%) and Manhattan has the next highest share (14%). White students in Staten Island charter schools, where they attend schools that are 71% white and Asian, are the most isolated from black, Latino, and American Indian students. In Brooklyn public schools, white students attend schools with 63% white and Asian students. However, there is substantial variability in white student enrollment in schools within boroughs. In 2010, roughly a third of schools in Staten Island served 80% or more white students; in 2018, that percent had fallen to under 10%. Still, in 2018, one-fourth of schools in Staten Island had higher than 68% white student enrollment. On the other hand, schools in the Bronx are heavily weighted with lower shares of white students; less than 3% of Bronx schools serve more than 20% of white students and this has not changed significantly since 2010.

### **Community District Moves Towards Integration**

Mayor de Blasio took office in 2014 and had been lukewarm on taking up integration efforts for the first part of his administration. After the publication of the landmark 2014 report, “New York state’s extreme school segregation: Inequality, inaction and a damaged future”,<sup>8</sup> activist groups increased pressure on the mayor to take action, resulting in de Blasio hiring a pro-integration chancellor, Richard Carranza, and forming the School Diversity Advisory Group (SDAG) commission. The SDAG published a milestone report providing detailed measures to desegregate NYC schools, including providing grants to schools to develop and implement integration plans. In 2016, the NYC Department of Education (DOE) initiated a Diversity in Admissions pilot program. The pilot started with seven schools in 2016-17, and in 2017-18, 14 more schools joined the pilot group. By 2019-20, 81 schools, five pre-K programs and three districts had adopted diversity plans, and currently, the number has grown to 100 NYC public schools. We review district segregation metrics to investigate differences between districts, including those that have undertaken voluntary integration efforts. Since the data used in this report ends with the 2018-19 school year, it is too soon to see the possible effect of the most recent changes, which should be evaluated after the next regular school year after the pandemic, which has seriously distorted normal patterns.

### ***Modest Increase in Diverse Schooling in Three Community School Districts***

There are a significant number of schools showing signs of reduced segregation. Since 2010, we have seen a modest increase in white student enrollment and a greater share of schools that are diverse.<sup>9</sup> Eight years ago, all of NYC community school districts (CSDs) were greater than 60% nonwhite. Since then, the share of schools with this nonwhite percentage has steadily declined, to 95% in 2018. There were no CSDs that were diverse in 2010; in 2014 that share had grown to 4% and was 5% in 2018. However, there is considerable intra-district variation in the shares of

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<sup>8</sup> Kucsera, J., & Orfield, G. (2014). New York state’s extreme school segregation: Inequality, inaction and a damaged future, (March), 155 p. Retrieved from <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norfl-et-report-placeholder>.

<sup>9</sup> In our analysis, we characterize diverse schools as those that have shares of nonwhite enrollment between 20-60%.

white student enrollment in schools. In exploring district racial/ethnic stability from 2010-2018, we identify 34 schools that are integrating, predominantly within District 2 in Manhattan, District 15 in Brooklyn, and 31 in Staten Island. These districts were all on the SDAG's list of CSDs with sufficient demographic diversity to create integration plans. District 15 was one of the first districts to adopt an integration plan that was launched in the 2019-20 school year. We identified 22 schools that are resegregating, nine of which are located in District 24 and District 25 in Queens.

Using the categorization schema outlined by the SDAG to quantify representativeness between a school and its district, we found 42% of the schools in NYC (public non-charter schools only) to be representative of their community district (within 10% of the CSD average share of each race), 31% of schools to be unrepresentative of their district (20% above or below the CSD average for each race/ethnicity), and 26% are somewhat representative (within 10%-20% of the CSD average). Manhattan had the highest shares of unrepresentative schools (55%) and the Bronx had the lowest (16%). Conversely, the Bronx had the highest rate of representative schools (49%) and Queens the lowest (19%).

In the absence of concrete school desegregation policy, and management of neighborhood gentrification and diversity goals in school choice, these forces have a complex interplay and exert varying impacts on school segregation. This report is intended to further our understanding and debate about the state of segregation in NYC schools and also the impacts of forces in play since 2010.

## Introduction

New York City is known as a melting pot, one of the most diverse cities in the nation. However, “melting pot” is a dubious moniker for the city’s schools, which lead the nation in segregation.<sup>10</sup> Sixty-seven years after the Supreme Court prohibited educational segregation, the subject of integration in NYC schools has been reignited. The 2014 Civil Rights Project report,<sup>11</sup> revealing New York state (NYS) has the most segregated schools in the nation, was arguably a catalyst to renewing the debate around desegregation. Activism around desegregation grew as grassroots advocates, particularly those led by student groups like IntegrateNYC, Teens Take Charge<sup>12</sup> educators, parents, and district leaders, engaged in the opportunity to organize and influence policy. These efforts led to the current integration work underway in NYC.

New York City has a history of housing policy that excluded people of color from participating in real estate wealth generation, which contributed to racial wealth gaps and residential segregation. Historical, racist educational policies had their roots in the exclusion of black students from schools. Geographic school zoning further exacerbated racial isolation in schools. These policies contributed to school segregation and culminated in harmful effects on underrepresented minority students, including what is known as the racial “achievement gap.” Over the past eight years, several interrelated forces have been at play perpetuating school segregation in NYC, notably demographic shifts, gentrification, and expanded choice and charter school growth.

Historically, segregation was framed in terms of black to white separation. However, sizable demographic changes in NYC have resulted in increased enrollment of Asian and Latino students, and small increases in white student enrollment. Although there is wide heterogeneity among Asian American groups (discussed further in the Data and Analysis section), on average, Asian students tend to be less poor, attend strong schools and have strong academic backgrounds, as do white students. Research shows that due to many factors including segregated schools, black and Latino students consistently score lower on standardized tests than white and Asian students.<sup>13</sup> Thus, it is relevant to think explicitly about integration in terms of Asian and white students as a group isolated from black, Latino, and American Indian students. Our analysis in this report encompasses these groupings. Policy analysis from this viewpoint could also create opportunities for black, Latino, and American Indian students to access schools with more resource advantages, and for white students to benefit from greater exposure to peers from underrepresented minority groups.

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<sup>10</sup> Kucsera, J., & Orfield, G. (2014). New York State’s extreme school segregation: Inequality, inaction and a damaged future, (March), 155 p. Retrieved from <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/ny-norfllet-report-placeholder>.

<sup>11</sup> IBID.

<sup>12</sup> Teens Take Charge was founded and is led by NYC high school students. On February 13, 2021, Teens Take Charge and UCLA Civil Rights Project hosted a virtual summit on racial justice in K-12 schools. <https://www.teenstakecharge.com>.

<sup>13</sup> Musu-Gillette, L., de Brey, C., McFarland, J., Hussar, W., Sonnenberg, W., & Wilkinson-Flicker, S. (2019). *Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic groups 2017*. National Center for Educational Statistics (Vol. NCES 2019-). Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019038.pdf>.

In New York City, exciting community integration plans have been initiated since 2014 and the implementation of diversification plans have recently launched in a few districts. The evaluation of these plans is beyond the scope of this report, but small signs of change could be the beginning of change for the future. However, in the absence of systemic and concrete school desegregation policy, school choice expansion and demographic changes have a complex interplay and exert varying impacts on school segregation.

We open this report with a discussion of the harms of segregation, followed by a brief overview of the history of segregation in NYC schools and a detailed discussion of the eight years of desegregation efforts in NYC since the publication of our last report. Gentrification and educational policies, including admissions testing, screening, and gifted and talented programs, have contributed to and propagate further the system of inequity entrenched in NYC schools. School choice policies facilitate gentrification, as high-income families are more likely to move into a low-income neighborhood if they have the option to send their children out of the neighborhood schools. Integration efforts by local districts act as a potential counterbalance to segregation resulting from choice and gentrification. We discuss these factors to describe how they contribute to integration or segregation. However, the time frame included in this report ends in 2018-19 and predates the implementation of diversification plans by local districts, thus any evaluation of these plans is not included in our analysis. These plans should be evaluated after the next regular school year and after the COVID-19 pandemic. We present demographic and segregation patterns over the past eight years in NYC schools and conclude with policy recommendations.

## **Harmful Effects of Segregation**

Stemming from a long history of systemic racial inequality, segregation in New York City schools is a deep-rooted problem that touches on political, social, and emotional levels. Systemic biases in school and residential real estate policy contributed strongly to segregation and continues to perpetuate it in schools. Integrating schools is presented here not as a panacea to racial inequity in US society, but as a powerful tool to help correct racial power imbalances and access to educational opportunities and structures. Disparities found among schools segregated by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status (SES) underscore the importance of access to resources that can disrupt the cycle of inequality and reshape educational opportunity for low-income students and students of color.<sup>14</sup> But segregation does not only harm people of color. Isolation of white students in schools means they also do not reap the benefits from having black and brown classmates, including growth that comes from having friendships across racial lines, improved cultural competency, greater collaboration, improved critical thinking and problem solving skills. As a country, society is harmed by the racial divides that segregation creates, and diminishes the ability for all students to be successful in a workforce that is increasingly diverse.

Nearly 60 years of social science research supports the fact that schools segregated by race/ethnicity and SES are associated with factors that severely limit educational opportunities

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<sup>14</sup> Adams, M. (2013). Integration reclaimed: A review of Gary Peller's critical race consciousness book review. *Connecticut Law Review*, 229. Retrieved from [https://opencommons.uconn.edu/law\\_review/229](https://opencommons.uconn.edu/law_review/229).



and life outcomes. The many negative impacts of segregated schools are particularly borne by students of color and low-income students. Segregated schools of poverty generally have fewer resources and this leads to achievement gaps and lower lifetime opportunities and success.<sup>15</sup> Thus, integration provides the opportunity to access the funding, resources, and networks of opportunity associated with schools that serve middle-class, white, and Asian students. Racially and socioeconomically diverse schools, and their access to greater resources, can provide students with a range of educational and social benefits.

Segregated schools attended by students of color students and low-income students typically have less experienced teachers, higher teacher turnover, and more limited curricula, particularly in advanced courses such as AP and honors level. Moreover, advanced-level math course taking is a key part of college preparation and a strong indicator of college matriculation. Students at higher SES schools find advantages in this regard, as they have more access to college prep math courses and progress further in their math curriculum versus students at low SES schools.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, research shows that segregated schools have higher expulsion, dropout, and graduation rates, which further causes academic harm.<sup>17</sup> Student discipline is also harsher in schools segregated by race/ethnicity than those that are middle-class with more white students. One study found that black students were far more likely to be suspended or expelled than their white peers, and that racial biases were a contributor.<sup>18</sup> Students subjected to this type of treatment are at a higher risk of negative life outcomes including involvement with the criminal justice system.<sup>19</sup>

Academic achievement disparities are exacerbated by school segregation, with higher achievement found in schools serving predominantly white and middle-class students. Moreover, the poverty level of a school has been found to exert a more powerful effect on individual students than a student's own income status.<sup>20</sup> Student learning has been shown to be more impacted by school factors in low socioeconomic schools versus schools serving more socioeconomically advantaged students.<sup>21</sup> Schools segregated by race/ethnicity generally also have high shares of low-income students, termed double segregation. A report that categorized 2,000 schools in the US as "dropout factories" found all to be doubly segregated.<sup>22</sup> Schools

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<sup>15</sup> Palardy (2008). Differential school effects among low, middle, and high social class composition schools: A multiple group, multilevel latent growth curve analysis. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* (Vol. 19) <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243450801936845>.

<sup>16</sup> Palardy, "Differential school effects", 38.

<sup>17</sup> Lee, C., & Orfield, G. (2005). Why segregation matters: Poverty and educational inequality. The Civil Rights Project, (January), 1–47. Palardy, G. J. (2008). *Differential school effects among low, middle, and high social class composition schools: A multiple group, multilevel latent growth curve analysis. School Effectiveness and School Improvement* (Vol. 19). <https://doi.org/10.1080/09243450801936845>.

<sup>18</sup> Riddle, T., & Sinclair, S. (2019). Racial disparities in school-based disciplinary actions are associated with county-level rates of racial bias. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 116(17), 8255–8260. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1808307116>.

<sup>19</sup> Hirschfield, P. (2009). Another way out: The impact of juvenile arrests on high school dropout. *Sociology of Education*, 82(4), 368–393.

<sup>20</sup> G. Borman, and M. Dowling, "Schools and Inequality: A Multilevel Analysis of Coleman's Equality of Educational Opportunity Data." *Teachers College Record* 112, no. 5 (2010): 1201-1246.

<sup>21</sup> Palardy, "Differential school effects", 37.

<sup>22</sup> R. Balfanz and N. E. Legters, "Locating the Dropout Crisis: Which High Schools Produce the Nation's Dropouts? In G. Orfield, ed., *Dropouts in America: Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2004, pp. 57-84; C. Swanson, "Sketching a Portrait of Public High School.

segregated by poverty also face other types of inequities: less stable enrollment, higher levels of foster students and homelessness, and students with higher chronic medical issues leading to higher chronic absenteeism. One study found that low-income students attending wealthier schools scored two years ahead of their peers attending high-poverty schools.<sup>23</sup> Low socioeconomic schools tend to have lower resources to attract and retain qualified teachers, often those who teach college prep courses.<sup>24</sup> Peer influences at low SES schools tend to undercut educational attitudes, behaviors and ultimately educational attainment while enhancing it in high SES schools.<sup>25</sup> The school and individual factors associated with low SES schools culminate in substantially lower rates of high school graduation and college matriculation,<sup>26</sup> restricting the range of careers that could be pursued and impacting life-long earning potential.<sup>27</sup>

Though integration does not solve all the harms associated with segregated schools, it addresses many of the factors that influence educational attainment. Diverse schools have many benefits, including higher academic achievement, improved intergroup relations, and long-term life success.<sup>28</sup> Desegregated schools offer students of all racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds the opportunity to learn in diverse settings, which have been shown to foster multicultural understanding and improved critical thinking skills.<sup>29</sup> Integrated schools improve cross-cultural competency and intergroup relationships leading to reduced stereotyping and racial bias, the skills needed to succeed in a multiracial society. Improved race relations can have long-term societal benefits as individuals from different groups gain mutual understanding, which has a lasting impact since individuals educated in desegregated schools tend to seek out similar environments in adulthood.<sup>30</sup> Segregated schools, on the other hand, limit interracial social interaction, often during a period when racial/ethnic attitudes are being established. As has been proven in the research on affirmative action in colleges, students of all races gain from diverse educational experiences in terms of broadened perspectives, understanding of other groups and preparation to live and work together as adults. White students, as a former majority population in schools, particularly need these experiences of learning about other groups that comprise the future majority.

In addition to improved race-relations, desegregated schools offer improved academic and life outcomes for underrepresented minority students. Research shows students who attend desegregated schools have higher educational achievement and completion, higher education success, and better economic outcomes than those with concentrated poverty, regardless of a

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<sup>23</sup> *NAEP Data Explorer*, National Assessment for Educational Progress, 2017, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/naepdata/>; and C. Lubienski and S. T. Lubienski, "Charter, private, public schools and academic achievement: New evidence from NAEP mathematics data," National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, January 2006, [https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/EPRU-0601-137-OWI\[1\].pdf](https://nepc.colorado.edu/sites/default/files/EPRU-0601-137-OWI[1].pdf).

<sup>24</sup> Palardy, "Differential school effects", 38.

<sup>25</sup> Palardy, G. J. (2013). High school socioeconomic segregation and student attainment. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(4), 714–754. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831213481240>.

<sup>26</sup> Palardy, "High school socioeconomic segregation", 742-743.

<sup>27</sup> Kolesnikova, N. (2009). *Community colleges: A route of upward economic mobility*. Retrieved from [https://www.stlouisfed.org/~media/files/pdfs/publications/pub\\_assets/pdf/br/2009/communitycolleges.pdf?la=en](https://www.stlouisfed.org/~media/files/pdfs/publications/pub_assets/pdf/br/2009/communitycolleges.pdf?la=en).

<sup>28</sup> Ayscue, J., Frankenberg, E., & Siegel-hawley, G. (2017). The complementary benefits of racial and socioeconomic diversity in schools. *Education*, (36), 197–238.

<sup>29</sup> Ayscue & Siegel-hawley, "Benefits of racial and socioeconomic diversity", 2.

<sup>30</sup> Ayscue & Siegel-hawley, "Benefits of racial and socioeconomic diversity", 3.

student's own economic status.<sup>31</sup> For example, black students that attend more resource rich schools with challenging curriculum, materials and facilities have been shown to have higher graduation rates.<sup>32</sup> Better health outcomes and future earnings have also been found for black students who attended desegregated schools.<sup>33</sup>

The benefits of desegregated schools are not a given nor is desegregation a remedy to systemic racial/ethnic inequities and racism. Furthermore, the manner in which diversity within a school is managed is critical. Even in integrated schools, students of color experience inequities, systemic racism, and discrimination just as some students of color thrive in schools that are majority nonwhite. Clearly, integration narrowly defined in terms of interracial mixing in schools is not the simple end goal. Curriculum, teaching processes, racial/ethnic representation among faculty and administration, and strong leadership to support intergroup relationships and navigate socio-cultural issues are necessary elements to beneficial school integration. Nonetheless, research is clear that desegregated schools offer students improved academic and life-long benefits and preparation to live and work successfully in a nation that is becoming increasingly diverse. School integration is a powerful means to rectify fundamental societal power imbalances.

## History of Segregation in NYC Public Schools

The first schools in NYC were established in 1805 as the Free School Society, run by Quakers, and later by Baptist groups who renamed the school system, The Public School Society. The Catholic Church dissuaded participation in The Public School Society believing it to be anti-Catholic, and with Irish Catholic immigration on the rise in the 1830s, the pressure to include their involvement in schools led to the establishment of the NYC Board of Education (BOE) in 1842. Schools were under local control by town school boards. The Public School Society schools were ultimately converted to the universal public school system in 1853.<sup>34</sup>

African Americans were, however, not able to access these schools until after 1827, when the New York legislature passed a law for the abolition of legal slavery, the first state to do so. The first school established to educate African Americans in Brooklyn in 1827 was the New York African Free School.<sup>35</sup> It began as a one-room schoolhouse with forty students, mainly enrolling children of slaves, and was later incorporated into the New York public school system and renamed Colored School No. 1.<sup>36</sup> In 1896, *Plessy vs. Ferguson* upheld the “separate but equal” decision, and in 1899 a similar ruling by New York state courts decided that it was legal to

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<sup>31</sup> Rucker C. Johnson with Alexander Nazaryan, *Children of the Dream: Why School Integration Works*, New York: Basic Books, 2019; Jennifer Ayscue, Erica Frankenberg, & Genevieve Siegel-Hawley, The complementary benefits of racial and socioeconomic diversity in schools. Washington, DC: The National Coalition on School Diversity. Research Brief No. 10. (2017).

<sup>32</sup> Palardy, “High school socioeconomic segregation”, 734.

<sup>33</sup> Johnson, R. C. (2011). Long-run impacts of school desegregation and school quality on adult attainment. *NBER Working Paper*, 1–87.

<sup>34</sup> <https://janos.nyc/2015/04/10/today-in-nyc-history-the-great-school-wars-religious-edition-1842>.

<sup>35</sup> <http://archives.nypl.org/scm/20890>.

<sup>36</sup> IBID.

refuse admittance of a “colored child” to a “white public school.”<sup>37</sup> Although this provision was repealed in 1938, theoretically making segregated schools illegal, no real desegregation occurred and schools remained segregated in New York.

Between 1940 and 1960, black and Puerto Rican immigration to NYC was met with rampant racism. Federal Housing Authority’s guidelines upheld residential segregation with redlining practices, whereby neighborhoods were rated on a scale, with lower ratings given to communities with higher shares of black residents. Banks refused loans to black homebuyers, and landlords discriminated against black renters to avoid the risk of lowering a neighborhood’s rating. Black and Puerto Rican neighborhoods and schools became overcrowded, yet the school zoning lines remained in place. The BOE’s answer to overcrowding in schools in black and Puerto Rican neighborhoods was to implement part-time school days and the old school facilities continued to deteriorate.<sup>38</sup>

A few months after the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* Supreme Court ruling that declared dual educational systems unconstitutional, Kenneth Clark, a psychologist whose research was used by NAACP in the *Brown* case, concluded that *de facto* segregation in NYC schools led to inferior education that resulted in psychological damage to black children.<sup>39</sup> A lesser known finding from Clark’s research, highlighted by Heather McGee in her recent book,<sup>40</sup> is the harm done to white children. Clark notes that students in the majority group learn “prejudices of our society and are also being taught to gain personal status in an unrealistic and non-adaptive way (pg. 246).”<sup>41</sup> His research was initially met with backlash, but he was able to convince then school Superintendent Jansen to support a study, “The Status of the Public School Education of Negro and Puerto Rican Children in NYC.”<sup>42</sup> The NYC BOE tasked the Public Education Association to conduct the study, which essentially confirmed Clark’s findings: schools that served black and Puerto Rican students were overcrowded, buildings were in deplorable conditions, teachers were inexperienced and many were substitute teachers, poor academic achievement was the norm, and students of color were disproportionately placed in special education classes.<sup>43</sup> The BOE acknowledged segregation was a problem in the city schools and established a committee, The Commission on Integration, to evaluate the report’s findings and to propose an integration plan. Six sub-commissions presented their recommendations to the BOE between 1956-1957, but in 1958, the Commission’s Final Report

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<sup>37</sup> Folts, J. D. (1996). History of the University of the State of New York and the State Education Department 1784-1996. Albany, NY: New York State Education Department. Retrieved from <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/edocs/education/sedhist.htm>.

<sup>38</sup> Forest, J. De. (2008). The 1958 Harlem school boycott: Parental activism and the struggle for educational equity in NYC. *Urban Review*, 40, 21–41. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-007-0075-5>.

<sup>39</sup> Jeffries, H. K., & Jones, P. D. (2012). Desegregating New York: The case of the “Harlem Nine.” *OAH Magazine of History*, 26(1), 51–53. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oahmag/oar061>.

<sup>40</sup> McGhee, H. (2021). *The sum of us: What racism costs everyone and how we can prosper together*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House LLC.

<sup>41</sup> Clark, K. B. (1963). Segregated schools in New York City. *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 36(6), 245–250.

<sup>42</sup> Public Education Association of the City of New York., New York University. Research Center for Human Relations., New York (N.Y.). Board of Education. Commission on Integration. (1955). The status of the public school education of Negro and Puerto Rican children in NYC.

<sup>43</sup> Harlem Parents Committee. (1965). The education of minority group children in the NYC public schools, 1965. New York, NY.

found limited changes, citing lack of funding and “professional misunderstandings” of the recommendations.<sup>44</sup> Seven years later, The Harlem Parents Committee documented that,

...after another seven years of studies and surveys, new programs and ‘pilot projects’, reports and recommendations, consultations and conferences, demonstrations, counter-demonstrations, boycotts and negotiations, policy pronouncements and progress reports, we find ourselves essentially no further along that road in the fall of 1965 than we were in the fall of 1958<sup>45</sup>

In fact, segregation had increased, with the number of “X” school (those with an elementary school population of 90% or more of black and Puerto Rican students and junior high school with a population of 85% or more) increasing 17% in the two years after the Commission’s report.<sup>46</sup> Buildings were left in their dilapidated states, and the BOE was unwilling to alter zoning to achieve integration. Clark, who later served on the New York Board of Regents, was bitterly disappointed at the failure to deliver on many promises.

Residential segregation, property tax-based school funding, boundary lines, and resource decision-making by white administrators unfairly relegated black students to segregated schools with inferior conditions and less qualified teachers.<sup>47</sup> In 1958, “The Little Rock Nine of Harlem,” a group of mothers, boycotted Harlem junior high school, claiming their children were not receiving a quality education.<sup>48</sup> As a result, four of the parents were found guilty of violating the state’s law on compulsory education. Supreme Court Judge Polier tried the case of 2 of the other parents, dismissed their case and issued a landmark decision upholding the parents’ rights to their children’s equal education. Her decision charged the NYC BOE with offering inferior education to black students but stopped short of alleging *de facto* segregation. The BOE appealed the Polier decision, spurring protests to remove board members, which did not materialize. The Harlem 9 provided a model for school boycotts for the next 15 years.

Like most of the country, the decades following *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954) were a time of concentrated desegregation efforts. However, unlike desegregation in the South, New York City schools never faced a citywide desegregation lawsuit and were never court-ordered to desegregate, and to date, have not achieved racial/ethnic integration. Ten years after the *Brown* decision, the BOE announced the Free Choice Transfer integration plan, a future desegregation plan (the Princeton Plan), and a rezoning plan. These plans were designed to integrate black and white schools by pairing imbalanced schools and provided busing to transfer students between neighborhoods. White backlash quickly ensued; white residents established the Parents and Taxpayers organization (PAT) to oppose the plan.

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<sup>44</sup> Harlem Parents Committee, “The education of minority children”, 4.

<sup>45</sup> Harlem Parents Committee, “The education of minority children”, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Harlem Parents Committee, “The education of minority children”, 6.

<sup>47</sup> Harlem Parents Committee, “The education of minority children”, 1.

<sup>48</sup> Jeffries & Jones, “Desegregating New York”, 51.

Civil rights activists, frustrated over continued stymied integration efforts, led one of the biggest Civil Rights Movement boycotts to protest segregation and inequity in education. In 1964, over 464,000 students participated in the boycott. In response, the PAT staged an opposing protest where more than 10,000 white parents marched to fight integration efforts. In the end, protests and threats against NYC officials who feared the threat of white flight led to the abandonment of desegregation efforts.<sup>49</sup>

In response to fierce resistance to integration on the part of white residents, black and Latino civil rights leaders in NYC led the charge towards local control, and in 1969 the State Legislature decentralized the city schools by dividing the city into 32 community school districts (CSDs, also called “Districts”) and transferred control from the mayor to local school districts. Local districts had the power to elect community boards and local superintendents who governed elementary and middle school; high school remained controlled by NYC BOE. This system, with many modifications, lasted until 2002 when Michael Bloomberg became mayor, successfully lobbied the state legislature and gained control of NYC public schools. This win allowed the mayor to appoint school chancellors and members of the Board of Education and gave him the power to close schools.

In 2007, Supreme Court decisions in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District* struck down voluntary integration programs that assigned students to schools according to their race. Subsequently, the few schools in NYC that previously achieved racial/ethnic balance by using race in admissions became majority (>50%) white.<sup>50</sup> Thus, initiatives to decrease segregation using race/ethnicity in admissions were essentially abandoned under Bloomberg’s administration. Bloomberg transformed school admissions, which were previously based on geographic proximity, to a school choice model where families select schools and rank their preferred school choices. The process was intended to diminish inequity in the city by allowing students to apply to schools anywhere in the city and thus leave segregated, poor quality neighborhood schools. However, this posed several problems, not the least of which was the challenges facing the schools left behind.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, along with school choice, Bloomberg expanded admissions methods based on screening tests, grades, interviews, behavior, attendance, auditions, and demonstrated interest — exclusionary practices that served mostly middle-class white and Asian students. Without an eye towards equity, these reforms targeted middle-class families to draw them to NYC public schools. Bloomberg selected attorney Joel Klein in 2002 as school chancellor. He closed roughly 150 ineffective schools and, in their place, encouraged and aided in opening charter schools by offering them free space in public school buildings. Magnets, conceived to promote voluntary integration, fell out of favor, and magnet grant funding ceased in 2010. The city embraced a market oriented choice solution, without equity policies to prevent segregation of opportunities.

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<sup>49</sup> Gregory, A. F. (2019). “This is N.Y.C. not Little Rock”: The battle to integrate NYC’s public schools. Bowdoin College.

<sup>50</sup> Mader, N., Hemphill, C., & Abbas, Q. (2018). *The Paradox of Choice: How school choice divides NYC elementary schools*. Personalizing Learning in the 21st Century. New York, NY.

<sup>51</sup> Mader, Hemphill, & Abbas, “The Paradox of Choice”, 4.

## New York City, 2014 to Present

Mayor Bill de Blasio took office in 2014. His policies did not focus directly on meaningful integration efforts in the first years of his administration, typically avoiding the term “segregation” and instead favoring “diversity.” De Blasio’s approach remained hands-off in making concerted efforts towards integration, arguing residential housing and historical racism were intractable problems complicating the issue in schools.<sup>52</sup> His focus centered on improving all schools and offering parents more choices, believing that these would promote voluntary integration. Part of his agenda represented a reversal of the charter school expansion under his predecessor, preferring to turn around ineffective schools over closing them. De Blasio campaigned to curtail charter expansion, and in his first year made good on the promise; the DOE rejected several charter co-location applications. Pressure by charter school operators resulted in Governor Cuomo approving a law in 2014 to offer charter schools free space or pay their leases in private space.<sup>53</sup> New charter schools continue to be approved, but at a slower rate than under Bloomberg’s administration.

After the publication of the CRP report in 2014, the NYC Council held a hearing on school segregation that led to the passage of the School Diversity Accountability Act in 2015<sup>54</sup> requiring the NYC Department of Education to report demographic data and enrollment information by grade level in specialized programs, such as gifted and talented programs. At the state level, under pressure to promote school integration, the Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program (SIPP) was created to provide \$1.25M in grants between 2015-2018 to help schools achieve racial, ethnic and socioeconomic balance in their enrollment. A similar version of this plan was presented at the federal level but dismissed by the education department under President Trump.

Despite initial resistance to integration efforts, due to the CRP report, media coverage of it and public pressure, in 2015, Mayor de Blasio signaled his willingness to address the state of segregation in the city and initiated the NYC Department of Education (DOE) plan, “Equity and Excellence for All.”<sup>55</sup> Consistent with de Blasio’s idea that creating great schools is a panacea to segregation, the plan entails several programs to improve all student outcomes, such as a Pre-K for All program and expanded Advanced Placement courses in high schools. The plan also sets priorities and goals to create diversity in its schools. For example, it specifies when a school is considered racially representative, defines inclusivity to include students who speak dual languages and students with disabilities, improves the school selection process, and expands diversity in admissions pilot programs, among several other important goals. NYC deserves credit for the steps it has taken, and the plans outlined in “Equity and Excellence for All” to increase and support diversity in schools.

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<sup>52</sup> <https://www.gothamgazette.com/city/8769-new-york-city-waist-deep-school-desegregation-conversation-how-did-we-get-here-de-blasio>.

<sup>53</sup> Sahn, C. (2018). Finding room for NYC charter schools.

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.gothamgazette.com/city/8769-new-york-city-waist-deep-school-desegregation-conversation-how-did-we-get-here-de-blasio>.

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-US/vision-and-mission/equity-and-excellence>.

As part of the plan, the DOE established the School Diversity Advisory Group (SDAG) to make recommendations on racial and socioeconomic diversity goals and examine admissions policies that perpetuate racial/ethnic isolation.<sup>56</sup> Two reports laid the foundation for the city's diversity plan.<sup>57</sup> The reports presented short-, medium-, and long-term goals that encompass all school levels. The SDAG based the goals on the 5Rs of Real Integration set forth by IntegrateNY,<sup>58</sup> a youth-led advocacy group: race and enrollment, resources, relationships, restorative justice, and representation. Among the recommendations in the reports, the SDAG recommended eliminating gifted and talented programs, mirroring school demographics to that of the city and promoting socioeconomic integration.

A significant shift in integration policy occurred in 2018 when de Blasio hired school chancellor Richard Carranza, formerly of the Houston and San Francisco schools. Carranza signified a decided change in the administration's stance towards integration. Carranza openly made the issue of integration a priority, gaining him both praise and criticism. His first move was to tackle head-on the elimination of the Specialized High School Admissions Test. In 2019, he strongly supported a plan to eliminate the test and repeal the Hecht-Calandra Act mandating the admissions test at 3 of 8 specialized schools. Wealthy donors and some Asian advocacy groups strongly opposed the plan. Ultimately the plan never made it to the legislative floor after the Assembly's education committee voted against it.<sup>59</sup> Carranza was also openly opposed to testing 4-year-olds for the city's gifted and talented program, believing the gifted programs were unfair, frustrating some Asian-American families who felt alienated by his policies.<sup>60</sup> City Hall rejected de Blasio's plan for the test to be administered in the fall of 2020; thus, testing is temporarily suspended. Nonetheless, the test for the eight specialized high schools was allowed to go forward. Continued divergent approaches to desegregation between the often cautious De Blasio and more brazen Carranza led Carranza announcing his resignation in February 2021. Mayor de Blasio appointed Meisha Porter to replace Carranza as of 2021. Further administrative changes are on the horizon in November 2021, when the general election will determine the next mayor.

School segregation figures prominently in the current mayoral election. While Mayor de Blasio made temporary changes to the admissions process due to COVID, the next mayor will be responsible for dealing with the major issues of school segregation going forward. The prominence of integration in NYC's political discourse is clear in its presence on the campaign trail. Activist groups have pressured candidates to articulate their position on school integration policies resulting in the issues raised in town halls and interviews, revealing the candidates' mixed positions. They all believe integration is necessary but are divided on how to implement policy to achieve integration. Some candidates are in favor of ending gifted and talented

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<sup>56</sup> School Diversity Advisory Group. (2019). Making the grade: The path to real integration and equity for NYC public school students.

<sup>57</sup> [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/1c478c\\_4de7a85cae884c53a8d48750e0858172.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/1c478c_4de7a85cae884c53a8d48750e0858172.pdf).

<sup>58</sup> <https://integratenyc.org/mission>.

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/24/nyregion/specialized-schools-nyc-deblasio.html>.

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/nyregion/carranza-asian-americans-schools.html>.



programs,<sup>61</sup> and most candidates are proponents of ending gifted exam testing for kindergarten admissions, but they are divided on middle school screening. Some candidates are in favor of repealing the Hecht-Calandra Act that requires the Specialized High School Admissions Test, some further advocate for re-zoning and still others favor the policy to expand gifted programs rather than end them, especially in low-income neighborhoods.<sup>62</sup> Andrew Yang, a front-runner in the election, cautioned that ending gifted programs would result in a flight of families out of the city.<sup>63</sup>

There is hope that NYC's troubled history with school segregation is at a turning point. Hastened by COVID-19, which brought systemic racial inequity to the forefront of conversation, the Department of Education is making changes to bring greater integration to schools. The DOE permanently eliminated priorities by zones for high school admissions as of the 2020-21 enrollment cycle. They are allowing high school screens for the 2020-21 enrollment cycle, however, phasing out geographic priorities over the next two years. This means that in the 2020-21 enrollment cycle, priority is no longer given to students living in the district of their desired school, and over the next two years, all other geographic priorities will be eliminated. This will broaden access to students from all areas of the city to high-demand schools that have been previously serving affluent areas. Schools are "encouraged" but not mandated to follow the process in place via the *Diversity in Admissions* plan that is currently being used voluntarily by 100 schools.<sup>64</sup> The DOE plans to support all 32 districts in funding over the next four years to develop their own community-led diversity plans. The voluntary call to desegregate schools continues to be the policy of the mayor's office; it remains to be seen if districts will answer that call.

## Gentrification

Gentrification can revitalize neighborhoods by bringing resources, but it can also have negative impacts associated with displacing low-income residents and residents of color, leading to resegregation of schools. In the 1970s in NYC, a tax abatement program was instituted in response to urban decay to encourage developers to build by giving them a ten-year tax exemption. A by-product of the bill has been high levels of gentrification of low-income neighborhoods in the city. Although tax law requires that a portion of units be set aside for affordable housing, the provision has made little impact on affordable housing, resulting in concentrated wealth in small, segregated pockets in the city. A bill is currently in the Senate to repeal the tax law.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> <https://www.gothamgazette.com/city/10245-democratic-mayoral-candidates-education-policy-positions-nyc-schools>.

<sup>62</sup> IBID.

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/nyregion/nyc-mayoral-race-school-segregation.html>.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/874-20/mayor-de-blasio-chancellor-carranza-2021-22-school-year-admissions-process>.

<sup>65</sup> <https://legiscan.com/NY/bill/S07238/2019>.

Gentrification research shows that when middle- and upper-class families have school choices, as they do in New York City, they are more likely to move into low-income neighborhoods, knowing they can enroll their children in better quality schools outside their area. Thus, although gentrification desegregates a community, at least for some time, school choice may inhibit residential integration from extending to neighborhood schools. However, gentrification may facilitate desegregation in schools if parents opt to keep their children in neighborhood schools.<sup>66</sup> How gentrification plays out in NYC is a genuine concern as more than 12% of NYC neighborhoods are in process of gentrifying or already gentrified.<sup>67</sup>

In NYC, student retention in neighborhood schools varies by geographic area, as would be expected. Schools in higher real estate markets tend to have higher zone retention rates (Upper East Side, Midtown, lower Manhattan, Brooklyn). However, a recent study revealed that more than two-thirds of kindergarteners in gentrifying neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Central Harlem (Districts 5, 16, and 17) attend schools outside their attendance zones.<sup>68</sup> The same study found the leading predictor of choice participation to be residence in gentrifying neighborhoods; families living in gentrifying neighborhoods are more than 1.5 times as likely to participate in the choice system than those in high-income or non-gentrifying neighborhoods. Further, white students in gentrifying areas lead the charge in this regard, with 46% opting out of their zoned schools. Yet, with the white population increasing, another study found that in the city's most rapidly gentrifying areas, intensely segregated elementary schools declined between 2000 and 2015.<sup>69</sup> The authors of that study point out that school integration is, however, unlikely to stabilize on its own without efforts to sustain school integration in conjunction with neighborhood gentrification.<sup>70</sup>

## **The Choice Model in NYC**

School policies over the past 60 years have at times served to intentionally segregate schools, and at other times attempted to integrate them. The expansion of the school choice model over the past ten years is the latest iteration of integration efforts of NYC schools. The argument for school choice is based on improving public education and the belief that families have the right to choose the best school for their children. School choice proponents believe that when families “vote with their feet,” schools that deliver quality education are rewarded, and those that do not, lose students and face pressure to improve or close.<sup>71</sup> School choice is billed as a system to level the playing field that allows families in neighborhoods with low performing schools the choice to go elsewhere. This “choice” relies on families to make informed decisions regarding the fit and quality of a school. Yet, low-income families and students of color face barriers to true choice:

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<sup>66</sup> Mordechay, K., & Ayscue, J. B. (2020). Does neighborhood gentrification create school desegregation? *Teachers College Record*, 122(5), 111–135.

<sup>67</sup> <https://cusp.nyu.edu/news/gentrification-nyc-neighborhood>.

<sup>68</sup> Mader, Hemphill, & Abbas, “The Paradox of Choice”, 20.

<sup>69</sup> Mordechay & Ayscue, “Gentrification create school desegregation?”, 10.

<sup>70</sup> Mordechay & Ayscue, “Gentrification create school desegregation?”, 11.

<sup>71</sup> <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/028-12/mayor-bloomberg-details-new-york-city-s-bold-education-reform-efforts-u-s-conference-mayors>.

proximity to schools, familiarity with specific schools, time and resources to complete a successful search, and resources to pay high-cost tutors to assist with high stakes admissions exams. Consequently, the notion of a “choice” is questionable as students of low-income families often lack resources to make a fully informed choice. In contrast to the support that more advantaged children receive, the decision for low-achieving students, in some cases, is left to the child.<sup>72</sup>

Each year, students participate in NYC’s choice system by applying to the city’s 1866 public schools and 260 charter schools. The admissions process is a labyrinth of choices and admissions criteria. Most programs for elementary, middle, and high school consist of an application where up to 12 schools may be selected, ordered by preference. The assignment of students to schools is a dual process consisting of residential attendance zones and individual school preferences. Students may attend schools in the zone in which they reside, or they may choose to attend a school outside their zone. Within the choice system, there are specific school types that require specialized testing and screening. The choice system has been at the heart of the segregation dialogue and the Department of Education’s reform efforts to diversify the city’s schools.

### **School Admissions by Zone**

Each CSD serves smaller geographic zones or catchment areas that define an area around a school. A priority system directs the placement of children in schools, directed mainly by zoned priority. The zone in which a student lives gives them preference to attend schools in that zone over students from outside the area. Three districts are “un-zoned,” which means children living in those districts may attend any school in the district. Schools sometimes become oversubscribed and may deny students entry to their zoned schools. In this case, the city assigns students to their neighboring schools that have availability.<sup>73</sup> Beyond zoning priority, other priority conditions include having a sibling already enrolled in the desired school. Integration is not part of the criteria.

Where a student lives often determines where they will go to school, thus residential segregation is reflected in school segregation. Although race-based school admissions are not legal, rezoning presents an opportunity for school boards to redefine zone areas to attenuate segregation. This was clarified by Justice Kennedy in the US Supreme court *Parents Involved in Community Schools* decision. Nonetheless, wealthy families have the opportunity to side-step any efforts at desegregation using zoning by just moving to their preferred zone, an option many lower-income families do not have.

### **School Admissions by Choice**

Whereas residential zoning inherently extends to segregation in schools, the choice model often exacerbates segregation by the school selections of well-meaning parents. New York Appleseed wrote, “Zones provide families of means with exclusive access to the schools they like, while

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<sup>72</sup> Nathanson, L., Corcoran, S., Baker-smith, C., & Baker-smith, C. (2013). High School Choice in NYC : A Report on the School Choices and Placements of Low-Achieving Students, (April).

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/pre-k>.

choice allows them to flee the ones they don't."74 Most students attend their zoned schools, but with school choice allowing students to attend schools outside their zone, a growing share of students do so. Families may also choose charter schools or private schools. A recent study found 40% of kindergartners attended schools outside their zone in 2016-17.75

School choice admissions practices are akin to stringent college admissions that use wide-ranging methods to evaluate students. Methods include tests, grades and subjective evaluation methods via interviews, behavior and attendance records, essays, and demonstrated interest. Because school choice models use testing and grades as screening mechanisms, they result in schools with high concentrations of students with high academic performance. Yet, academic achievement measures do not accurately reflect ability; instead, they are often a proxy for socioeconomic status that advances educational opportunity but excludes low-income students. Thus, choice consolidates advantages to families who have the time and resources and reproduces these advantages as siblings gain priority to the same selective schools. Low-income parents and families that are not English-language proficient have a higher burden to access information and often do not have the same luxury of time as more advantaged families do to navigate the complex admissions process. Schools with screening are the most homogeneous in terms of race and socioeconomic status and disproportionately underserve black and Latino students, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners.

Thus, the dual-system of choice and zoning create an environment where parents with means have an advantage over families with fewer resources to gain admissions to their preferred schools. They may relocate to neighborhoods often in the highest real estate areas to increase their chances of prized entry. They may opt-out altogether of the public system and enroll their children in private schools. Residential mobility coupled with savvy ability to navigate the admissions process helps higher-income families identify and gain entry to the most desirable schools while excluding out-of-zone students and low-income students of color. As a result of this process, low-income and children of color are relegated to schools with fewer educational resources, which propagates to the middle schools and high schools they attend.

## **Specialized, Screened, and Gifted and Talented Schools**

The School Diversity Advisory Group (SDAG), in its second report to the NYC BOE, asserted that schools relying on screening methods and gifted and talented programs segregate schools that are “unfair, unjust, and not necessarily research-based.”76

NYC’s system of choice includes a wide array of different types of schools and admissions methods. Many of the methods used in attaining access to schools have become a center of

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<sup>74</sup> New York Appleseed. (2020). *Within our reach: Segregation in NYC District elementary schools and what we can do about it*. New York, NY.

<sup>75</sup> Mader, Hemphill, & Abbas, “The Paradox of Choice”, 21.

<sup>76</sup> School Diversity Advisory Group. (2019). *Making the grade II: New programs for better schools*. New York, NY.

controversy for contributing to segregation. The following school types have been highlighted as having admissions processes that contribute to segregation.

### **Specialized High Schools**

Eighth grade students may follow two paths to high school in NYC: regular high school admissions or admissions to one of 8 elite specialized high schools.<sup>77</sup> The latter requires a Specialized High Schools Admissions Test (SHSAT).<sup>78</sup> Specialized high schools in NYC are a highly charged subject in recent public discourse as they are extremely segregated by race/ethnicity. On average, the specialized high schools in 2018-19 enrolled 61.6% Asian students, 24.3% white students, and only 4% black students and 6% Latino students. However, this was not always the case; diminishing percentages have been steeper over the past several years. Established in the 1970s, the schools once had sizeable black and Latino student enrollments, but over time became extremely segregated by race/ethnicity with Asian and white students dominating the enrollment. At Stuyvesant High School, black students comprised 10% of enrollment and Latino students 4% in 1976, declining to 1% and 3%, respectively by 2018.<sup>79</sup> In 1976, Brooklyn Technical High School had some of the highest shares of black and Latino students, 38% and 12% respectively. Today, black students comprise only 6% and Latino students 7% of the student body. Similarly, Bronx Science in 1976 had 14% of their seats filled by black students and 10% by Latino students, declining to 3% of black students and 7% of Latino students in 2018.<sup>80</sup>

The decline in black and Latino enrollment in specialized schools can be traced to the inequality in NYC schools and the inappropriate use of testing. A study of SHSAT applicants found a small number of NYC middle schools serve as feeder schools to the specialized high schools, and a majority of those were selective middle school programs that enroll predominantly white and Asian students.<sup>81</sup> Academic outcomes on state English Language Arts and Mathematics tests are correlated with higher SHSAT results.<sup>82</sup> However, many of the schools that black and Latino students attend are poorly resourced, they have limited advanced coursework and consequently lack proper preparation for the stringent academic requirements of the SHSAT. The rise in competitive test preparation programs further disadvantages black and Latino students, many of whom have less means to prepare for the test. To encourage integration in the specialized high schools, in 2002, an additional five high schools were designated as specialized with the hope of increasing enrollment of black and Latino students. However, the declines continue and additional spots have been filled by predominantly white and Asian students.

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<sup>77</sup> The Brooklyn Latin School, Brooklyn Technical High School, High School for Mathematics, Science, and Engineering, High School of American Students at Lehman College, Queens High School for the Sciences at NYC College, Staten Island Technical High School, Stuyvesant High School, The Bronx High School of Science.

<sup>78</sup> One additional school, LaGuardia High School, uses an audition in addition to academic criteria.

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/03/nyregion/nyc-public-schools-black-hispanic-students.html>.

<sup>80</sup> IBID.

<sup>81</sup> Corcoran, S. P., & Baker-Smith, E. C. (2018). Pathways to an elite education: Application, admission, and matriculation to New York City's specialized high schools. *Education Finance and Policy*, 13(2), 256–279. <https://doi.org/10.1162>.

<sup>82</sup> IBID, 258.

In recent years, the de Blasio administration took steps to alleviate segregation in the specialized high schools including working with the State Legislature to end the SHSAT and replacing it with a more equitable admission process. The proposal includes admitting a top percentage of students from all city's middle schools and using state-wide exam scores and academic records. However, the SHSAT has not been eliminated during de Blasio's administration and it will be left to the new mayor whether to continue this effort or not. The debate around ending the SHSAT is highly contested by some Asian-American and Asian immigrant groups who view the test as part of a meritocratic process and terminating the test to be discriminatory.<sup>83</sup>

### **Screened Schools**

Apart from specialized high schools that use the SHSAT as the sole criterion for admissions, roughly 15% of high schools and 18% of middle schools<sup>84</sup> use screening methods consisting of grades, test scores, portfolios, auditions, interviews, and admissions factors.<sup>85</sup> The process tends to consolidate high achievers in few schools, which tends to propagate segregation, as test scores are highly correlated to race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. However, for the 2021-22 school year, COVID-19 has disrupted these screening mechanisms as many schools have moved away from letter grades in the 2020-21 school year, and the state has canceled state tests. Mayor de Blasio announced that for the 2021-22 enrollment cycle, middle schools would not use screening methods, and a lottery system would be used instead, but high school screening will be admissible.<sup>86</sup> Screening for the 2022-23 enrollment cycle is to be determined after evaluation of this year's enrollment.

The use of standardized test scores as sole criteria for admission to unique educational opportunities has been rejected by the testing industry and in a major report by the National Academy of Sciences. Standardized test scores are strongly related to parent income and educational level and previous educational opportunities. They are not a valid measure of individual merit, motivation or potential if offered opportunities since they are strongly related to prior positive or negative opportunities.<sup>87</sup> Any test only measures a limited range of possible skills at one point in time.<sup>88</sup> These are major reasons why elite colleges do not admit simply on the basis of test scores and why affirmative action admittees at Ivy League colleges perform far better than their test scores suggested.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> <https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/perspectives/new-york-citys-plan-diversify-specialized-high-schools-racist-toward-asian>

<sup>84</sup> <https://www.centernyc.org/screened-schools>.

<sup>85</sup> NYC Department of Education. (2020). 2020 NYC high school admissions guide. New York, NY.

<sup>86</sup> <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/874-20/mayor-de-blasio-chancellor-carranza-2021-22-school-year-admissions-process>.

<sup>87</sup> American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association and National Council on Measurement in Education, *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*; Jay P. Heubert and Robert M. Hauser, Eds., *High Stakes: Testing for Tracking, Promotion, and Graduation*, Washington: National Academy Press, 1999.

<sup>88</sup> Daniel Koretz *The Testing Charade: Pretending to Make Schools Better* University of Chicago Press, 2017,

<sup>89</sup> William Bowen and Derek Bok, *The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*, Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1998.

## **Charter Schools**

Charter schools are independent, privately run, publicly-funded schools that are open to all students in NYC at no cost. They are operated by a Board of Trustees. Proponents of charter schools tout individual choice as driving superior educational opportunities and outcomes, giving parents a better-quality alternative to persistently ineffective traditional public schools.<sup>90</sup> Charter schools have flexibility in their instructional approaches. It is inherently difficult to compare choice schools with regular public schools because of selection bias, though research tends to show similar academic outcomes controlling for student backgrounds. There is controversy regarding charter school admissions policies and whether they impact the racial/ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of all schools due to admissions practices,<sup>91</sup> language barriers, and lack of access to networks of information to learn about charters.<sup>92</sup> This report examines the segregation levels in New York charters.

In NYC, families interested in charter schools apply directly to the charter school and use a separate application than for the city's traditional public schools, typically the NYC Common Online Charter School Application. Most of the city's charter schools serve kindergarten through eighth grade, but charter high schools have expanded in the past decade.

## **Gifted and Talented**

The idea of test-based access to gifted and talented education had its roots in early gifted and talented education when IQ testing was used to identify participants to a study by Leta Stetter Holingworth at the Speyer School in NYC. Gifted and talented (G&T) programs began to grow in the early 1970s to stave off the white-flight that was occurring due to the demographic changes of the times. Later, in the early 1980s, test-based admissions to gifted programs became more prevalent after an alarm sounded by *A Nation at Risk* report detailed American students' poor performance on international standardized tests and raised concern over an American school system failing its talented population. As a result, educational policies, such as the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act,<sup>93</sup> provided resources to identify and serve the needs of gifted and talented students and proliferated G&T offerings.<sup>94</sup>

G&T programs in NYC have long struggled to achieve racial and socioeconomic balance in their enrollment. In 2006, the city attempted to expand its enrollment of underrepresented minority and low-income students in G&T programs by placing 15 new programs in underserved communities. Nonetheless, three years later, most of the schools had been closed due to low enrollment. Until 2021, entry to one of NYC's G&T programs rested entirely on the score of one exam. Ironically, the NYC BOE issued the one-exam policy to make the process fair, rather than

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<sup>90</sup> Frankenberg, E., & Siegel-Hawley, G. (2011). Choosing Diversity: School Choice and Racial Integration in the Age of Obama. *Stanford Journal on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties* 6 (2), 219-252.

<sup>91</sup> Tanimura, J. (2011). Still separate and still unequal: The need for stronger civil rights protections in charter-enabling legislation. *Southern California Review of Law and Social Justice*, 21, 399.

<sup>92</sup> *IBID*, 416.

<sup>93</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/pubs/Biennial/618.html>.

<sup>94</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/javits/index.html>.

using discriminatory admissions practices that heavily weighted teacher recommendations to the program. However, the use of a single exam quickly contributed to further inequity as more advantaged students were able to benefit from specialized tutoring to raise their G&T exam scores, leading to less diversity in G&T enrollment.<sup>95</sup> As of 2021, the city has canceled G&T testing. Instead, schools are returning to a subjective process of pre-k teacher nomination to identify whether a child is eligible for G&T and randomized lottery-based admissions. For children not enrolled in pre-K, schools will determine the eligibility based on an interview.<sup>96</sup>

Two G&T program types exist in NYC, one city-wide and one district-wide. City-wide G&T programs are comprised of 5 unzoned schools (meaning students from any geographic area in the city may attend), requiring a score in the 97<sup>th</sup> percentile for admission. The schools are typically oversubscribed and often draw from a pool of students scoring in the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile. District-wide G&T offerings place G&T classes in regular district schools where G&T students may take some classes with general education students (e.g., physical education). The minimum score for these schools is in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile and prioritizes students within the school zones.

In its report to the Board of Education, the School Diversity Advisory Group identified gifted and talented programs as a factor in segregating the city schools. SDAG reported to the NYC BOE that G&T programs unfairly favor students from advantaged families and exclude low-income students who do not have the resources to compete for the coveted spots.<sup>97</sup> The main reason is the test-based admissions practice, which benefits white and Asian students whose families can afford test preparation services and disadvantages low-income students who cannot afford the same services and are not as well-prepared. Additionally, students may apply to up to 12 programs. Parents and caretakers must have time to navigate the admissions process and a certain amount of savvy to research different schools to determine their children's best choices. Further, the most numerous spots in G&T programs are in kindergarten and become fewer in the higher grades. Gaining early access to a G&T program is important, and students who do not apply early can easily be locked out, a factor that maintains segregation throughout elementary school.

G&T district-wide programs that operate in elementary schools also segregate by race and socioeconomic status within schools, as they are primarily physically separated from general education students. As G&T schools are disproportionately comprised of white and Asian students, these groups are separated from black, Latino, and American Indian students. Given this practice, students are at risk of internalizing harmful stereotypes relating race and intelligence.<sup>98</sup> Further, studies find tracking to exacerbate inequity, widening achievement gaps

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<sup>95</sup> <https://hechingerreport.org/ending-racial-inequality-in-gifted-education>.

<sup>96</sup> <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/enrollment/enroll-grade-by-grade/gifted-and-talented>.

<sup>97</sup> New York Appleseed. (2020). *Within our reach: Segregation in NYC District elementary schools and what we can do about it*. New York, NY.

<sup>98</sup> *IBID*, 15.



by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Research has found de-tracked academic programming to be helpful to lower achievers while not harmful to higher achievers.<sup>99</sup>

## Supporting Community School District Desegregation Plans

Since 2014, the state and city have made efforts to encourage desegregation in schools, though these efforts are strictly voluntary. The first step the state took towards desegregation was to provide funding through the Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program (SIPP) in 2014. District 1 (Lower East Side and East Village) was the first district to participate in the SIPP and used funds to develop a district-wide plan for its pre-K and kindergarten admissions.<sup>100</sup> The plan includes a weighted admissions process that prioritized low-income, English Language Learners, and homeless students for most of its admissions spots (67%) in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. SDAG reported that this target was met in fall of 2018.<sup>101</sup> The plan also included a Family Resource Center to educate families about school choice. In 2016, the NYC DOE initiated a *Diversity in Admissions* pilot program to increase the diversity in schools, closely resembling District 1. The schools in the pilot program use “set-aside” plans that place a floor on the number of seats reserved for certain groups. Race is not permissible in evaluating admissions (per Supreme Court decisions in *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District*)<sup>102</sup> so these plans opt to use proxies to prioritize groups, such as socioeconomic status. The pilot started with seven schools in 2016-17, and 14 more schools joined the pilot group in 2017-18. By 2019-20, 81 schools, five pre-K programs and three districts had adopted diversity plans, and currently, the number has grown to 100 NYC public schools.<sup>103</sup> School-level plans and well-run community outreach can call public attention to desegregation efforts and create momentum towards district-wide diversification plans. This is happening in a few districts, such as District 1. All elementary schools in District 1, most of District 3 and District 15 middle schools have joined the pilot group.<sup>104</sup> An assessment of diversity programs issued in 2018 found the scope of the programs still remains small, only 3% of all city students as of 2018.<sup>105</sup> However, the report indicated initial positive outcomes including increased participation of low-income and English language learner (ELL) students. The analysis conducted did not find significant increases in participation by race/ethnicity. As additional data is released, further research to study the integration efforts is warranted.

Grassroots change is happening in other districts as well. In 2018, the New York State Integration Program – Professional Learning Community was initiated. Three phases of the plan provided funds to districts across the state, beginning with a first planning stage, a second stage with continued support, and a third phase to fully implement integration plans. The first round of

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<sup>99</sup> Gamoran, A. (2009). WCER Working Paper No . 2009-6 Tracking and Inequality : New Directions for Research and Practice.

<sup>100</sup> New York State Education Department. (2015). Socioeconomic Integration Pilot Program.

<sup>101</sup> School Diversity Advisory Group, “Making the grade”, 70.

<sup>102</sup> <https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/06pdf/05-908.pdf>.

<sup>103</sup> <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-US/vision-and-mission/diversity-in-our-schools>.

<sup>104</sup> IBID.

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.centernyc.org/promising-outcomes-limited-potential-diversity-in-admissions>.

funds in the amount of \$65,000 to aid in developing diversity plans in NYC was awarded to 14 districts;<sup>106</sup> Phase III grants were substantially higher and awarded to six NYC districts.<sup>107</sup> Two community school districts, District 3 and District 15, have moved past the planning phase and were the first to implement diversity plans in the 2019-20 school year.

**District 15.** District 15 is located in Brooklyn and identified as one of the most segregated districts in NYC.<sup>108</sup> District 15 is racially and economically diverse, including affluent areas such as Park Slope, Carroll Gardens, and Cobble Hill as well as lower-income areas like Red Hook and Sunset Park. The racial and economic diversity coupled with the fact that a high percentage of students (75%) attend zoned schools in District 15 make the district primed for integration. As part of the Equity and Excellence for All program, in 2017, District 15 began to organize its plans to diversify its schools, led by parents and integration advocates, including robust community engagement aiming its efforts at middle school enrollment. Middle school entrance policies in District 15 prior to the diversity plan implementation included screening methods (grades, test scores, attendance, and other factors) in 10 of the 11 schools. District 15 began its planning in 2017 and was first implemented in 2019-20. The multi-year rollout includes removing all screening methods and providing priority entry of 52% of seats to low-income students, English language learners and students living in temporary housing. The plan also includes, in subsequent years, transportation and monitoring, among other goals.

**District 3.** District 3 is located in Manhattan and encompasses the Upper West side, Morningside Heights and portions of Harlem. The diversification effort was led by parents and principals, which went into effect in 2019. The district's diversity plan is similar to that of District 15, also focusing on middle school admissions, but less aggressive. Prior to the diversification plan, middle school admissions were based on academic performance. The new plan retained its screening methods but reserves 25% of its seats for students who are low-income. Research conducted in 2020 indicates that District 15 decreased economic segregation in sixth grade by 55%, and racial segregation by 38%.<sup>109</sup> District 3 showed much more modest results, with decreases in sixth grade economic segregation by 8% and racial segregation of 5%.

We review district segregation metrics to investigate differences between districts but highlight the fact that, at this point, we do not have data to make conclusions regarding the integration efforts as they are still in-process. We advocate for future work to investigate results of these efforts.

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<sup>106</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/2018-title-1-nysip-plc/awardee-list.html>. Districts include 1, 2, 3, 10, 13, 15, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30, and 31.

<sup>107</sup> Districts include 2, 3, 13, 15, 24, and 30.

<sup>108</sup> Margolis, B. J., Dench, D., & Hashim, S. (2020). The impact of middle school integration efforts on segregation in two NYC Districts, (July).

<sup>109</sup> Margolis, Dench, & Hashim, "The impact of middle school integration", 6.

## Data and Analysis

We begin this section with analysis of demographic changes and segregation patterns at the state level. Next, with the backdrop of the renewed debate around segregation that NYC has undergone since our last publication on New York, we explore the demographic and segregation trends of NYC with a particular focus on the years since 2014.

This study uses the Common Core of Data from the National Center for Education Statistics. We explore patterns at the city, district, and borough levels. Several dimensions of school segregation are used in determining segregation trends. These measures give us valuable insights into the degree of segregation and allow us to track changes over time. However, it is important to note that they do not provide information into the causes of segregation.

We emphasize that there is no magic to learning by sitting next to a white student in school, and that integration goes beyond merely sharing physical spaces. Rather, given the inequities associated with higher concentrations of low-income and nonwhite students, and the higher level of financial and community resources associated with higher concentrations of white and Asian students in schools, our investigation of segregation considers the separation of black and Latino (and shares of other nonwhite groups<sup>110</sup>) from Asian and white students. We realize that each of these groups has considerable internal diversity. For instance, there is considerable heterogeneity among Asian Americans, including almost 50 ethnic subgroups speaking 100 different languages,<sup>111</sup> with wide disparities in poverty rates, access to health care, and unique immigration and educational experiences. Stereotypes of Asian Americans as well-educated and advantaged fail to address this diversity. Nonetheless, the data are limited by the inability to disaggregate within broad race/ethnicity categories. We recognize that there are significant minorities of Asian and white students who experience serious disadvantage and black and Latino families at the highest educational and economic levels. By analyzing white and Asian students as a group in certain analyses, we acknowledge that in spite of the social and historical complexities of race/ethnicity, there are sweeping differences in the *average educational advantages* of white and Asian students as a whole compared to that of black, Latino, and American Indian students that are apparent in the data.<sup>112</sup> This follows other reports that have measured segregation of black, Latino, and American Indian students from white and Asian students.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> We include black, Latino, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Natives as one group.

<sup>111</sup> <https://aspe.hhs.gov/report/feasibility-using-electronic-health-data-research-small-populations/population-1-asian-american-subpopulations>.

<sup>112</sup> De Brey, C., Musu, L., McFarland, J., Wilkinson-Flicker, S., Diliberti, M., Zhang, A., ... Wang, X. (2019). Status and trends in the education of racial and ethnic groups 2018. *National Center for Educational Statistics, NCES 2019-*, 181. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019038.pdf>.

<sup>113</sup> Monarrez, T., Kisida, B., & Chingos, M. (2019). When Is a school segregated? *Urban Institute*, (September).

Since schools with majority nonwhite student enrollment are typically associated with lower educational resources than other schools, we explore the concentration of racial/ethnic groups enrolled in schools at three levels of nonwhite enrollment. One measure we use is the concentration of racial/ethnic groups enrolled in schools at three levels of nonwhite student enrollment. We categorize these school types as *segregated* if they are predominantly nonwhite (greater than 50% of the student body is nonwhite), *intensely segregated* (90-100% of the student body is nonwhite), and *apartheid* (99-100% of the student body is nonwhite). We also provide estimates of attendance in *multiracial schools*, those that have any three races representing at least 10% each of the overall student body, to identify areas that have more diverse environments.

Segregation has been found to be higher between districts than between schools within a district; however, since the NYC choice model in principle allows schools to draw from the same pool of students city-wide, comparisons in segregation levels between school types within boroughs helps us to understand segregation within the school system. We use several measures of segregation that provide a window into the stark differences in the lived experience of students at different levels of school segregation.

One indication of integration or segregation is measured by the level of potential interracial contact that students have in schools, determined by calculating exposure or isolation rates. These measures are relevant to the daily experiences in schools that students have with one another. These are defined as the average percent enrollment of students from one group (i.e., black students) in a school attended by another group (i.e., Latino students) in a larger geographical area, such as a district. An example of an exposure is the finding that the typical black student in the Bronx attends school with 58% Latino students. In this example, exposure gives us an estimate of the potential contact that these two groups have in Bronx schools.

To measure changes that may have taken place over time, we explore the degree to which CSDs are resegregating, integrating, or remaining stable in their segregation/diversity level. To do this, we categorize CSDs by their level and type of racial/ethnic enrollment: *predominantly white* (those that have 80% or more of the student body comprised of white student enrollment), *diverse* (those between 20-60% nonwhite students), and *predominantly nonwhite* (greater than 60% nonwhite student enrollment). By comparing the change of the enrollment of white students in the city to that of the CSD, we identify the degree of change: rapidly changing, moderately changing, and stable. This degree factor identifies whether a CSD is resegregating, integrating, or remaining stable (segregated or diverse).

## **New York State Trends**

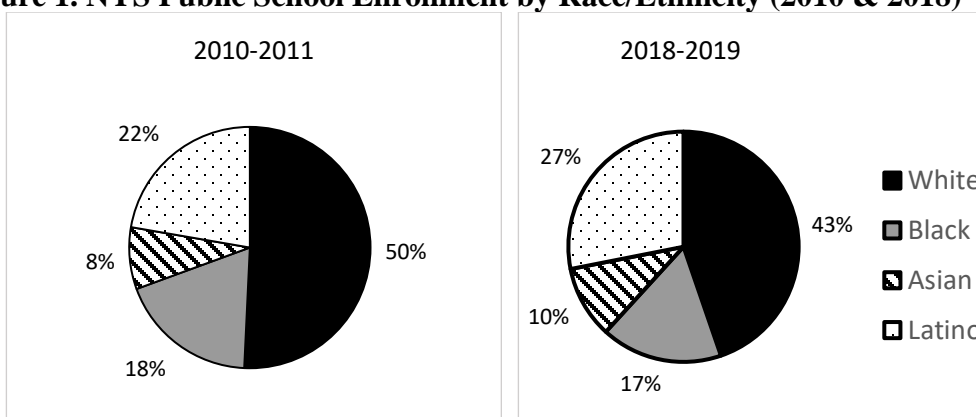
### ***Demographic Changes***

New York State (NYS) has followed a national demographic transformation, which is reflected in its public school population. As with much of the US, the demographic change is driven by

the increasing enrollment of Latino and Asian students and the declining white and black student enrollment. In eight years alone from 2010-2018, the percent of Asian student enrollment (9.8%) increased over 1.5 points, and Latino student enrollment (27.2%) increased over 5 points. At the same time, white and black student enrollment declined: white student enrollment (43.3%) is down 7 points, and black student enrollment (16.5%) by 2 points.

The demographic shift from 30 years ago is dramatic. Whereas 63% of public students were white and 20% black in 1989, today NYS public school enrollment has become predominantly nonwhite, with white student enrollment making up 43% of the student body (Figure 1), down from 50.2% in 2010. This underscores the reality of a transformed meaning of “minority;” how NYS public schools manage this transformation will be increasingly critical to the state’s economic future.

**Figure 1. NYS Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2010 & 2018)**



*Note:* Mixed Race and American Indian percentages are not figured in the table due to small percentages.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

The trend in enrollment over the past 30 years depicting the decline in black and white student enrollment and the rise in Asian and Latino student enrollment is shown in Figure 2 (and Table 1). Latino families have higher birth rates than white families, with white student enrollment having the steepest rate of decline and Latino student enrollment the highest rate of increase.

**Table 1. NYS Public School Enrollment (1990-2018)**

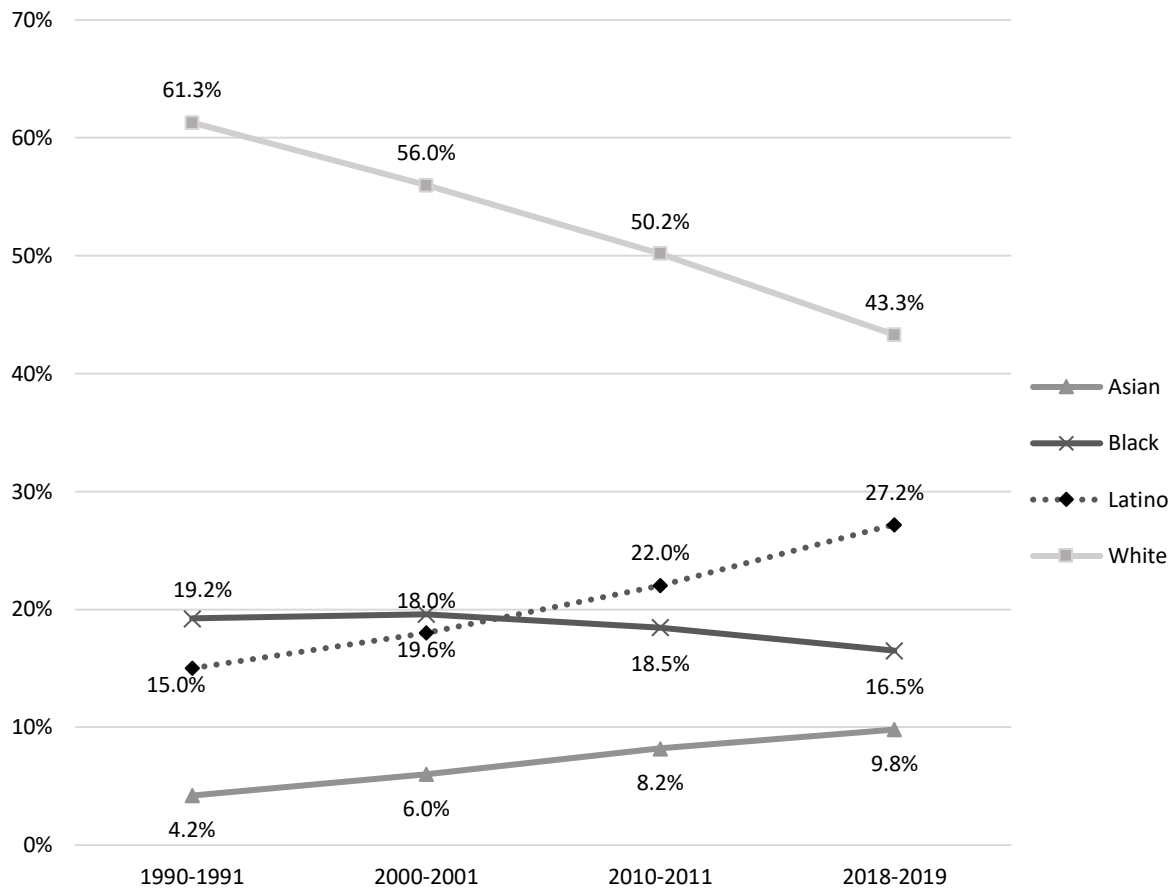
	Total Enrollment	Percentage				
		White	Black	Asian	Latino	AI
1990-1991	2,527,297	61.3%	19.2%	4.2%	15.0%	0.3%
2000-2001	2,815,604	56.0%	19.6%	6.0%	18.0%	0.4%
2010-2011	2,665,460	50.2%	18.5%	8.2%	22.0%	0.5%
2018-2019	2,593,371	43.3%	16.5%	9.8%	27.2%	0.2%

*Note:* AI is comprised of American Indian students. Percentages for 2018-2019 do not add to 100% as percent mixed race (2.6%) not figured in the table.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

The demographic shifts occurring in the state have strong implications for economic growth if the educational needs of the Latino and black population are not served. The success of Latino and black students is critical to the state’s prosperity, but these groups have had the lowest success rate in higher educational attainment and are also the most socioeconomically disadvantaged groups in NYS. COVID-19 poses a disruption to educationally disadvantaged groups, with early reports having already identified learning loss to be highest among low-income, black, and Latino students.<sup>114</sup> As demographic and academic attainment trends continue, NYS will have proportionally fewer higher-educated adults. Now more than ever, it is critical to address equity in the educational success of nonwhite students, the largest student population in the state.

**Figure 2. NYS Public School Enrollment (1990-2018)**



*Note:* Due to the small percentages of Mixed Race and American Indian students, these groups are not figured in the table.  
*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

<sup>114</sup> Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, E. (2020). COVID-19 and student learning in the United States: The hurt could last a lifetime. McKinsey & Company.

## *Segregation Patterns in New York State Public Schools*

**Segregated nonwhite and Multiracial Schools.** Since the 1980s, with greater numbers of Latino students enrolled and the lack of desegregation plans, the number of segregated schools has been on the rise, effectively doubling in each category, except apartheid schools, which have declined in numbers. Over eight years from 2010-2018, New York State has crossed a threshold of having the majority of its school enrollment predominantly nonwhite. In 2018-19, 51.4% of schools in NYS were comprised of more than 50% nonwhite students, which is almost double the percentage from 30 years ago and up 6 points from 2010. Similarly, intensely segregated schools, those with more than 90% of enrollment nonwhite students, have more than doubled in the past 30 years, from roughly 1 in 7 schools to 1 in 3. There has been a decrease, however, in the number of apartheid schools, those with less than 1% enrollment of white students, down to roughly 7% from a high of 10% in 2010.

The number of multiracial schools, those that enroll at least 10% each of three or more races/ethnicities, has been steadily increasing over the past 30 years as well, increasing from 14% to 24%. In the past eight years, there has been a slight increase of over 4 points in the percentage of multiracial schools in NYS (from 19.7% to 24.4%).

**Table 2. Multiracial and Minority Segregated Schools in NYS (1990-2018)**

	Total Schools	% Multiracial Schools	% 50-100% Nonwhite schools	% 90-100% Nonwhite schools	% 99-100% Nonwhite schools
1990-1991	3,903	14.5%	27.1%	14.9%	9.4%
2000-2001	4,158	18.1%	34.4%	19.7%	9.0%
2010-2011	4,565	19.7%	44.6%	30.0%	11.3%
2018-2019	4,572	24.4%	51.4%	31.7%	6.7%

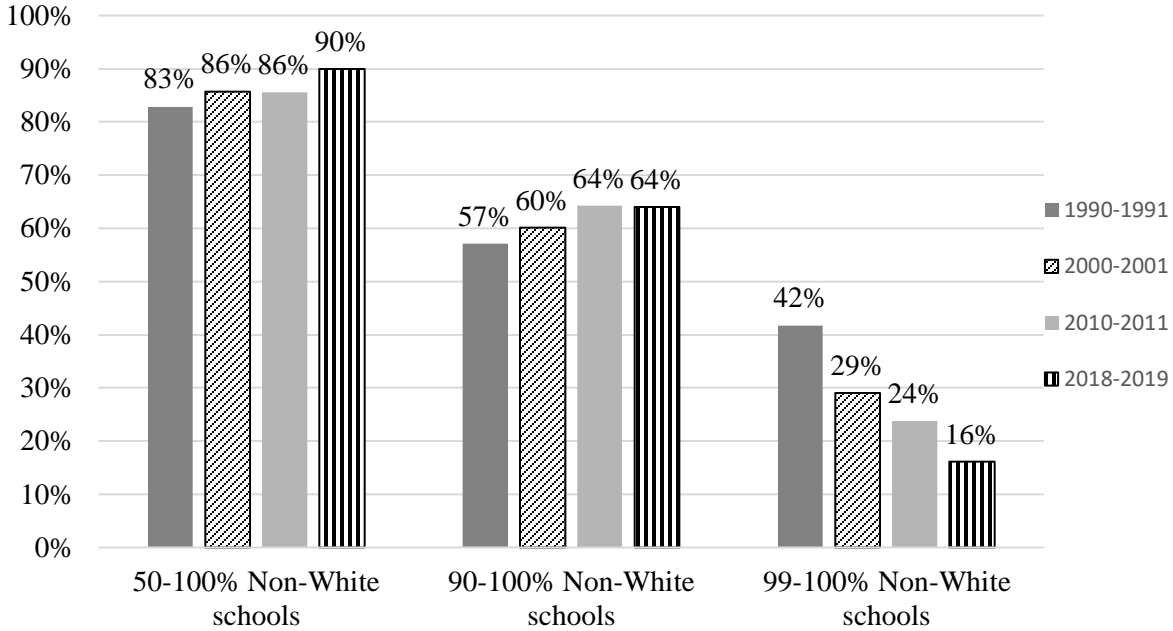
*Note:* Nonwhite category includes black, Latino, American Indian, and Asian students. Multiracial schools are those comprised of any three races/ethnicities in percentages greater than 10% of the total student enrollment.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

We examine the enrollment of students by race/ethnicity in segregated schools to get a view into the disparate experiences students have based on their racial/ethnic group. The majority of black and Latino students in NYS public schools attend predominantly nonwhite schools (Figure 3 and Figure 4). In 2018, 90% of black students attended predominantly nonwhite schools, a steady increase over the past 30 years, while Latino student enrollment in predominantly nonwhite schools has remained roughly stable (84%). Black and Latino students also predominantly attend intensely segregated schools, those with fewer than 10% white student enrollment. Almost two out of three black students and over half of Latino students attend these intensely segregated schools. Black student enrollment in intensely segregated schools increased until 2010 but has remained stable in the past eight years. Latino student enrollment had been stable from 2000-2010 but decreased slightly in the past eight years. There has been a steady decline in the concentration of both black and Latino student enrollment in apartheid schools statewide, from a

high point 30 years ago of 42% to 16% in 2018 for black students, and 33% to 11% in 2018 for Latino students.

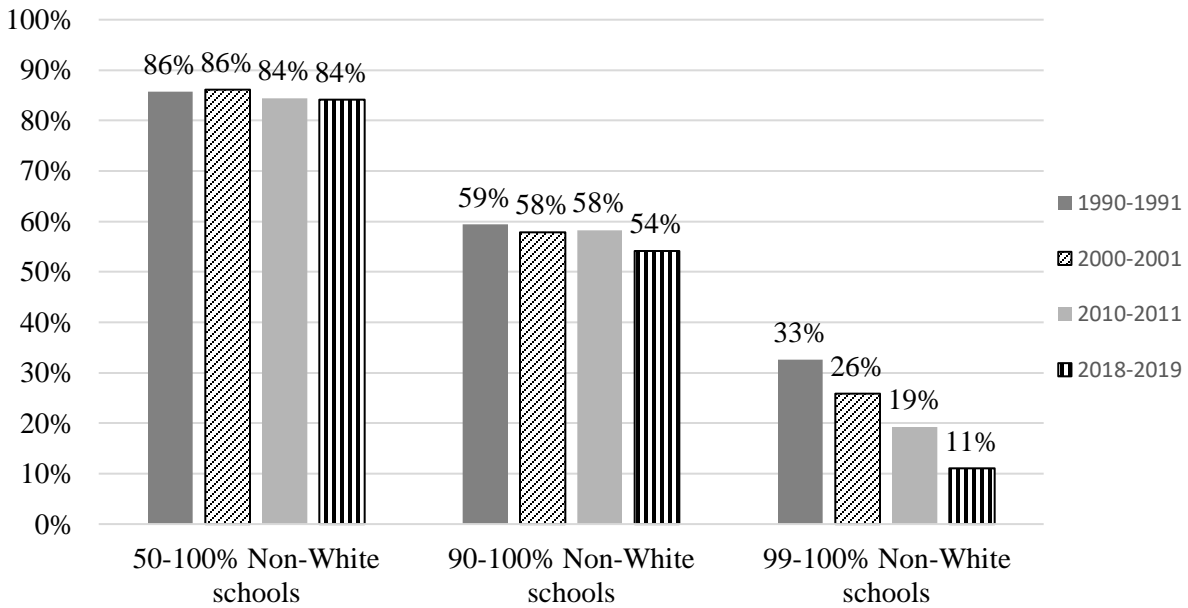
**Figure 3. Black Students in Minority Segregated NYS Schools (1990-2018)**



*Note:* Nonwhite category includes black, Latino, American Indian, and Asian students.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Figure 4. Latino Students in Minority Segregated NYS Schools (1990-2018)**



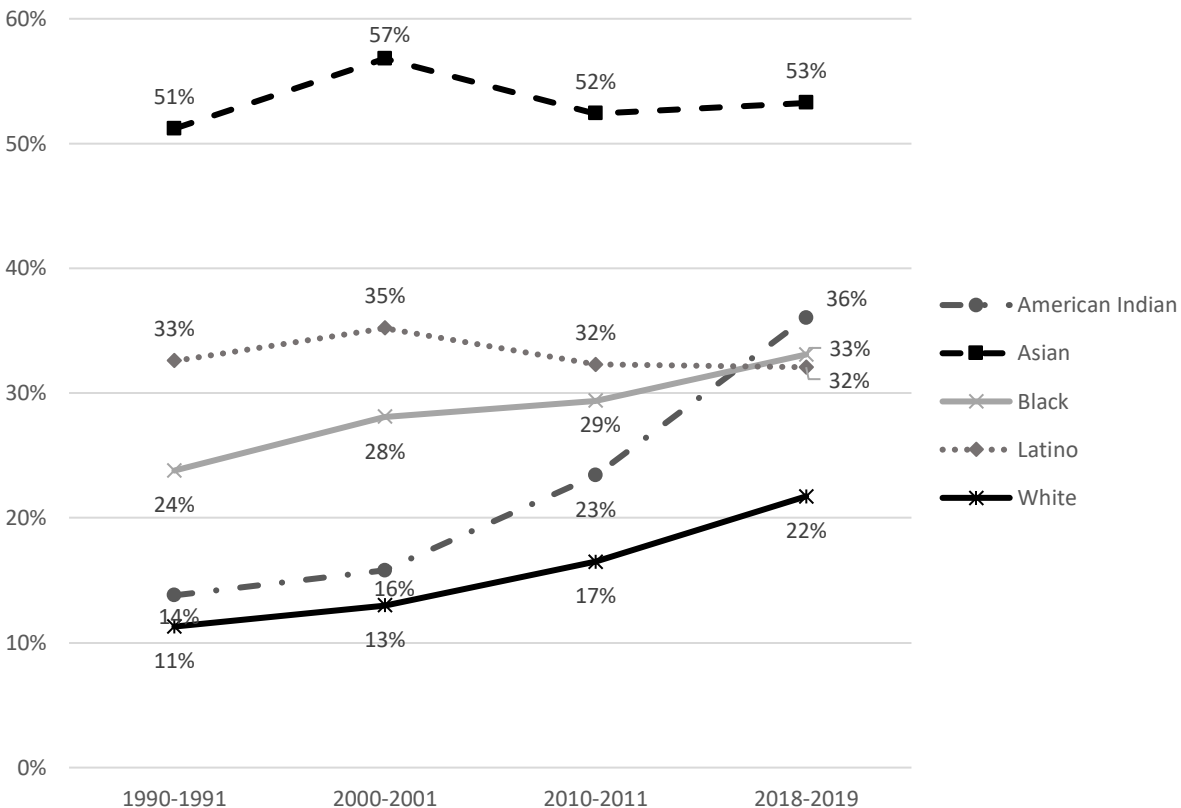
*Note:* Nonwhite category includes black, Latino, American Indian, and Asian students.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.



Over the past 30 years, the number of multiracial schools — those that have at least 10% enrollment of each of three or more racial/ethnic groups<sup>115</sup> — have increased 90%. Investigating the groups that attend these schools reveals different patterns of enrollment by race/ethnicity. White students have been steadily increasing their presence in multiracial schools; in 2018-2019, approximately 1 in 5 white students attended such schools. Asian students had steadily increased attendance in multiracial schools from 1990 until 2000 (from 51% to 57%), but since then dropped to 52% in 2010 and have remained stable through 2018. Thirty years ago, one in three Latino students and one in four black students were enrolled in multiracial schools. Latino student enrollment in multiracial schools has remained roughly stable over the past 30 years, while black student enrollment increased. In 2018, the two groups now attend these schools in roughly same percentages (32-33%). At the same time, American Indian students have almost tripled enrollment in multiracial schools over the past 30 years (when only 14% attended multiracial schools) and have increased by 42% in just the past eight years to 36% attendance in multiracial schools.

**Figure 5. Students in Multiracial Schools in NYS by Race/Ethnicity (1990-2018)**



*Note:* Multiracial schools are those with any three races representing 10% or more of the total student enrollment, respectively.  
*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

<sup>115</sup> Racial/ethnic groups include black, white, Latino, Asian, American Indian, mixed race.

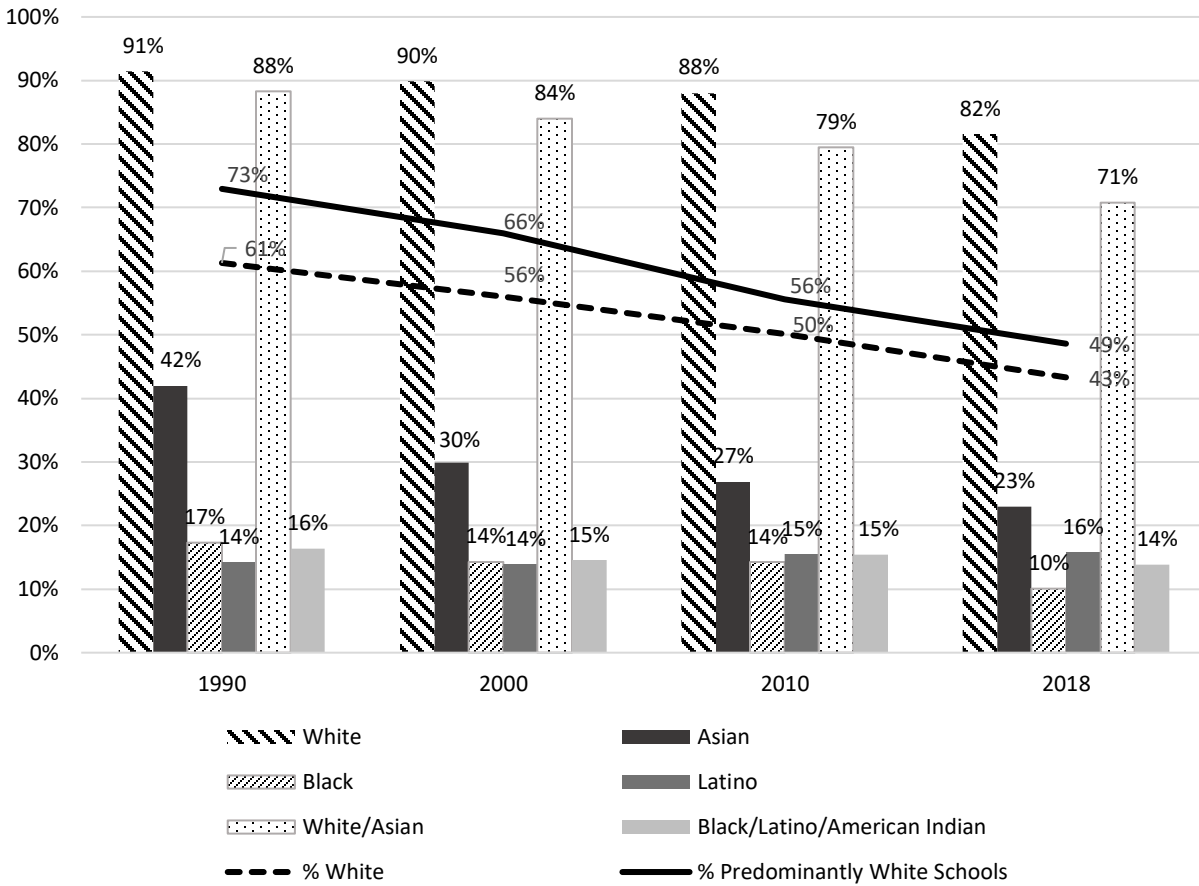
In the late 1980s, when the US was at the peak of desegregation, these efforts were concentrated in the Southern states. While the Northeast had pockets of desegregation, overall, there were no lasting efforts made. In 1990 in the South, 40% of black students attended predominantly white schools, while in the Northeast, 25% of black students attended such schools. Over the course of close to 30 years, the share of predominantly white schools in New York State declined from a high of 73% in 1990 to less than 50% in 2018. Nevertheless, white students have consistently attended these schools in high shares, at 91% in 1990 and declining 10 points to 82% in 2018. Asian students attended predominantly white schools in high percentages in 1990 (42%) but their attendance declined to 23% in 2018. In contrast, in 1990 in NYS, 17% of black students attended schools that had more than 50% white students enrolled and 14% of Latino students did the same. With the exception of Latino students – who have had stable attendance ranging from 14-16% in predominantly white schools for 30 years – these percentages have been declining for every other racial/ethnic group. In 2018, 10% of black students, 16% of Latino students, 23% of Asian students, and 82% of white students attended predominantly white schools, and the population of white students has declined to 43%. The percentage of black students attending predominantly white schools in 2018 is far below the national average of 19%.

**Table 3. Percent Students by Race/Ethnicity in Predominantly White Schools in NYS (1990-2018)**

	1990	2000	2010	2018
Share of Predominantly White Schools	73.0%	65.9%	55.5%	48.6%
% White in Schools	61.3%	56.0%	50.2%	43.3%
White	91.4%	89.9%	88.0%	81.5 %
Asian	42.0%	29.8%	26.9%	23.0%
Black	17.3%	14.3%	14.3%	10.0%
Latino	14.3%	13.9%	15.5%	15.9%
White/Asian	88.3%	84.0%	79.4%	70.7%
Black/Latino/American Indian	16.4%	14.5%	15.4%	13.8%

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

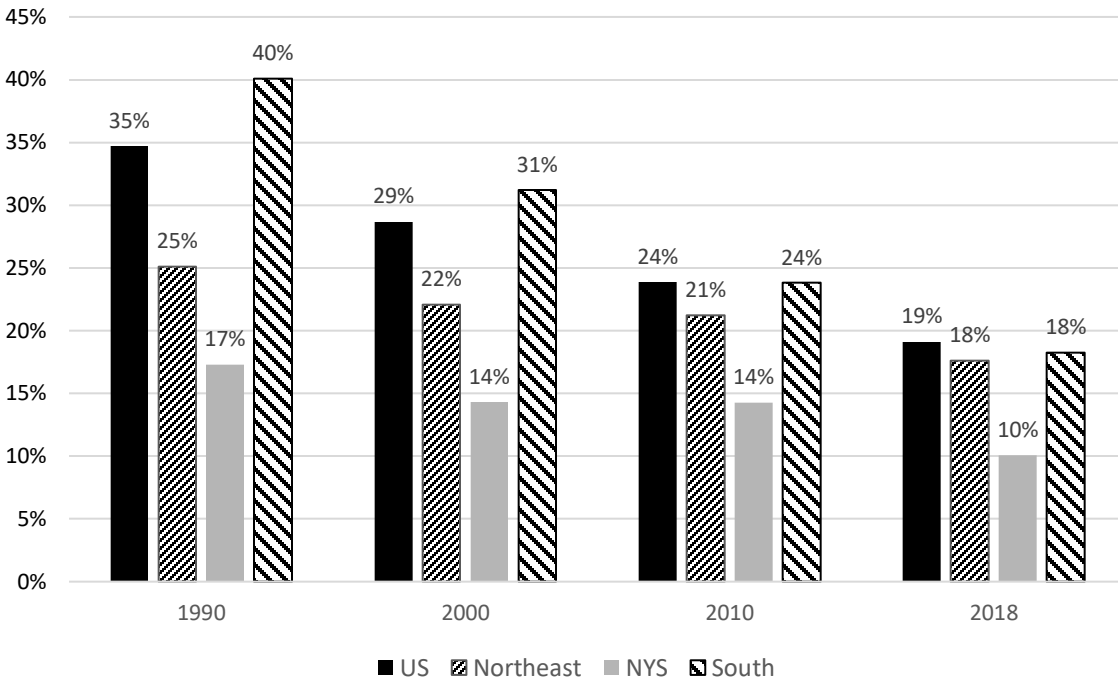
**Figure 6. Percent of Students by Race/Ethnicity Attending Predominantly White Schools in NYS (1990-2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

As shown in Figure 7, at the peak of desegregation, the Southern schools had the highest percentage of black students in predominantly white schools (Border states had about the same percentage), but that percentage has sharply declined over the past 30 years. Today, the percentage of black students in predominantly white schools in the South and Northeast regions of the US is just under 20%, roughly the same as the national average, but NYS is half of that, 10%.

**Figure 7. Percent of Black Students in Predominantly White Schools in US, NYS, Northeast and South (1990-2018)**



*Note:* South region consists of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia. Northeast region is Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

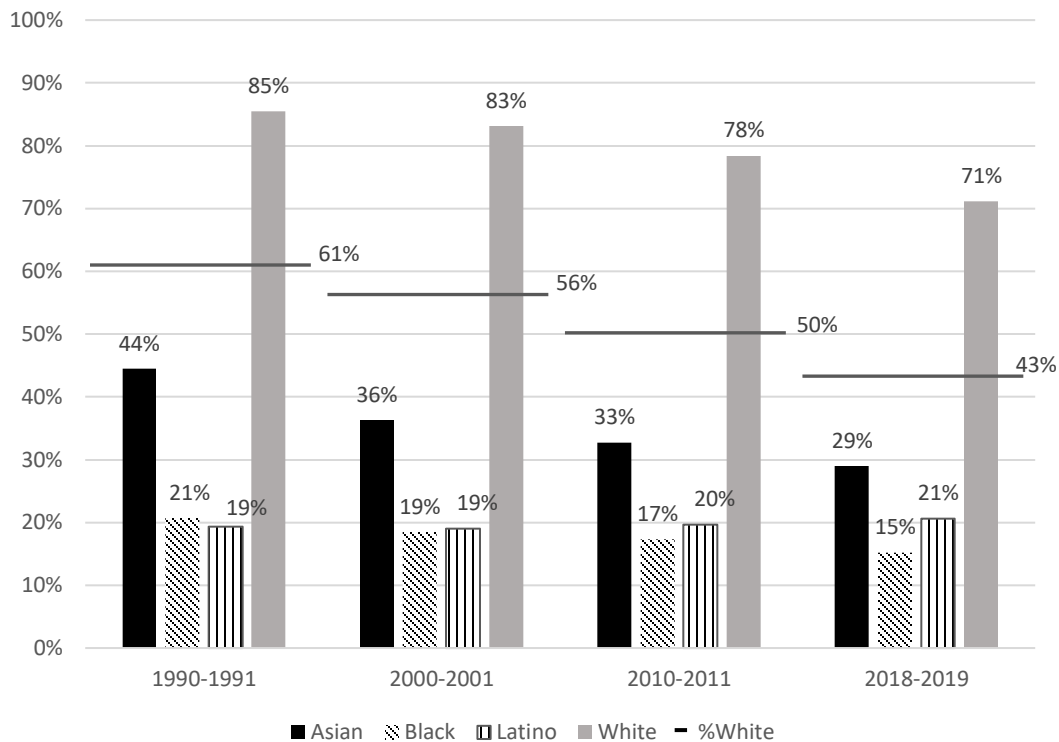
**Trends in Racial/Ethnic Exposure.** The percentage of white student enrollment in New York State has been decreasing over the past 30 years; the decline in potential contact that students of all races have with white students in schools has followed. Yet, white students continue to have far more contact with other white peers in the schools they attend, well over the average percent of white students in the state, while black and Latino students have disproportionately fewer white peers. Ten other states have higher shares of black, Latino, and American Indian students than New York; however, in all of those states, black students have higher contact with white students than in NYS. Of the ten states with higher percentages of black, Latino, and American Indian students, NYS has the third lowest exposure level of Latino students to white students (California has the lowest, then Texas).<sup>116</sup>

Thirty years ago, 85% of white students’ peers were other white students, while the state average of white students was 61%. The enrollment of white students has declined, and white students now attend schools where 71% of their peers are white. However, the contact that Latino students have with white students has not changed in 30 years; Latino students continue to attend schools where 1 in 5 of their peers are white. Black students have fewer white peers (15%) than

<sup>116</sup> Since rankings include states with greater than 5% population of black/Latino students, states with low shares of students from these groups may appear to outperform NYS; however, this would not be a valid assumption as the metrics are dependent upon the shares of black/Latino/American Indian students in the state.

they did in 1990. Over the past three decades, white students in NYS have had consistently about 25 points more contact with other white students over the state average, illustrating the persistent separation of these students from students of color in the state.

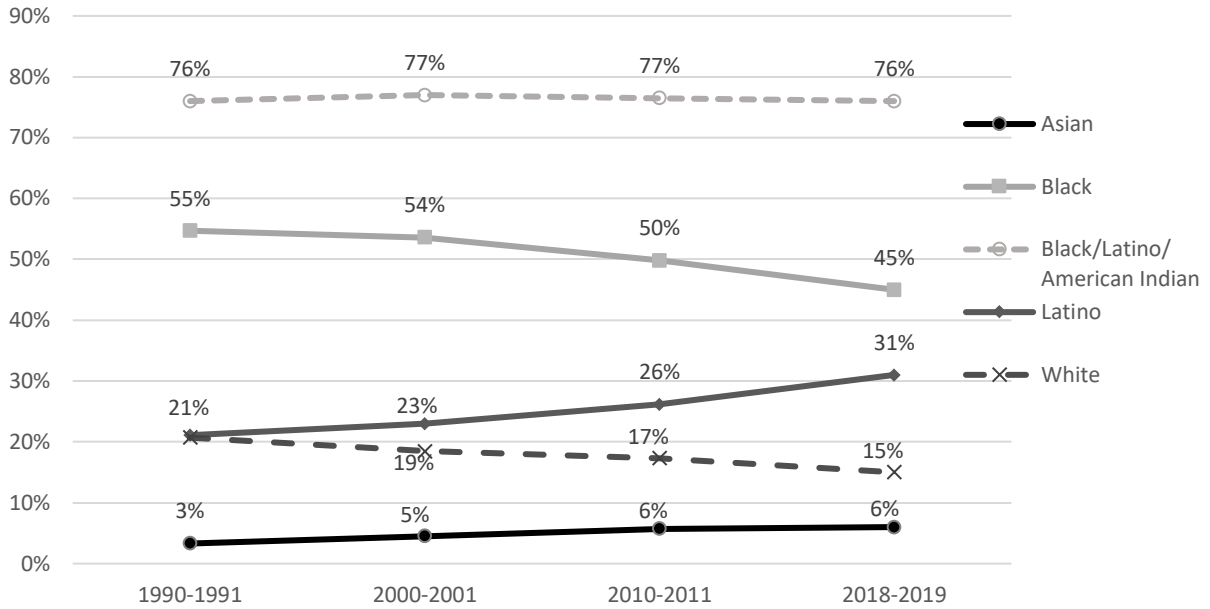
**Figure 8. Percentage of White Students in Schools Attended by Typical Student of each Race/Ethnicity (1990-2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

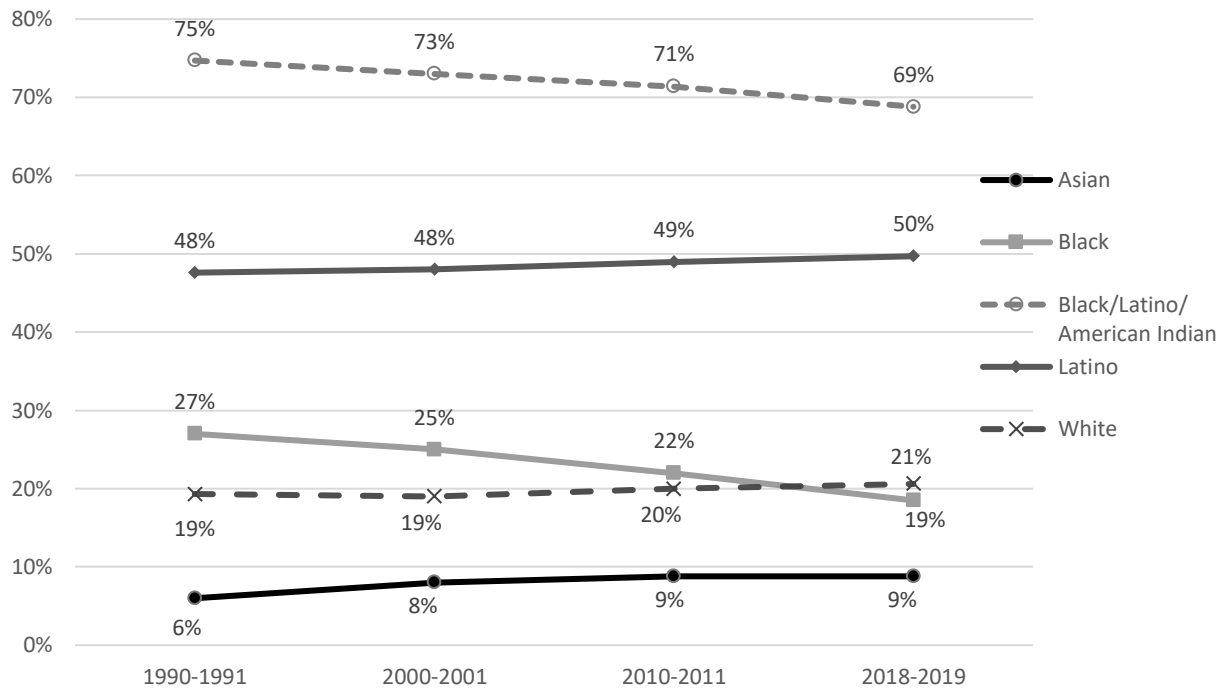
The declining contact that students have with white pupils in NYS has been supplanted with growing exposure to Latino students. Black students have seen a 10 point increase in their contact with Latino students since 1990 (21% to 31%). A constant 76% of black students' peers are black, Latino, and American Indian students. The experience of Latino students has not changed much in 30 years, with the exception of their contact with black peers, which has declined from 27% in 1990 to 19% in 2018. As was roughly the case 30 years ago, in 2018, one in 2 peers of Latino students, on average, are Latino students, and 1 in 5 peers of Latino students were white, and 1 in 11 peers were Asian. As with black students, Latino students attend schools with high percentages of black, Latino, and American Indian students, though that percentage has decreased slightly in thirty years. In 1990 they attended with 75% black, Latino, and American Indian peers; in 2018, it was 69%.

**Figure 9. Change in Racial/Ethnic Composition of Schools Attended by Black Students (1990-2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

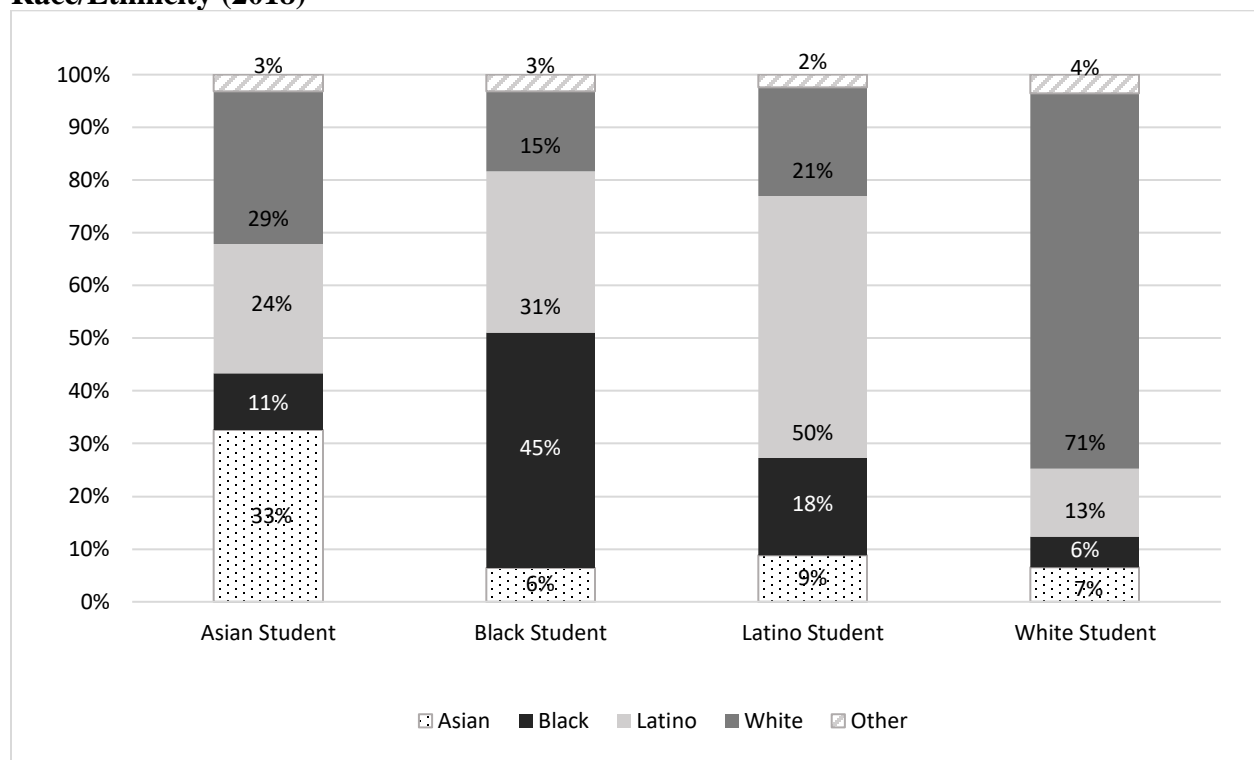
**Figure 10. Change in Racial/Ethnic Composition of Schools Attended by Latino Students (1990-2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Examining the racial/ethnic composition of schools attended by typical students of each race/ethnicity, we see that the students of all races/ethnicities attend schools that have a majority share of their own race/ethnicity. This is most pronounced for white students who attend schools with 71% other white students. Asian students also attend schools with a disproportionate share of other Asian students, but as was the case in 2010, statewide all other groups on average attend schools with close to the state percentage of Asian students (9.8%). This makes Asian students the most integrated group. Black and Latino students attend schools with the lowest shares of white students. Latino students attend schools with roughly the state average of black students, but white and Asian students have much lower shares of black peers than the state average (16.5%).

**Figure 11. Racial/Ethnic Composition of Schools Attended by Typical Student in NYS by Race/Ethnicity (2018)**



Note: Other includes American Indian and Mixed Race students.

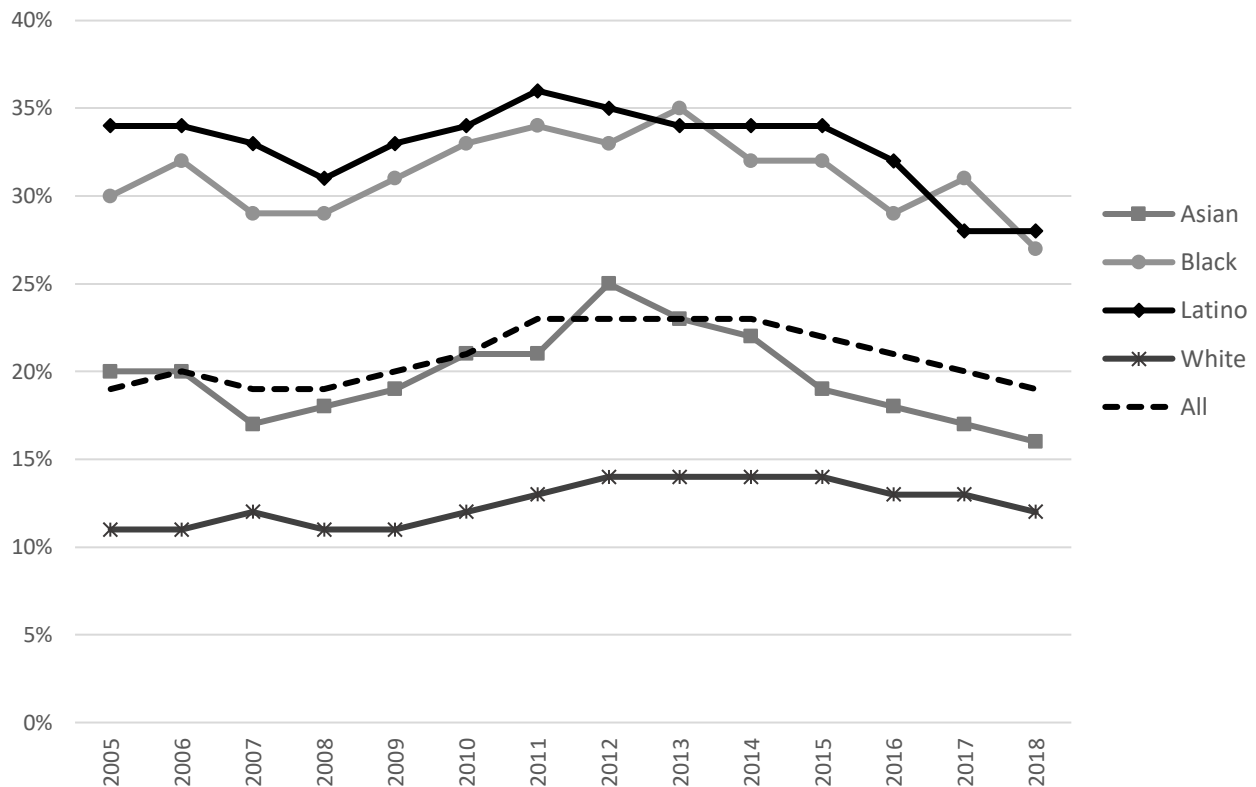
Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Dual Segregation.** Dual segregation occurs when black, Latino, and American Indian students are separated from white and Asian students and concentrated in high-poverty schools. Typically, schools that are segregated by race/ethnicity have high concentrations of low-income students, a facet of segregation that is critically important as schools isolated by income contribute to limited educational opportunities.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Orfield & Lee, “Why Segregation Matters”, 15 .

According to Kids Count,<sup>118</sup> NYS has experienced declining poverty among children under 18, from 21% in 2010 to 19% in 2018. Poverty among white children is the lowest in the state (12%) and highest among black and Latino children (27-28%). The poverty level for Latino children was 28% in 2018, a decline from the high and roughly stable share of 34% from 2010-2015. When the post-pandemic data become available, of course, poverty will be far worse due to the pandemic.

**Figure 12. Poverty of Children Under 18 in NYS by Race/Ethnicity (2005-2018)**



Source: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>.

To understand the relationship between race/ethnicity and poverty, we investigated poverty data obtained from the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for 2018-19,<sup>119</sup> which provides counts by school for students participating in the free and reduced price lunch program.

<sup>118</sup> <https://datacenter.kidscount.org>.

<sup>119</sup> We use NYSED data for 2018 since in 2010, as part of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) was introduced to expand the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) program by providing an alternative method for free and reduced price lunch eligibility for schools with high numbers of low-income students (more than 40% of the student body). Schools that participate in the CEP program provide all enrolled students meals at no cost. According to the CCD, schools that participate in CEP are no longer required to count students who receive free lunch, and they may report all students in the count regardless of economic status <https://nces.ed.gov/blogs/nces/post/understanding-school-lunch-eligibility-in-the-common-core-of-data>.



Correlations between the composition of schools by race/ethnicity and poverty show very strong negative relationships between black, Latino, and American Indian students together in a school (-.77) and white and Asian students together in a school (.77). In other words, the greater the composition of black, Latino, and American Indian students together in schools the greater the poverty in these schools. The opposite is true for white and Asian students, with higher compositions of these students in schools related to lower poverty rates.

**Table 4. Correlation Between Poverty and Percent Composition of Race/Ethnicity in NYS (2018)**

	Poverty
% White	-.75
% Asian	-.03
% Black	.57
% Latino	.59
% American Indian	.12
% White or Asian	-.77
% Black or Latino or American Indian	.77

Source: New York State Education Department (data.nysed.gov/downloads.php Enrollment Database).

Despite overall state poverty declines, the concentration of low-income students in segregated schools has continued to be extreme, the highest percentages occurring in apartheid schools. For instance, in 2010, roughly 86% of low-income students attended schools with fewer than 1% white students. In 2018, the data indicate extreme segregation by race and socioeconomic status, close to 90% of low-income students in NYS attend apartheid schools.

**Table 5. Distribution of Low-Income students in Nonwhite Segregated Schools in NYS**

	% Low-Income in NYS	% Low Income in 50-100% Nonwhite schools	% Low Income in 90-100% Nonwhite schools	% Low Income in 99-100% Nonwhite schools
2010-2011	47.6%	73.4%	82.0%	85.9%
2018-2019	57.6%	77.4%	86.0%	89.2%

Source: New York State Education Department (data.nysed.gov/downloads.php Enrollment Database).

Our previous report revealed the high percentages of low-income students in schools attended by average black and Latino students. The results indicate a large gap in the enrollment of white and Asian students with low-income students and black, Latino, and American Indian students with low-income students. In 2018, white and Asian students attended schools with 44% low-income students while black, Latino, and American Indian students attended schools with 76% low-income students.

**Table 6. Percent Low-Income in Schools Attended by the Average Student by Race and Year in NYS (2010 & 2018)**

	White Student	Asian Student	White and Asian Students	Black Student	Latino Student	American Indian Student	Black/Latino/American Indian Students
2010-2011	31.4%	51.3%	33.2%	71.4%	70.2%	54.4%	70.5%
2018-2019	42.0%	57.5%	44.1%	78.9%	74.3%	73.2%	76.2%

Source: New York State Education Department data site [data.nysed.gov/downloads.php](http://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php) Enrollment Database.

At the time of the last report, New York State was ranked the most segregated state in the nation based on having the highest share of black and Latino students in intensely segregated schools and the lowest exposure of these groups to white peers. In 2018, NYS is still the most segregated, with black student enrollment in intensely segregated schools increasing 1 percentage point and a decline in contact between black and white students in schools by 2 percentage points. Latino students also attend intensely segregated schools in NYS in the highest shares in the nation, with no percentage change from 2010. California has surpassed New York in having the lowest contact of Latino students with white peers; NYS is now ranked second on this measure.

## NYC Trends

### *Demographic Context of NYC*

The New York City Department of Education is the largest in the nation. It is comprised of 32 community school districts (CSD) across the five boroughs: Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. The NYC school population is becoming increasingly diverse, as are American schools overall. NYC public school enrollment comprises close to 40% of the entire state enrollment. The total enrollment in NYC has fluctuated over the past 30 years, but overall, it is roughly the same as it was 20 years ago. However, NYC has undergone a stark transformation of its school population in the past 30 years. The largest change in the past three decades is in the sharp increase in the Latino population, from 35% in 1990 to 41% in 2018, making this group the largest racial/ethnic group in the city's schools. The Asian population has also increased, more than doubling in the same time frame (from 8% in 1990 to over 17% in 2018), outnumbering the white population in 2018. At the same time, there have been significant declines in the black population: once the largest racial/ethnic group in the city with a 37% share of the population in 1990 to 25% in 2018. The white population had been on the decline until 2010 but has remained roughly stable in the past 20 years and slightly increased in the past eight years.

The city's suburban rings are experiencing tremendous gains in the Latino population. Long Island has seen over a four-fold increase in its Latino school population from 1990; the past 8 years there were 11 points of increase in enrollment. Outer- and inner-rings experienced the same rate of increase in their Latino student enrollment, roughly 11 points in each area. Since 1990, white student enrollment in Long Island declined by 30 points, 13 point in just 8 years

from 2010 to 2018. Similar sharp declines in white student enrollment were found in the inner- and outer-rings of the city; white shares of school enrollment declining over 10 points in each area. However, NYC is distinct from Long Island and the inner- and outer-rings of the city as the white and Asian population as a group has been increasing steadily since 1990. The white population started to increase modestly in NYC in the past 8 years and the declines in white population previously in NYC are not as dramatic as those experienced in the other areas. Taken as a group, the white and Asian population in NYC schools is 32% in 2018 up 4 percentage points since 1990.

However, as Mordechay & Ayscue (2019) find, these changes are not evenly distributed across the city.<sup>120</sup> In the fastest gentrifying areas, the white population tripled from 2000 to 2016 while the black population declined. Accompanying the racial/ethnic changes in gentrifying areas during this time frame, income growth has been much steeper and educational attainment higher in gentrifying tracts than the average of the city, where the overall poverty rate declined.<sup>121</sup>

**Table 7. Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, NYC and Regions (1990-2018)**

	Total Enrollment	White	Asian	White/Asian	Black	Latino
<b>NYC</b>						
1990-91	891,742	19.5%	8.1%	27.7%	37.3%	34.9%
2000-01	1,009,143	15.8%	12.1%	27.8%	34.3%	37.6%
2010-11	973,136	14.5%	15.1%	29.5%	29.8%	40.1%
2018-19	1,010,610	15.1%	16.6%	31.7%	25.1%	40.6%
<b>Long Island</b>						
1990-91	390,474	79.4%	3.1%	82.5%	10.5%	6.8%
2000-01	460,566	72.0%	4.3%	76.3%	12.1%	11.4%
2010-11	463,031	63.0%	6.9%	69.9%	11.1%	18.2%
2018-19	433,681	49.9%	9.1%	59.0%	9.7%	29.1%
<b>Inner-ring</b>						
1990-91	143,286	64.9%	5.4%	70.3%	18.4%	11.2%
2000-01	182,607	57.7%	5.5%	63.2%	19.2%	17.5%
2010-11	187,463	52.3%	6.4%	57.8%	15.2%	24.8%
2018-19	185,932	42.7%	6.8%	49.6%	12.5%	35.1%
<b>Outer-ring</b>						
1990-91	91,986	82.6%	1.9%	84.6%	9.6%	5.7%
2000-01	111,470	75.4%	2.2%	77.6%	12.0%	10.2%
2010-11	108,802	65.3%	3.4%	68.7%	13.2%	17.4%
2018-19	96,777	54.2%	3.2%	57.4%	12.2%	26.9%

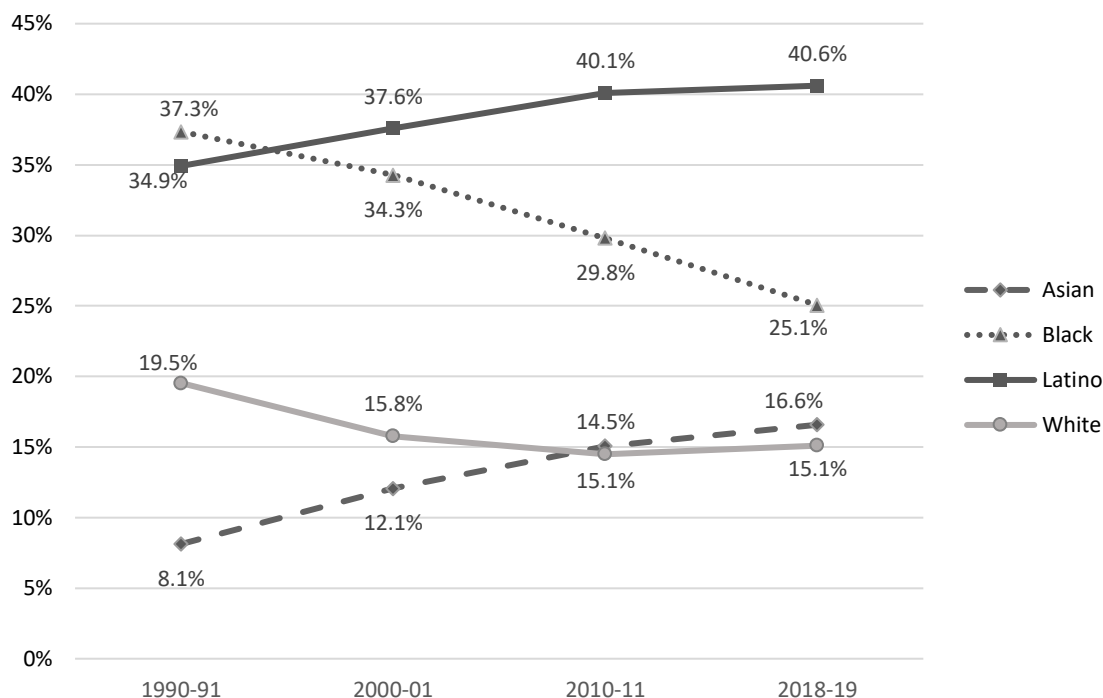
Note: NYC consists of Bronx, Kings (Brooklyn), New York (Manhattan), Queens, and Richmond (Staten Island) counties, inner-ring (Rockland and Westchester [Yonkers] counties), outer-ring region (Putnam, Dutchess, and Orange counties), and Long Island (Nassau and Suffolk counties).

<sup>120</sup> Mordechay, K., & Ayscue, J. B. (2019). School integration in gentrifying neighborhoods: Evidence from NYC, (March), 1–53.

<sup>121</sup> Mordechay, & Ayscue, “School integration in gentrifying neighborhoods”, 15.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Figure 13. Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, NYC Schools (1990-2018)**



Note: NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools. Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

### Segregation in NYC Schools

New York City schools have extreme levels of segregation by race/ethnicity. Almost all of the public schools are predominantly nonwhite (94%), and most are intensely segregated (70%), although this percentage has fallen slightly since 2010. The percent of apartheid schools (those with less than 1% white student enrollment) has been declining for the past 30 years, and in the time frame from 2010 to 2018 has declined more than 10 points to 17%. Nonetheless, the fact remains that 1 in 6 schools in NYC are apartheid schools.

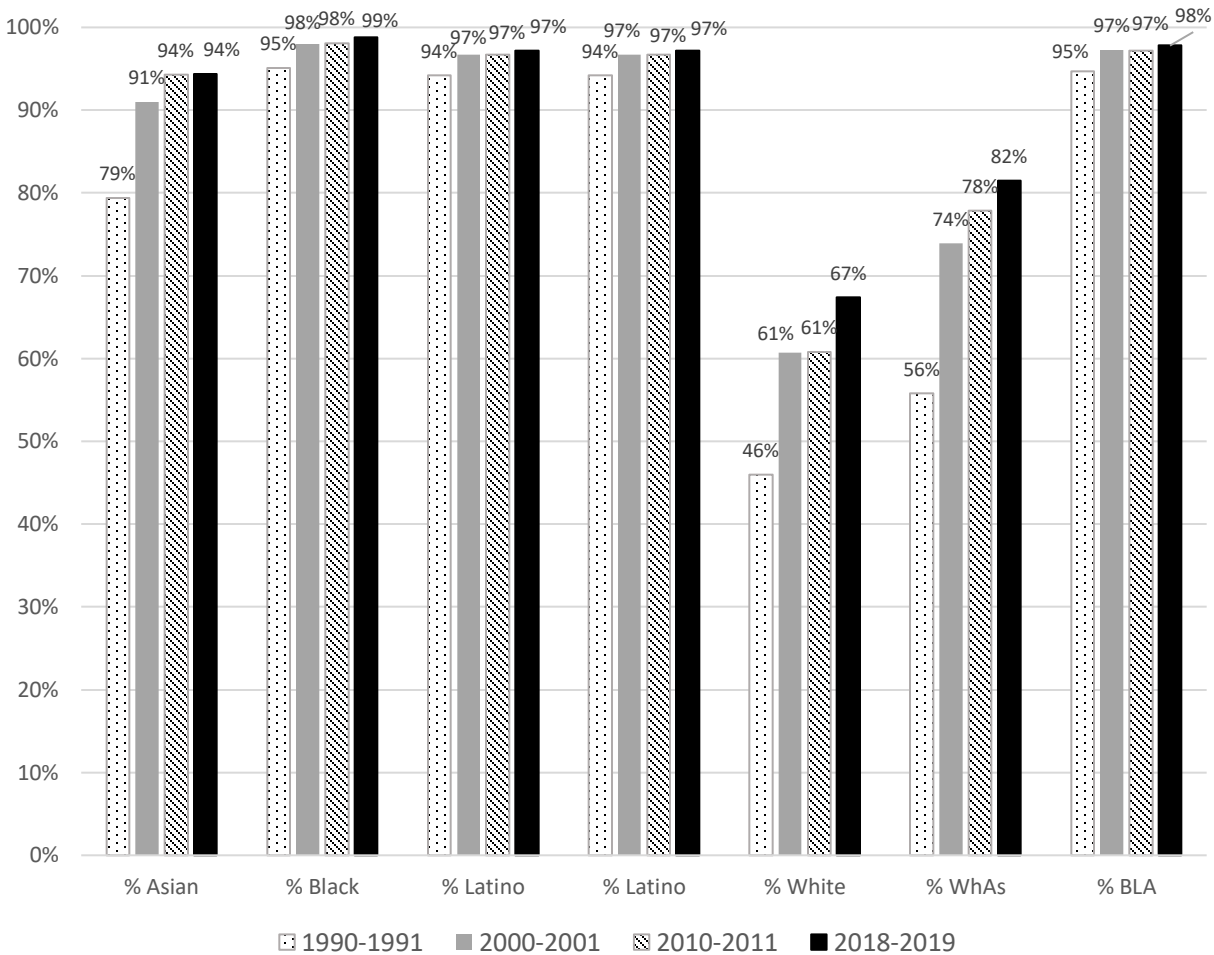
**Table 8. Percent of Schools in NYC that are Segregated (1990-2018)**

	% 50-100% nonwhite	% 90-100% nonwhite	% 99-100% nonwhite
1990-91	81%	58%	37%
2000-01	90%	65%	31%
2010-11	93%	72%	31%
2018-19	94%	70%	17%

Note: NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools. Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

The majority of students of all races/ethnicities in NYC attend schools comprised of predominantly nonwhite students. Virtually all black students (99%) and most all Latino students (97%) and Asian students (94%) attend schools that are predominantly nonwhite. This is a continuing and increasing trend over the past 30 years; today black and Latino students attend predominantly nonwhite schools in even higher shares than they did three decades ago (95% and 94%, respectively). Asian and white students together experienced a steep increase from 1990-2000 in their attendance in predominantly nonwhite schools, but white students continue to attend predominantly nonwhite schools in the lowest shares.

**Figure 14. Attendance by Race/Ethnicity in Predominantly (50-100%) Nonwhite Schools in NYC (1990-2018)**



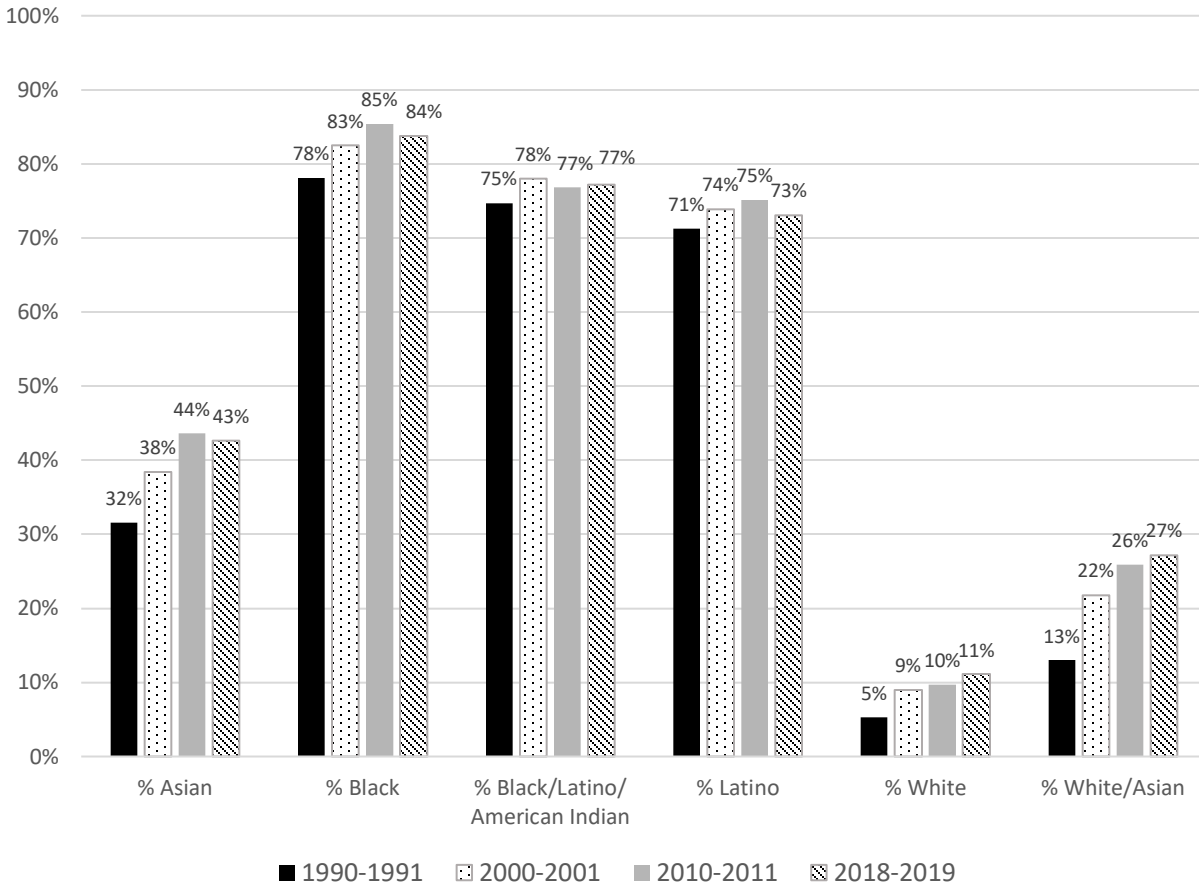
*Notes:* NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter traditional public schools. WhAs is white and Asian students combined, BLA is black, Latino, American Indian students combined.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

While attendance in predominantly nonwhite schools is pervasive for all races/ethnicities, this is not the case in intensely segregated schools, those with less than 10% white student enrollment (Figure 15). Black students, in particular, and Latino students vastly and disproportionately attend these schools in NYC. In 2018, close to 85% of black students and 73% of Latino students

attend schools that have less than 10% white students while only 11% of white students do the same. Asian student attendance in intensely segregated schools has had the sharpest increase over the past 30 years (from 32% to 43%).

**Figure 15. Attendance by Race/Ethnicity in Intensely Segregated (90-100%Nonwhite) Schools in NYC (1990-2018)**



*Note:* NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Enrollment in apartheid schools – those with less than 1% white population – has decreased tremendously; in 1990, over half of all black students in NYC attended schools with 99% students of color. Thirty years later, 1 in 4 black students and 1 in 6 Latino students attend apartheid schools. These percentages have dropped sharply from 30 years ago, but they are twice the national average and well above the state average.

**Table 9. Attendance by Race/Ethnicity in Apartheid Schools in NYC, NYS, US (1990-2018)**

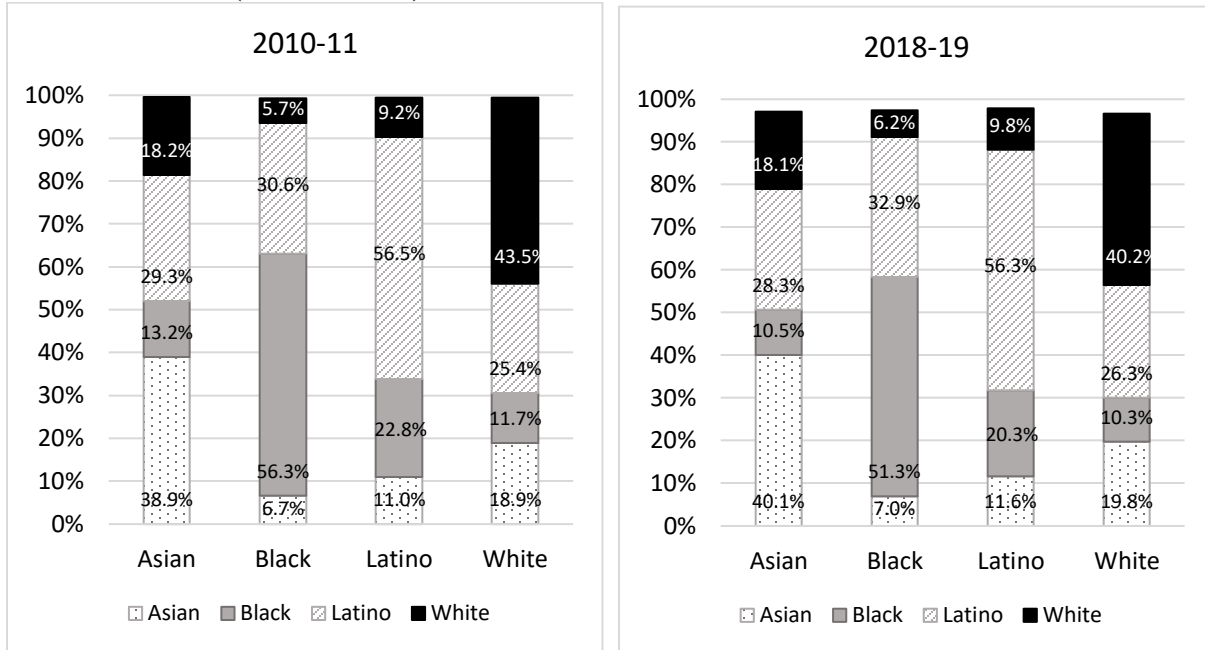
	Black	Latino	Black/Latino/ American Indian
<b>NYC</b>			
1990-1991	58%	39%	49%
2000-2001	42%	34%	38%
2010-2011	37%	27%	29%
2018-2019	24%	16%	19%
<b>NYS</b>			
1990-1991	42%	33%	38%
2000-2001	29%	26%	27%
2010-2011	24%	19%	21%
2018-2019	16%	11%	13%
<b>US</b>			
2018-2019	12%	8%	10%

*Note:* NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools.  
*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

In New York City, white students disproportionately attend schools with other white students (40%), close to three times the city-wide share of white students, and have much lower percentages of black and Latino peers than the city-wide shares of these groups. They attend schools in approximately the same share of Asian students as the city-wide percentage. All other racial/ethnic groups also attend schools with disproportionately high shares of the same race/ethnicity. For instance, Asian students attend schools with 2.5 times the share of Asian students than the city-wide percentage, black students with twice the share of black students, and Latino students with about 1.5 times the share of Latino students. Black and Latino students attend schools with disproportionately low shares of white students.

Compared to 2010, white students are attending schools, on average, with slightly more Latino and Asian students but fewer black students. Asian students have less contact with all racial groups except their own and have maintained the same exposure they had to white students in 2010. Black students attend schools with more black and Latino students than they did in 2010. There have not been significant changes in the shares of other race/ethnicities that Latino students attend schools with, except they attend schools with lower shares of black students than they did in 2021.

**Figure 16. Exposure of Students of each Race/Ethnicity to Students of each Race/Ethnicity in NYC Schools (2010 & 2018)**



Note: NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools. Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

### ***Trends in Segregation in Charter versus Traditional Public Schools***

Bloomberg’s pro charter policies, supported by state law, resulted in charter schools burgeoning from 2010, roughly doubling in numbers. Whereas charter schools comprised less than 10% of all NYC schools in 2010, eight years later they make up 16% of schools and enroll 12% of students. As the following sections show, changes in racial/ethnic composition of NYC schools show a clear pattern of segregation following charter school presence.

White student enrollment overall in NYC slightly increased over the past eight years, and we see that increase is concentrated in traditional and charter school enrollment. Magnet grant funding ceased in 2010 and along with it there has been a sharp decline in white student enrollment in magnet schools (where the enrollment is one-fourth of what it was eight years ago) (Table 10).

Asian student enrollment has followed a similar pattern, decreasing in magnet schools and increasing in traditional schools (3 points). Black student enrollment, on the other hand, has declined across all school types, while Latino student enrollment has increased in all school types, particularly in magnet schools where their enrollment increased from 37% ten years ago to 58% in 2018.



**Table 10. Racial/Ethnic Composition in Public School Enrollment in NYC by School Type (2010 & 2018)**

	Number of Schools	% White	% Black	% Asian	% Latino
2010-2011					
Charter	123	3.0%	62.1%	1.8%	30.8%
Magnet (2008-2009)*	136	15.8%	28.5%	18.5%	36.9%
Traditional	1451	15.0%	29.8%	15.6%	40.5%
2018-2019					
Charter	230	4.4%	51.6%	2.8%	39.0%
Magnet	31	4.3%	22.6%	12.3%	58.1%
Traditional	1441	16.7%	21.6%	18.5%	40.5%

Note: Magnet school data for 2010-2011 for NYC missing in NCES files.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Earlier, we showed that the share of intensely segregated and apartheid segregated schools in NYC had fallen over the past decade; this is true of both traditional and charter schools. While the shares of schools that are intensely segregated have fallen slightly, the shares of apartheid schools have decreased significantly.

**Table 11. Percent of Schools in NYC that are Segregated by School Type (2010 & 2018)**

	% 50-100% nonwhite	% 90-100% nonwhite	% 99-100% nonwhite
2010-11			
All Schools	93%	72%	28%
Traditional	91%	71%	27%
Charter	99%	91%	73%
2018-19			
All Schools	94%	70%	17%
Traditional	93%	67%	13%
Charter	99%	89%	42%

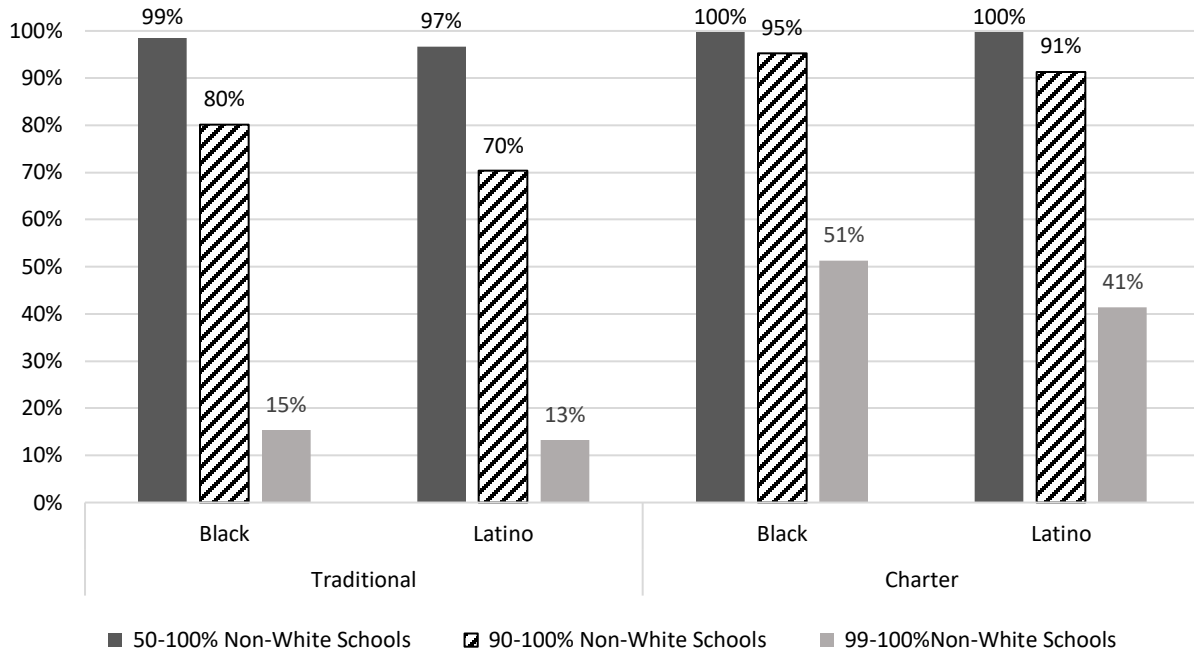
Note: NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Essentially all black and Latino charter students in New York City attend predominantly nonwhite charter schools; the percentage is slightly lower in traditional public schools, but still close to 100% (Figure 17). Charter schools are overwhelmingly intensely segregated for both black and Latino students, more so than the traditional public schools. Ninety-five percent of black students and 91% of Latino students attend intensely segregated charter schools, compared to 80% of black and 70% of Latino students attending intensely segregated traditional schools. Enrollment of black and Latino students in apartheid charter schools is also extremely high compared to apartheid traditional schools. Whereas 15% of black students attend apartheid

traditional schools, over half (51%) of black students in charter schools are in apartheid charter schools. The shares for Latino students are also astonishingly high; 41% of Latino students attend apartheid charter schools compared to 13% in apartheid traditional schools.

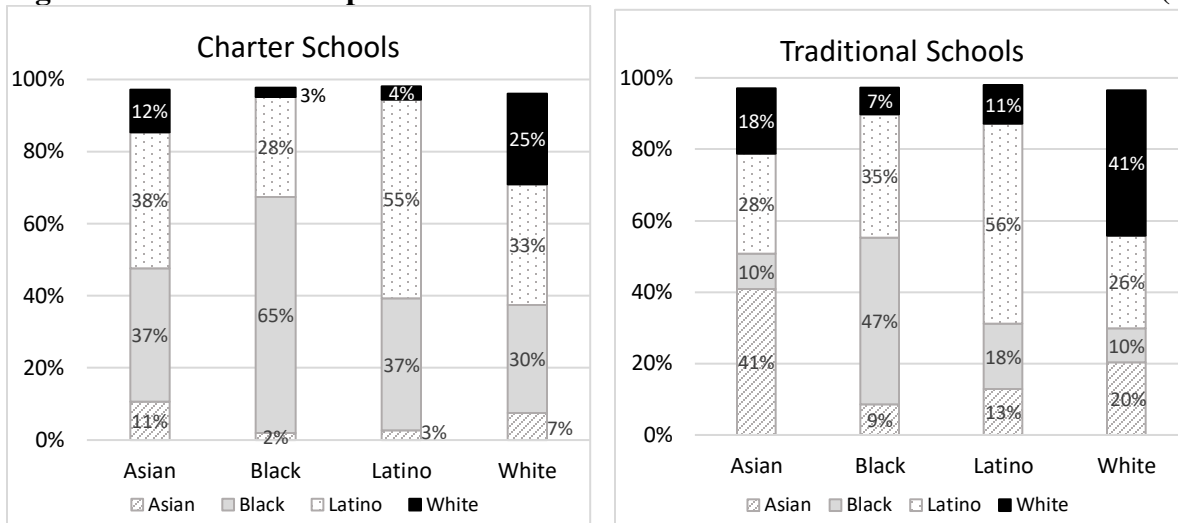
**Figure 17. Percent of Black and Latino Students in Segregated Schools by Type (2018)**



*Note:* NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools. *Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data

**Exposure.** In charter schools, black and Latino students are extremely isolated in terms of their attendance in schools with white and Asian peers. For black students in charter schools, only 3 peers in 100 students are white; for Latino students, the share is 4 in 100. Black, and Latino students, on average, attend charter schools where almost all their peers are black, Latino, or American Indian students (94%). In contrast, roughly 7 in 10 peers of white and Asian students are black, Latino, or American Indian students. In traditional public schools, black and Latino students have lower exposure to black, Latino, and American Indian students than they do at charter schools, though the majority of their peers are in this group (83% for black students and 76% for Latino students). White and Asian students have limited exposure to black, Latino, and American Indian students, attending traditional schools with only 38% of students from these racial/ethnic groups.

**Figure 18. Interracial Exposure in Charter Schools and Traditional Schools in NYC (2018)**



*Note:* NYC schools consist of Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island counties. Data include charter and non-charter public schools. Figures do not add up to 100% as American Indian students and students of two or more races are not included (less than 3% of total enrollment).

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data

### ***Dual Segregation in NYC Schools***

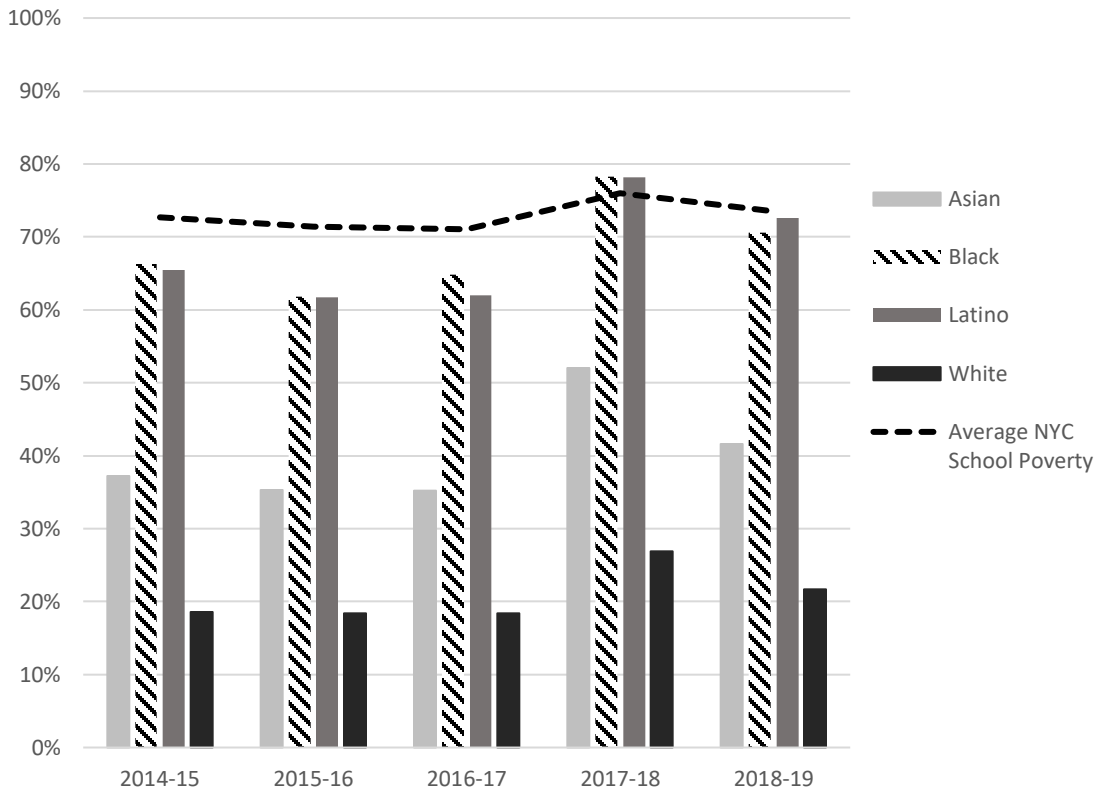
The share of New York City students living in poverty has grown over the last two decades. The extreme double segregation is even more dramatic with 92% of low-income students attending apartheid schools with 99-100% students of color. These schools are almost totally isolated from contact with white or middle-class fellow students. White and Asian students mostly attend schools with a majority of students from middle-class families. Thinking about one of the roles of schools as socializing students to adult society, students are being prepared for very segregated futures. When students eventually enter post-secondary education, they will be encountering, in most cases, diverse middle-class settings. Some students will be much better prepared than others.

To investigate poverty in NYC schools, we used the NYC Department of Education data from 2014 to 2018.<sup>122</sup> The data show that poverty has fluctuated since 2014, but in 2018 was at the same rate as it was in 2014, roughly 73%. Figure 19 illustrates that black and Latino students disproportionately attend schools that have more than a 75% rate of poverty. Latino students have increased their share of attendance in these schools from 66% to 73% during this time frame, and black students from 66% to 71%. White and Asian students also attend schools with

<sup>122</sup> Starting in 2017-2018, NYC adopted a Free School Lunch for All program, allowing all public school students to be eligible for free meals. Prior to the 2017-18 school year, the Department of Education of New York counted poverty for schools that were designated as universal meal schools students as 100%, since all students attending such schools were automatically eligible for free lunch, whether they were or not. From 2017-2018 on, in order to get a more accurate free and reduced price lunch status count, the poverty count is now calculated as students that *would* qualify for free/reduced lunch or would be eligible for Human Resources Administration (HRA) benefits.

higher poverty in higher shares than they did in 2014, but the increases are much more modest (19% to 22% for white students, and 37% to 42% for Asian students).

**Figure 19. Percent of Students by Race/Ethnicity Attending Schools with Greater than 75% Poverty (2014-2018)**



*Note:* The poverty indicator does not include student universal meal status, and retroactively applies this rule to previous years.  
*Source:* NYC Department of Education.

The average black and Latino students attend schools with 81% low-income students; this is up over 1 point from 2014. White and Asian students attend schools that have roughly 60% low-income students, and this is also up about 1 point from 2014. The results for NYC in 2018 are much higher than the state averages for every racial/ethnic group.

**Table 12. Share of Low-income Peers in Schools Attended by the Average Student of each Race/Ethnic Group (2014-2018)**

	White Students	Asian Students	White/Asian Students	Black Students	Latino Students	Black/Latino Students
2014-15	52.2%	67.4%	59.5%	79.6%	80.0%	79.8%
2018-19	53.6%	68.2%	60.8%	81.1%	81.6%	81.4%
2018-19 NYS	42.0%	57.5%	44.1%	78.9%	74.3%	76.2%

*Source:* NYDOE obtained from NYC Open Data, 2013-2018 Demographic Snapshot (<https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Education/2013-2018-Demographic-Snapshot-School/s52a-8aq6>).  
 Data for 2018-19 New York State obtained from NYDOE obtained from New York State Education Department data site ([data.nysed.gov/downloads.php](http://data.nysed.gov/downloads.php) Enrollment Database).

Investigating dual segregation by the shares of low-income students in racially segregated schools, we found the attendance of low-income students has increased sharply in apartheid schools (5 points) compared to those in predominantly nonwhite (<1 point) and intensely nonwhite (2 points). Close to 92% of low-income students in NYC schools attend apartheid schools.

**Table 13. Low-income Attendance in Nonwhite Segregated Schools (2014-2018)**

	% Low-Income	% Low-income in 50-100% Nonwhite schools	% Low-income in 90-100% Nonwhite schools	% Low-income in 99-100% Nonwhite schools
2014-15	72.7%	76.4%	82.2%	86.9%
2018-19	73.5%	77.4%	84.4%	91.8%

Source: NYDOE obtained from NYC Open Data, 2013-2018 Demographic Snapshot (<https://data.cityofnewyork.us/Education/2013-2018-Demographic-Snapshot-School/s52a-8aq6>).

**Academic Achievement in NYC Schools.** Differences in standardized test scores by race/ethnicity and income status are not uncommon. Segregated schools typically have less experienced teachers and more limited curricula including less advanced courses. Since schools segregated by race/ethnicity generally also have high shares of low-income students, they also face other types of inequity. High poverty schools have less stable enrollment, higher levels of foster students and homelessness, and students with higher chronic medical issues leading to chronic absenteeism. These and other related factors previously discussed contribute to lower academic outcomes.

Investigating the results of the English Language Arts (ELA) (Table 14) and Mathematics exams (Table 15) by school, we see stark differences in levels of achievement by race/ethnicity and income status. White and Asian students in both ELA and math are overwhelmingly in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> quintiles of achievement; 91% of students in these highest scoring quintile groups score in the top 20% of all scores. The majority of black and Latino students are in the lowest 20%. Results for ELA scores for economically disadvantaged students show that 36% are in the bottom 20% of scores and 42% are in the top 20% of scores. These are disconcerting results compared to the large majority (87%) of advantaged students scoring in the top 20% of scores and only 6% in the bottom 20%. Similar results are found in math, but even sharper divides exist. Ninety-four percent of white and Asian students score in the top 20%, but only 22% of black and Latino students score in this bracket. Only 1% of white and Asian students are in the lowest 20% of scores, while 52% of black and Asian students are in these lowest tiers. Similar discrepancies are shown in economic status, where 82% advantaged versus 44% disadvantaged score in the top 20% of scores, while less than 10% of advantaged and one third of disadvantaged students are in the lowest 20% of scores. Thus, dual segregation by race and income status show severe inequities in educational outcomes.

**Table 14. Relationship between Race/Ethnicity and English Language Arts Achievement Level in NYC Schools (2018)**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Quintile	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quintile	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quintile	4 <sup>th</sup> Quintile	5 <sup>th</sup> Quintile
White	1%	2%	8%	22%	67%
Asian	0%	1%	7%	29%	63%
Black	24%	26%	23%	13%	14%
Hispanic	24%	28%	25%	14%	9%
White and Asian	1%	1%	7%	26%	65%
Black and Latino	24%	27%	24%	14%	11%
Economically Disadvantaged	15%	21%	21%	23%	19%
Not Economically Disadvantaged	2%	4%	8%	22%	65%

*Note:* Includes results for students in grades 3-8. Economically disadvantaged students include students identified by the State of New York as eligible for free or reduced-price lunch or other economic assistance programs. Charter School results are not included in these results. Native American and Multiracial groups are not included. Quintiles are constructed based on the overall mean scale score school result and number tested, resulting in 20% of overall NYC enrollment in each Quintile. Percent race/ethnicity in Quintiles found using average group mean scale score result and number tested; percent economically disadvantaged in each Quintile are found using the average mean scale score result and number tested by economically advantaged/not disadvantaged groups.

*Source:* NYC Department of Education ELA School Test Results 2013 to 2019 (<https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/academics/test-results>).

**Table 15. Relationship between Race/Ethnicity and Math Achievement Level in NYC Schools (2018)**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Quintile	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quintile	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quintile	4 <sup>th</sup> Quintile	5 <sup>th</sup> Quintile
White	1%	2%	7%	27%	63%
Asian	0%	1%	3%	17%	79%
Black	29%	28%	21%	9%	13%
Hispanic	21%	29%	29%	13%	9%
White and Asian	0%	1%	5%	22%	72%
Black and Latino	24%	28%	26%	12%	10%
Economically Disadvantaged	14%	19%	23%	20%	24%
Not Economically Disadvantaged	3%	5%	10%	22%	60%

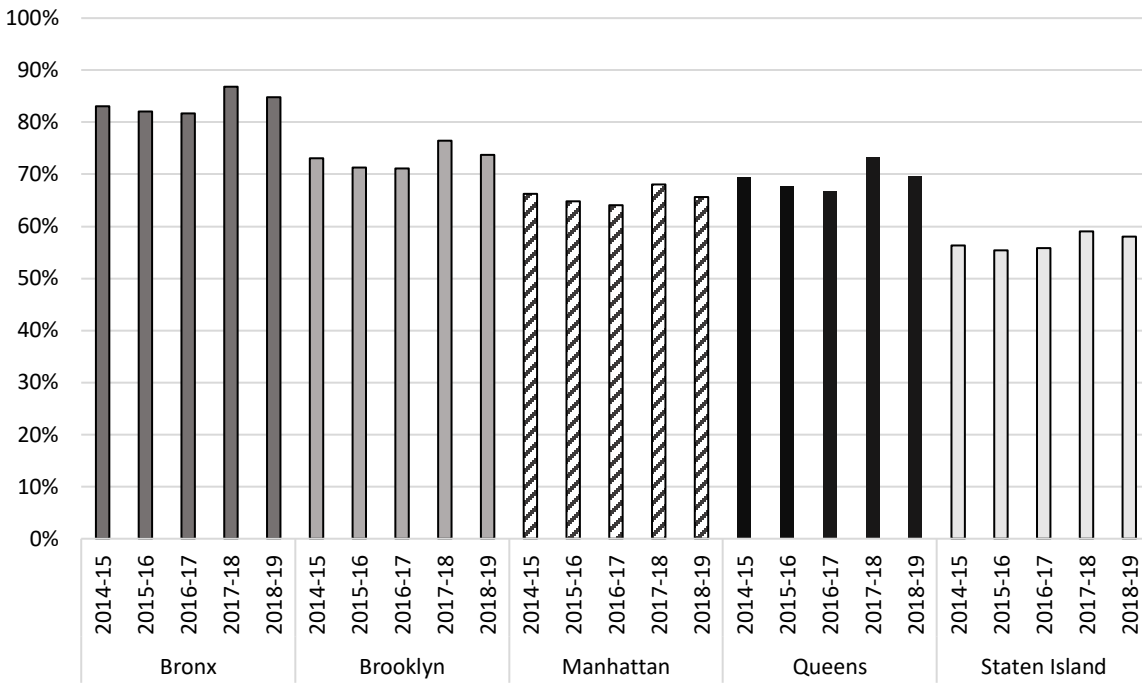
*Note:* Includes results for students in grades 3-8. Charter School results are not included in these results. Native American and Mutiracial groups are not included. Quintiles are constructed based on the overall mean scale score school result and number tested, resulting in 20% of overall NYC enrollment in each Quintile. Percent race/ethnicity in Quintiles found using average group mean scale score result and number tested; percent economically disadvantaged in each Quintile are found using the average mean scale score result and number tested by economically advantaged/not disadvantaged groups.

*Source:* NYC Department of Education School Math Results 2013 to 2019 (<https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/academics/test-results>).

### ***Segregation in NYC Boroughs***

New York City boroughs vary in their racial/ethnic makeup and income status. As shown in Figure 20, Bronx has the highest poverty levels among the boroughs, with 85% of students attending Bronx public schools identified as low-income. Brooklyn has the second highest levels of school poverty, 68% in 2018.

**Figure 20. School Poverty Levels by NYC Borough (2014-2018)**



Source: NYC Department of Education.

There are also difference in ethnic/racial makeup in the Boroughs. Staten Island has the highest white population, followed by Manhattan and Brooklyn. Brooklyn has the highest black student population and Bronx the highest Latino population. Asian student enrollment is highest in Queens.

**Table 16. Enrollment in NYC Boroughs (2018)**

	Total Enrollment	% White	% Asian	% Black	% Latino
Bronx	212,099	4%	5%	27%	62%
Brooklyn	306,544	18%	17%	35%	28%
Manhattan	159,663	18%	12%	22%	44%
Queens	272,108	13%	29%	17%	38%
Staten Island	60,196	45%	11%	13%	29%

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

The racial/ethnic composition differences between boroughs are most apparent when examining school types, charter versus traditional public schools (TPS). Across all boroughs, public schools greatly outnumber charter schools, the highest concentration of charter schools is in Brooklyn and the Bronx.

**Table 17. Number of Schools by Type in NYC Boroughs (2018)**

	Tradition	Charter	Magnet
Bronx	343	68	4
Brooklyn	436	83	10
Manhattan	271	53	4
Queens	320	22	13
Staten Island	71	4	-

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

The biggest demographic transformation from 2010-2018 has occurred in the city’s charter schools. Latino students in Staten Island and Manhattan charter schools increased 26 and 15 points, respectively (Figure 21). In the same time frame, black student enrollment dropped sharply in these same areas. Overall white decline in the city is concentrated in Queens and Staten Island in both school types. Bronx charter and traditional schools have the lowest shares of white and Asian students and the highest shares of black, Latino, and American Indian students (Table 18), though the shares of these groups have grown slightly in Bronx schools. Charter schools enroll higher shares of black, Latino, and American Indian students in all boroughs compared to their non-charter counterparts; the highest enrollment of black students occurs in Brooklyn charter schools. However, Latino students attend non-charter schools in higher percentages in all boroughs except Manhattan (the same share) and Staten Island.

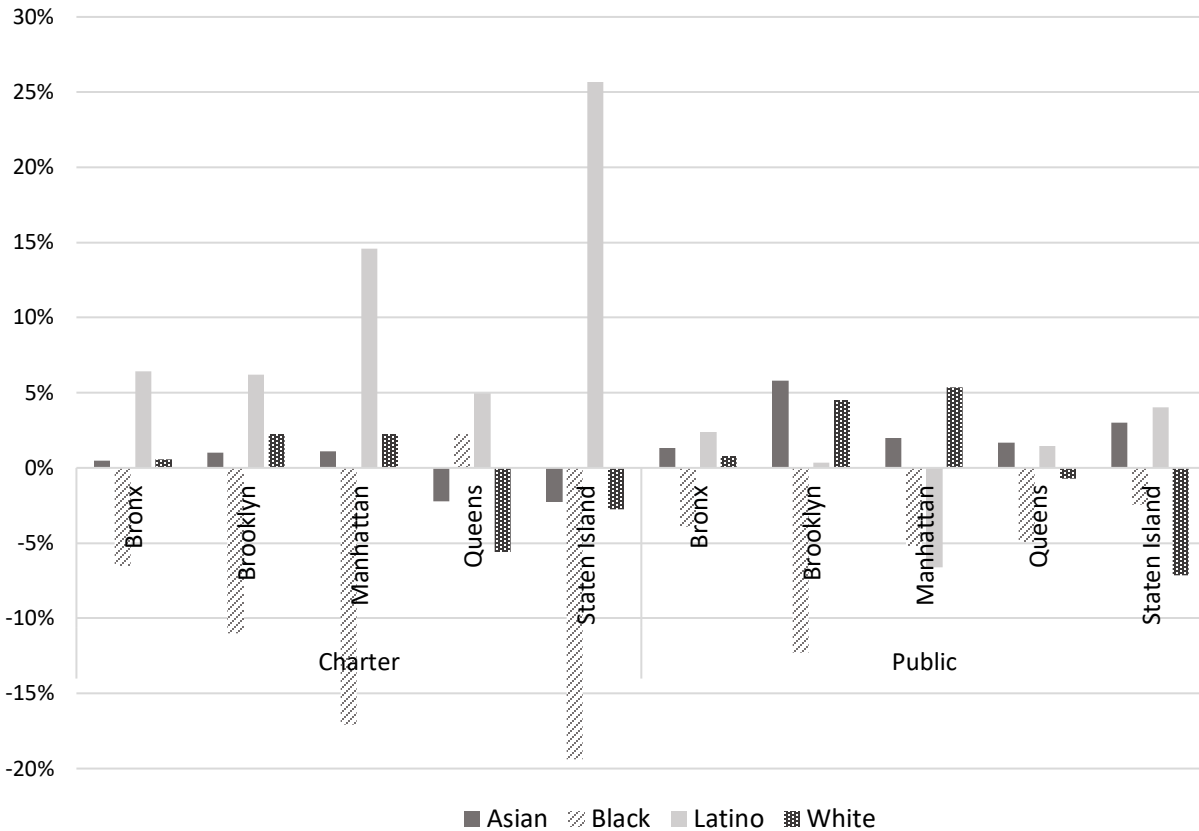
**Table 18. Racial Composition of Schools by NYC Borough and School Type (2018)**

		White	Asian	Black	Latino	White or Asian	Black/Latino/American Indian
Traditional	Bronx	5%	6%	25%	64%	10%	89%
	Brooklyn	20%	20%	29%	29%	40%	59%
	Manhattan	21%	15%	17%	42%	36%	60%
	Queens	13%	30%	16%	38%	43%	56%
	Staten Island	46%	11%	12%	28%	57%	41%
Magnet	Bronx	3%	6%	39%	50%	9%	90%
	Brooklyn	7%	7%	30%	54%	15%	85%
	Manhattan	3%	1%	1%	95%	4%	96%
	Queens	3%	19%	21%	53%	22%	77%
	Staten Island	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Charter	Bronx	1%	2%	40%	56%	3%	96%
	Brooklyn	6%	2%	65%	24%	8%	90%
	Manhattan	3%	2%	45%	47%	6%	93%
	Queens	9%	8%	49%	31%	17%	81%
	Staten Island	10%	2%	33%	52%	12%	86%

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.



**Figure 21. Change in Enrollment in Charter and Public Schools in NYC Boroughs from 2010 to 2018**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Further investigating enrollment patterns of the public and charter schools in the boroughs reveals trends by geographic area. Charter schools have increased most markedly in the Bronx and Queens. Whereas in 2010, Queens had only nine charter schools, in 2018, the number had increased to 22 (an increase of 144%). Similarly, the Bronx has added 36 new charter schools in the past eight years, bringing their total in 2018 to 68 (an increase of 113%). The increases in charter schools have resulted in large increases in charter school enrollment in all boroughs (Table 20). Numerically, the largest increases in enrollment are in Brooklyn (31,102), Bronx (19,405) and Manhattan (19,607).

**Table 19. Percent Change in Number of Charter and Traditional Schools from 2010 to 2018 in NYC Boroughs**

	Traditional			Charter		
	Number in 2010	Number in 2018	% Change	Number in 2010	Number in 2018	% Change
Bronx	339	343	1%	32	68	113%
Brooklyn	453	436	-4%	48	83	73%
Manhattan	289	271	-6%	31	53	71%
Queens	308	320	4%	9	22	144%
Staten Island	62	71	15%	3	4	33%

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

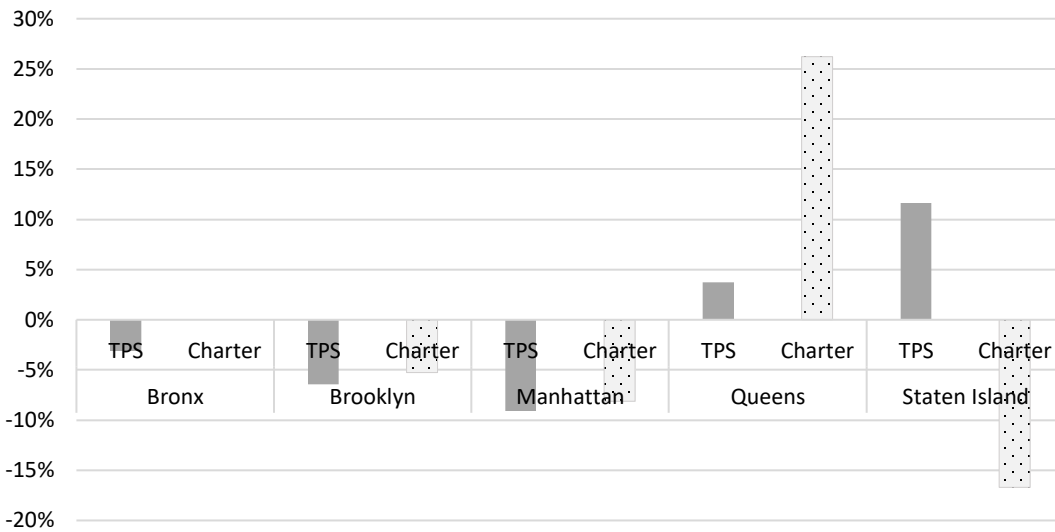
**Table 20. Percent Change in Charter and Traditional Schools Enrollment from 2010 to 2018 in NYC Boroughs**

	Traditional			Charter		
	Enrollment in 2010	Enrollment in 2018	% Change	Enrollment in 2010	Enrollment in 2018	% Change
Bronx	181,327	194,082	-7%	9,771	29,176	199%
Brooklyn	256,659	279,614	-8%	14,412	45,514	216%
Manhattan	126,815	142,826	-11%	11,088	30,695	177%
Queens	253,737	261,088	-3%	2,960	10,108	241%
Staten Island	58,834	56,942	3%	353	1,362	286%

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

The racial composition of charters and traditional schools in the boroughs shows that the majority of both school types are as intensely segregated (except traditional schools in Staten Island) as they were in 2010 (Table 21-Table 22). However, charter schools are by far more segregated than traditional schools, having higher percentages of schools with fewer than 10% white student enrollment. Queens has more than doubled their number of charters from 2010, and they have become increasingly segregated, shares of these schools rising from 56% to 82%. However, charter schools in all other boroughs have seen a decline in the shares of these schools during this time, except the Bronx, where 100% of the charter schools are intensely segregated, as they were in 2010. Staten Island has less than 5 charter schools; the 1 additional charter that opened from 2010 drove the share of intensely segregated charters down from two-thirds to half. The more numerous charter schools in Manhattan have had the high decline in shares of intensely segregated schools (from 97% in 2010 to 89% in 2018). The share of traditional schools that are intensely segregated in Staten Island has more than doubled in eight years, and those in Queens have increased by 4 points, while all other traditional schools have seen a decline in their shares of these schools. The highest decline in traditional schools, as with charter schools, is found in Manhattan (from 69% in 2010 to 59% in 2018). Most boroughs have no predominantly white schools. The exception is in Staten Island, where 42% of schools are predominantly white, a sharp decline from 60% of predominantly white schools in 2010, and Manhattan public schools are 14% predominantly white, up slightly from 2010 (12.5%)

**Figure 22. Point Change in Shares of Intensely Segregated Schools in Borough Charter and Public Schools from 2010 to 2018**



*Note:* TPS denotes Traditional public schools.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data

**Table 21. Distribution of Charter and Public Schools in Boroughs by Percentage White Deciles (2018)**

% white	Bronx Public (n=343)	Bronx Charter (n=68)	Brooklyn Public (n=436)	Brooklyn Charter (n=83)	Manhattan Public (n=271)	Manhattan Charter (n=53)	Queens Public (n=320)	Queens Charter (n=22)	Staten Island Public (n=71)	Staten Island Charter (n=4)
Less than 10%	90.1%	100%	64.7%	84.3%	59.4%	88.7%	62.5%	81.8%	19.7%	50.0%
10-20%	6.7%		9.4%	3.6%	9.2%	7.5%	16.2%	4.5%	9.9%	25.0%
20-30%	1.5%		7.6%	1.2%	7.0%	3.8%	6.9%		7.0%	
30-40%	.9%		6.2%	4.8%	3.7%		7.5%	13.6%	4.2%	25.0%
40-50%	.3%		6.2%	3.6%	7.0%		4.1%		16.9%	
50-60%	.3%		2.5%	2.4%	7.0%		.9%		14.1%	
60-70%	.3%		1.6%		4.8%		.6%		4.2%	
70-80%			1.6%		1.8%		.9%		18.3%	
80-90%			.2%				.3%		5.6%	
90-100%			.2%							
50-100%	.6%		6.1%	2.4%	13.6%		2.7%		42.2%	

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

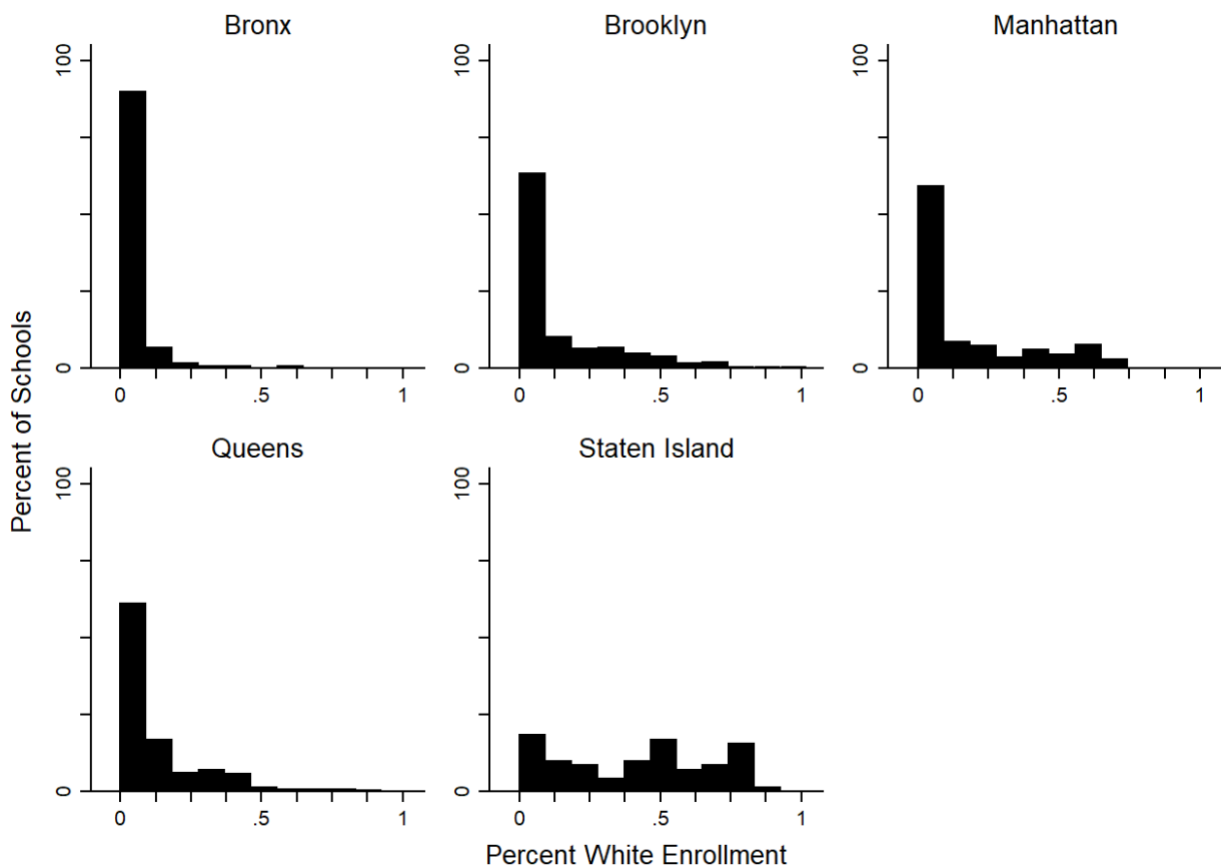
**Table 22. Distribution of Charter and Public Schools in Boroughs by Percentage White Deciles (2010)**

% White	Bronx Public (n=339)	Bronx Charter (n=32)	Brooklyn Public (n=453)	Brooklyn Charter (n=48)	Manhattan Public (n=289)	Manhattan Charter (n=31)	Queens Public (n=308)	Queens Charter (n=9)	Staten Island Public (n=62)	Staten Island Charter (n=3)
Less than 10%	93.2%	100%	71.1%	89.6%	68.5%	96.8%	58.8%	55.6%	8.1%	66.7%
10-20%	2.9%		8.2%	2.1%	7.3%	3.2%	15.6%	11.1%	11.3%	
20-30%	1.2%		4.6%	2.1%	5.5%		8.8%	33.3%	9.7%	33.3%
30-40%	1.2%		5.1%	2.1%	2.8%		5.8%		6.5%	
40-50%	.9%		4.9%	2.1%	3.5%		6.2%		4.8%	
50-60%			2.4%	2.1%	3.1%		1.9%		17.7%	
60-70%	.6%		1.8%		5.2%		1.6%		9.7%	
70-80%			1.3%		3.5%		.6%		4.8%	
80-90%			.2%		.7%		.6%		27.4%	
90-100%			.2%							
50-100%	0.6%		5.9%	2.1%	12.5%		4.7%		59.6%	

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Figure 23 further demonstrates the variation in white student enrollment within boroughs. Staten Island has one CSD encompassing 71 traditional public schools. Although the borough has the highest rate of white student enrollment – just under half of all enrollment is white – the distribution of white students throughout the district schools varies greatly and has changed dramatically since 2010. In 2010, roughly a third of schools in Staten Island served 80% or more white students. In 2018, under 10% serve over 80% of white students. In 2018, only one-fourth of schools have higher than 68% white student enrollment. On the other hand, schools in the Bronx are heavily weighted with lower shares of white students; less than 3% of schools serve more than 20% of white students and this has not changed significantly since 2010.

**Figure 23. Distribution of Percent White Enrollment in Schools within Community School Districts by Borough (2018)**

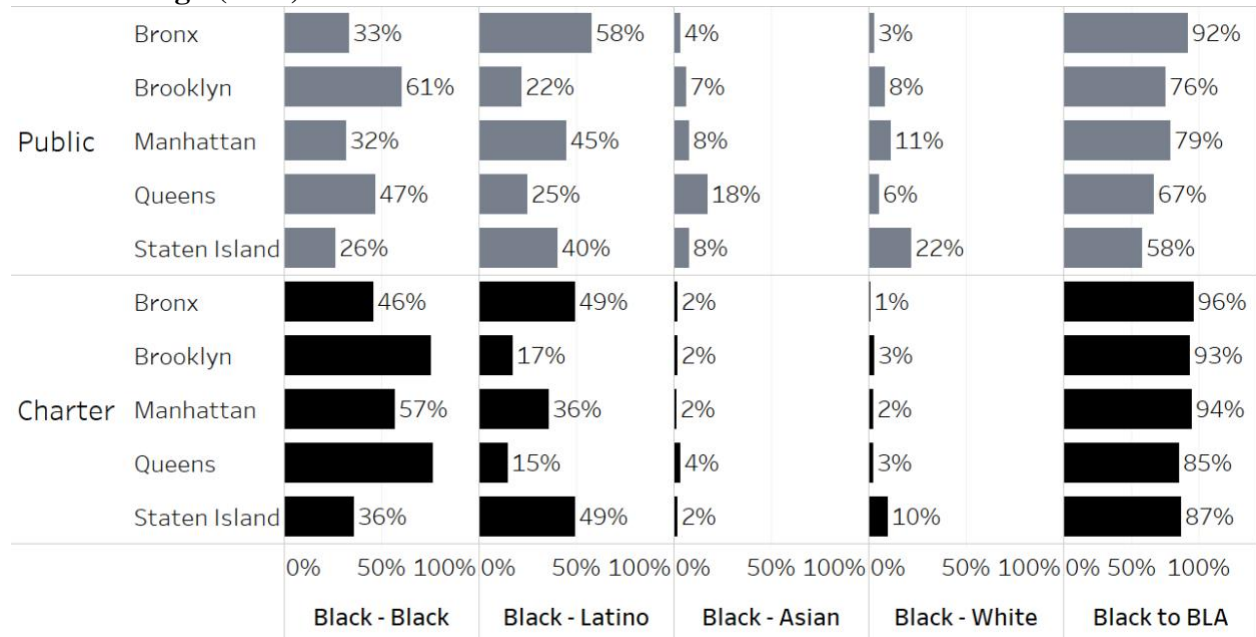


Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Segregation of Black Students in NYC Boroughs.** As shown in Figure 24, black students overwhelmingly attend schools with black, Latino, and American Indian students in all boroughs, charter and public schools alike. However, they experience the highest segregation in Bronx schools, where 96% of their peers are black, Latino, and American Indian in charter schools, and 92% black, Latino, and American Indian in public schools. Black students have very few white and Asian peers in all schools, though on Staten Island they have higher levels of

white peers in public schools (22%) than elsewhere and attend schools with more Asian students in Queens public schools (18%). The highest contact that black students have with other black students is in Queens and Brooklyn charter schools (roughly 75% for both), and they attend schools with Latino students in the highest percentages in Bronx public schools. Our results are consistent with the results of Mordechay and Ayscue (2019), who found Queens and Brooklyn to be the areas where the most rapidly gentrifying tracts in the city are located, and where black and Latino students attended elementary schools with same-race peers in higher percentages than in non-gentrifying areas.

**Figure 24. Exposure of Black Students to Students of Race/Ethnicity by School Type and NYC Borough (2018)**

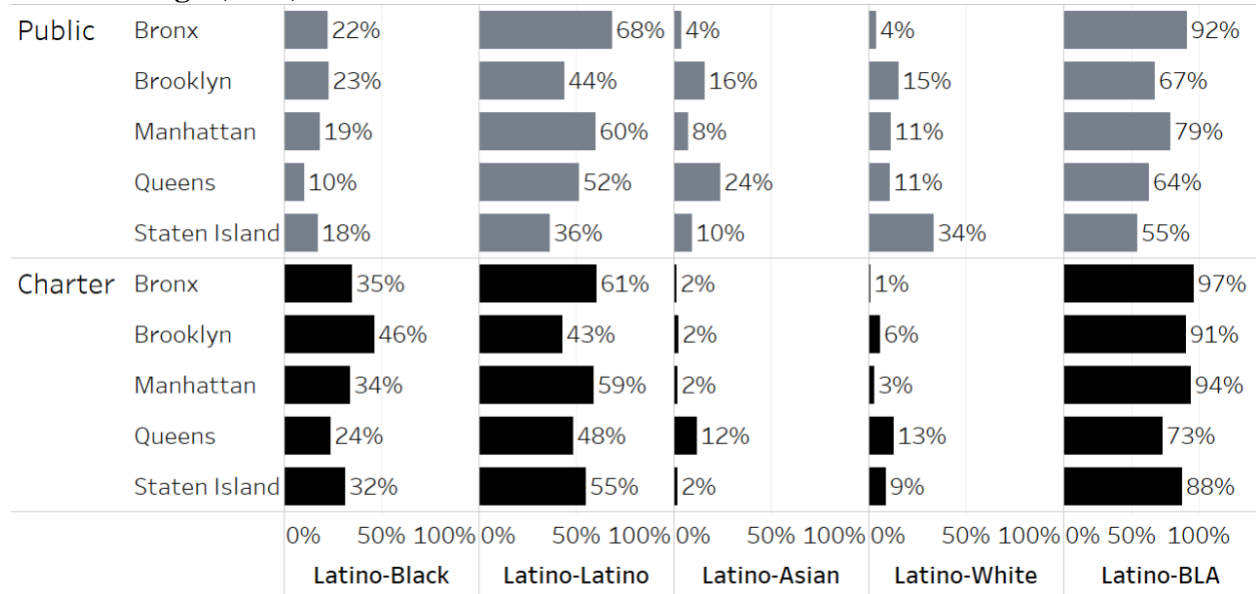


Note: BLA denotes black, Latino, and American Indian students combined.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Segregation of Latino Students in NYC Boroughs.** Like black students, Latino students are most segregated in the Bronx, where they attend schools with 92% black, Latino, and American Indian students and almost uniquely with black, Latino, and American Indian students in charter schools (97%). Latino students have higher exposure to white students than black students in most areas, with the highest shares of white peers on Staten Island (34%). However, they have extremely low shares of white peers in charter schools in all areas, though slightly higher in Queens (13%). Latino students attend schools with roughly a majority of other Latino students in all borough charter schools, though slightly lower than 50% in Brooklyn. Latino students attend schools with higher shares of black students in charter schools than in public schools in all boroughs.

**Figure 25. Exposure of Latino Students to Students of Race/Ethnicity by School Type and NYC Borough (2018)**

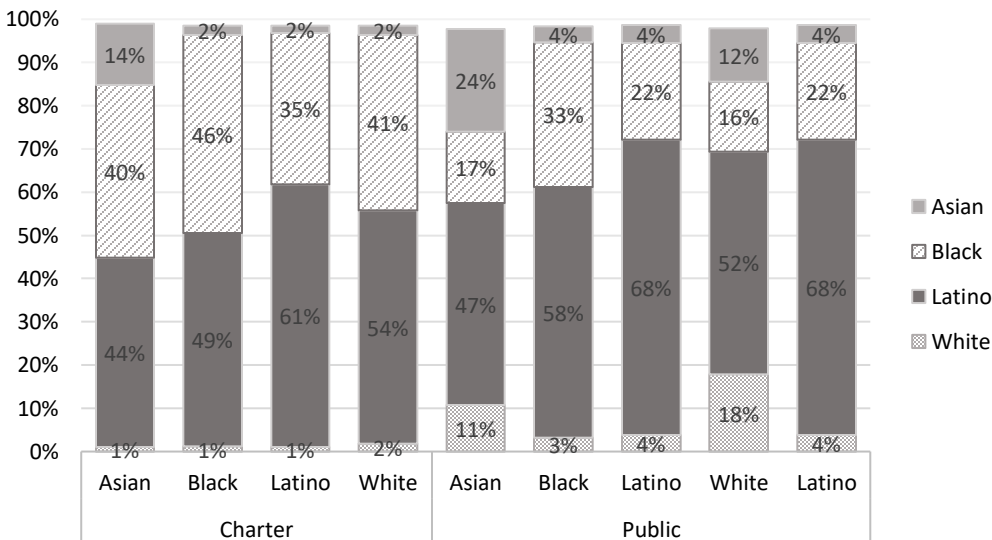


Note: BLA denotes black, Latino, and American Indian students combined.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

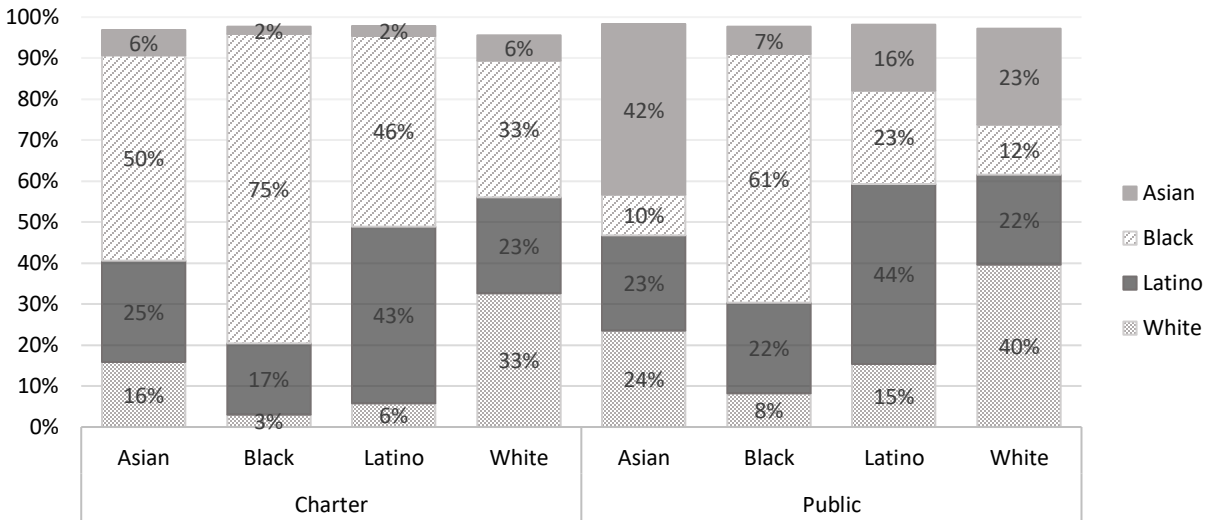
The previous figures illustrated the isolation of black and Latino students; the following figures (Figure 26-Figure 30) summarize interracial exposure for all racial/ethnic groups in charter and public schools in all boroughs. These figures reveal that white students are most isolated in Staten Island public schools, where they attend schools with 59% other white students. White students also tend to attend schools with Asian students in high percentages. In Brooklyn, white students attend public schools that are 63% white and Asian, and in Staten Island, white students attend charter schools that are 71% white and Asian.

**Figure 26. Bronx Interracial Exposure in NYC Public and Charter Schools (2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

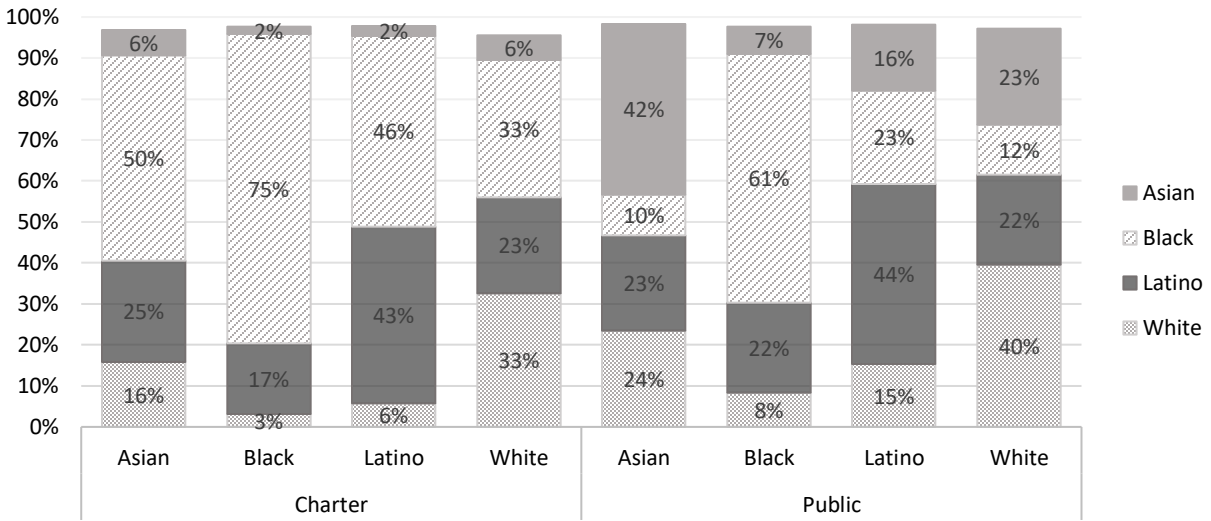
**Figure 27. Brooklyn Interracial Exposure in NYC Public and Charter Schools (2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

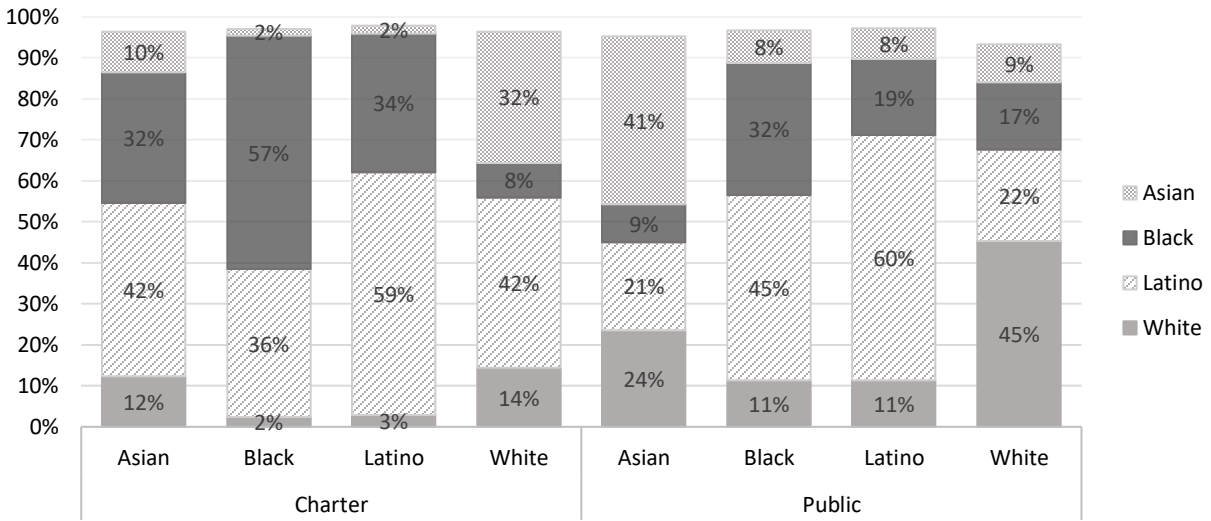


**Figure 28. Queens Interracial Exposure in NYC Public and Charter Schools (2018)**



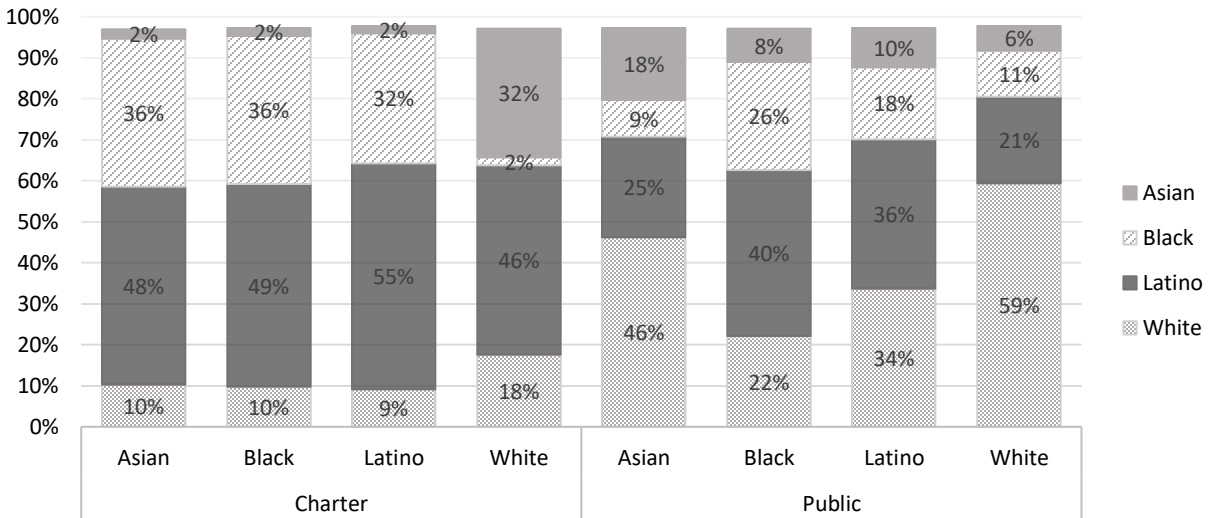
Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Figure 29. Manhattan Interracial Exposure in NYC Public and Charter Schools (2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Figure 30. Staten Island Interracial Exposure in NYC Public and Charter Schools (2018)**



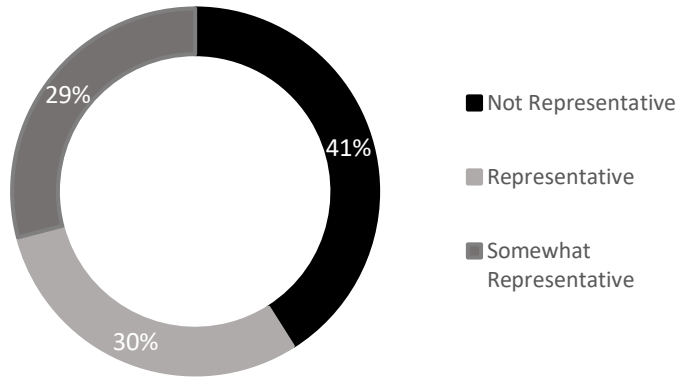
Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

***Segregation in NYC Community School Districts***

Mayor de Blasio has made it clear that he is not willing to impose city-wide integration policies, but he has encouraged local districts to take up their own voluntary efforts. Several districts have initiated these diversification efforts, but as the districts that are furthest in their implementation plans launched in 2019-2020, the data in this report do not reflect these efforts.

The School Diversity Advisory Group (SDAG) report set a goal for all NYC schools to be representative of their community district by 2022. Using the categorization schema outlined by the SDAG to quantify *representativeness* between a school and its district, we found 41% of all traditional public schools to be representative of their district (within 10% of the CSD average share of each race), 30% of schools to be unrepresentative of their district (20% above or below the CSD average for each race/ethnicity), and 29% are somewhat representative (within 10% - 20% of the CSD average).

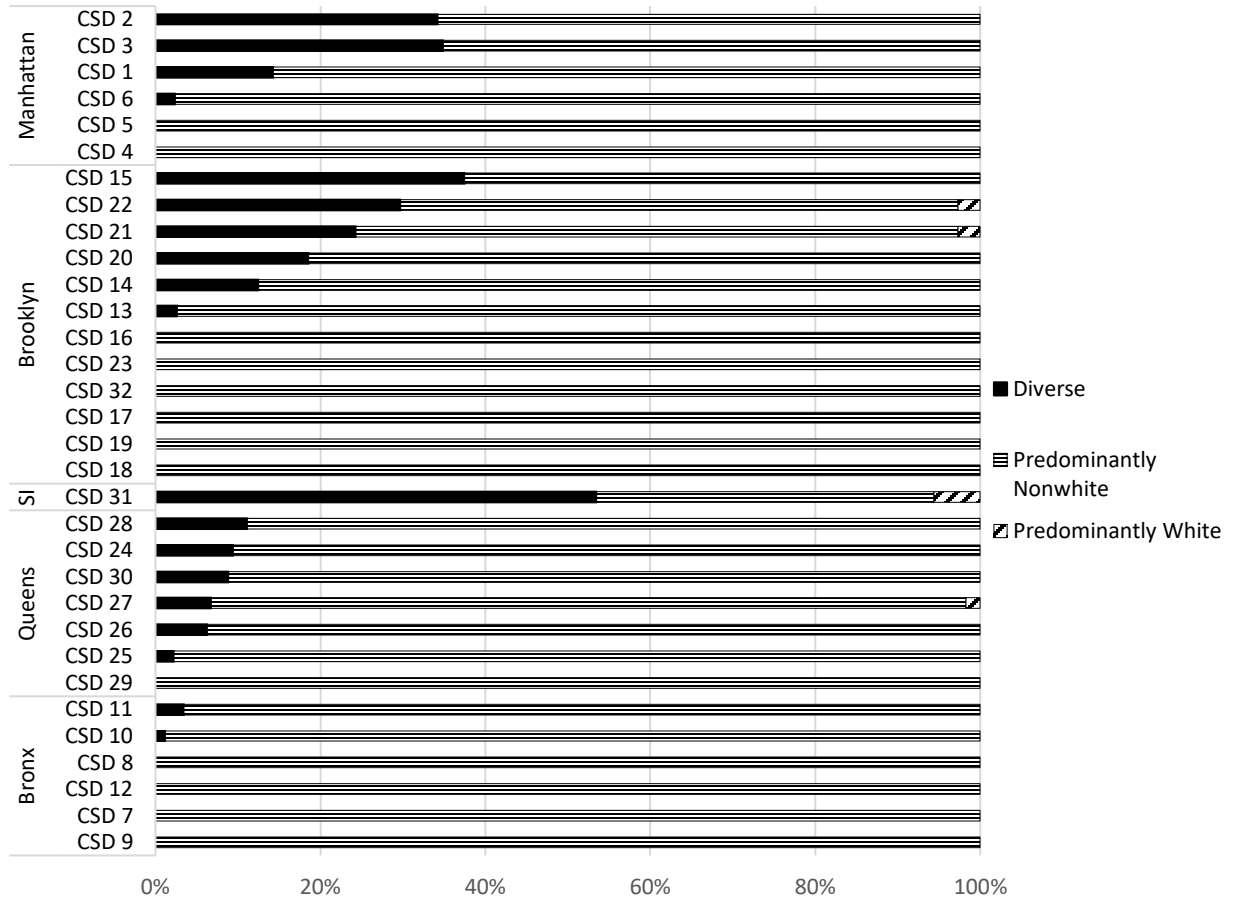
**Figure 31. Share of NYC Schools that are Representative of their School Districts (2018)**



*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Manhattan had the highest shares of unrepresentative schools (55%), with CSD 2 (80%) and CSD 3 (77%) having the highest shares. Conversely, Bronx had the highest rate of representative schools (49%), with its community school districts CSD 7 (84%) and CSD 9 (70%) having the highest shares of representative schools.

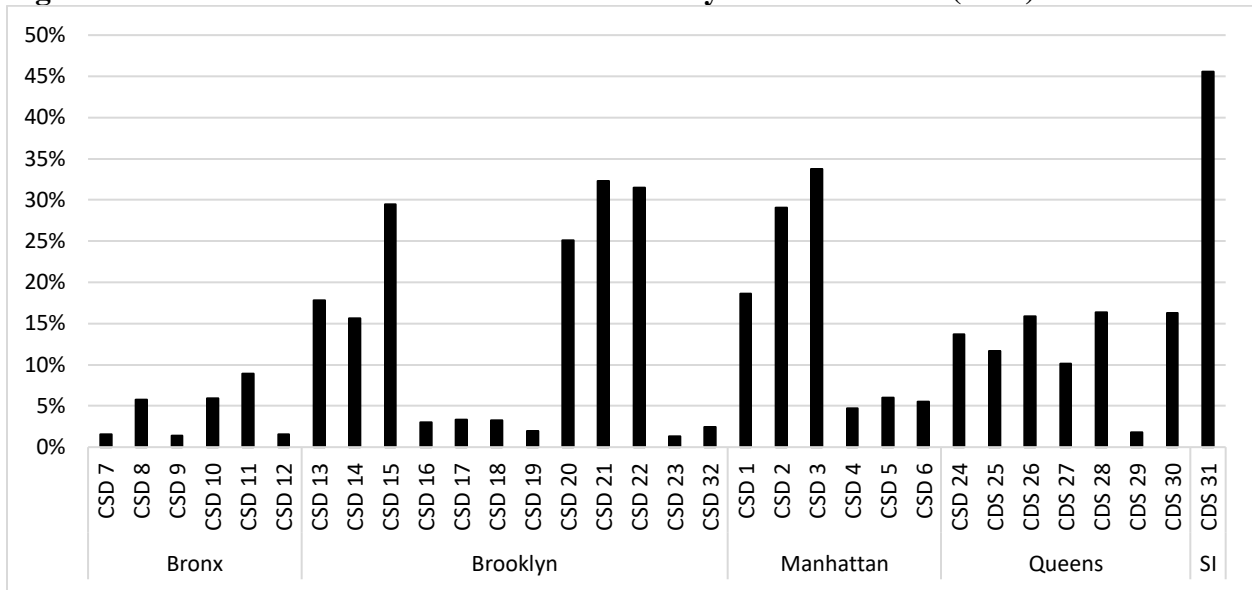
**Figure 32. Share of Schools by Representative Status in Community School Districts (2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Of the 32 CSDs, 17 had 10% or fewer white students enrolled (down from 19 CSDs in 2010) (Figure 33). All Bronx districts, half the districts in Brooklyn and Manhattan, a third of the districts in Queens and none in Staten Island (there is only one) have fewer than 10% white students enrolled. Staten Island’s one district (District 31) has the highest shares of white students (46%); this share has declined in the past eight years, from 53%.

**Figure 33. Percent White Enrollment in Community School Districts (2018)**

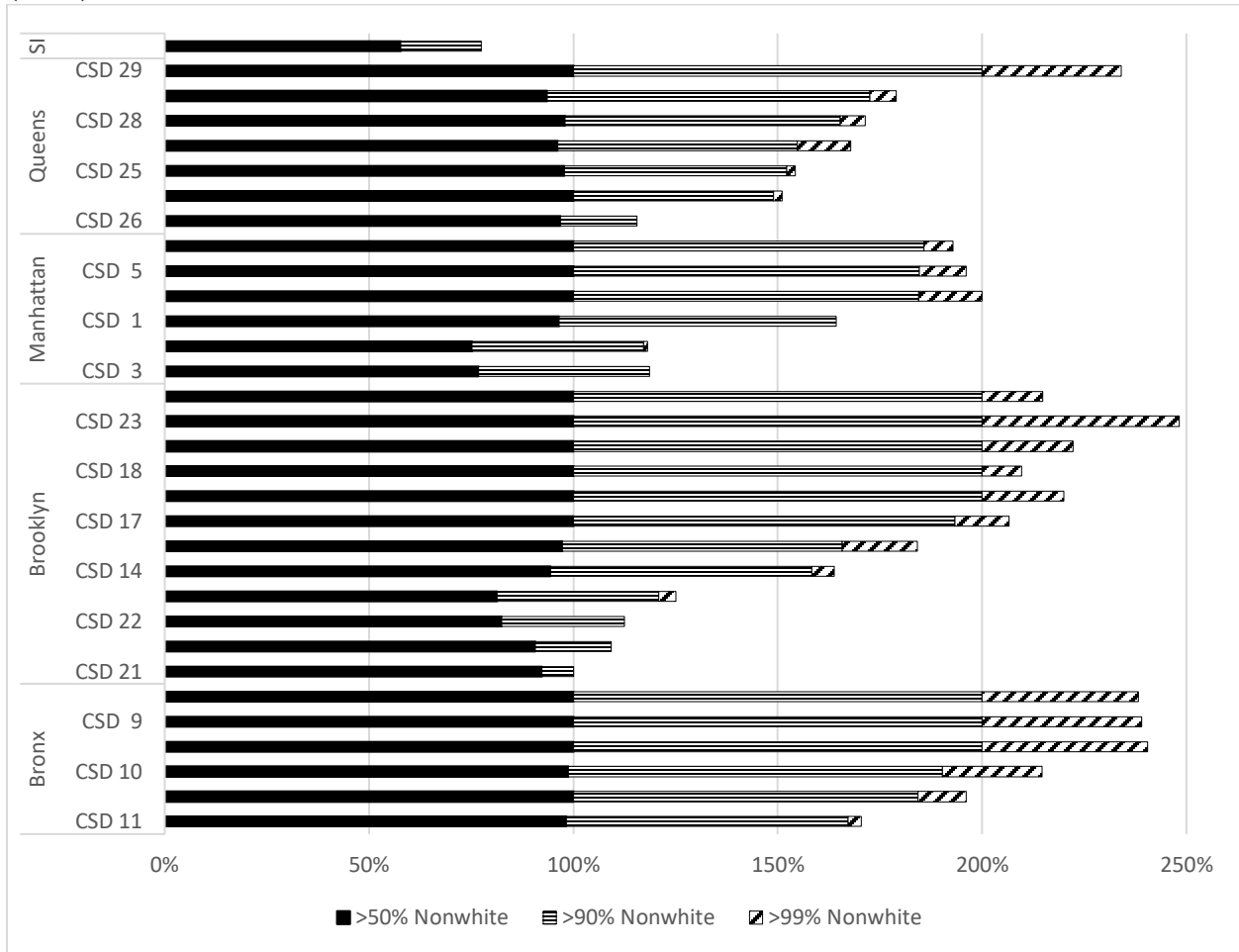


Note: SI stands for Staten Island.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

All but three districts (CSD 2, CSD 3, and CSD 31) have greater than 80% of schools that are predominantly nonwhite. The three districts with less than 80% of schools that are predominantly nonwhite schools also have the highest shares of white students. Almost half the districts have more than 80% of schools that are intensely segregated. Districts 7, 9, and 12 in the Bronx, 23 in Brooklyn, and 29 in Queens have more than one-third of schools that are apartheid schools. These districts have extremely low shares of white students (1-2%) and high levels of black, Latino, and American Indian (80-97%) students.

**Figure 34. Percent of Segregated Schools by Type in NYC Community School Districts (2018)**



*Note:* SI stands for Staten Island. Schools that had 60% or more nonwhite students were designated as predominantly nonwhite; if the schools had more than 20% but less than 60% nonwhite students they were assigned diverse, and if a school had more than 80% white student enrollment we categorized the school as predominantly white. Schools are considered resegregating if their designation changed from diverse to either predominantly white or predominantly nonwhite, and integrating if the opposite occurred.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**District Stability.** We assigned each school to a category according to the shares of white students they enroll. For schools that had 60% or more nonwhite students, they were designated as *predominantly nonwhite*; if the schools had more than 20% but less than 60% nonwhite students they were assigned *diverse*, and if a school had more than 80% white student enrollment we categorized the school as *predominantly white*. Data show that based on the average share of white and nonwhite student enrollment in traditional public schools, there has been slightly more diversity in schools from 10 years ago at the district-level. Since 2010, we have seen shifts in the proportion of predominantly white student enrollment to a greater share of districts that are diverse. In 2010, all of NYC’s districts were predominantly nonwhite (greater than 60% nonwhite) (Table 23). Since then, the share of predominantly nonwhite districts has steadily declined, to 95% in 2018. There were no districts that were diverse in 2010; in 2014 that share had grown to 4% and was 5% in 2018.

**Table 23. Distribution of Community School Districts by White Proportion Classification (2010-2018)**

	Diverse	Predominantly Nonwhite	Predominantly white
2010-11	-	100%	-
2014-15	4%	96%	-
2018-19	5%	95%	-

*Note.* Nonwhite category includes black, Latino, Asian, and American Indian racial/ethnic groups.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

However, there is considerable intra-district variation in the shares of white student enrollment in schools. At the school level, the share of diverse schools since 2014 has remained stable, only slightly increasing from 2014-2018. The shares of predominantly nonwhite and predominantly white schools have both declined (Table 24).

**Table 24. Distribution of Schools in NYC by White Proportion Classification (2010-2018)**

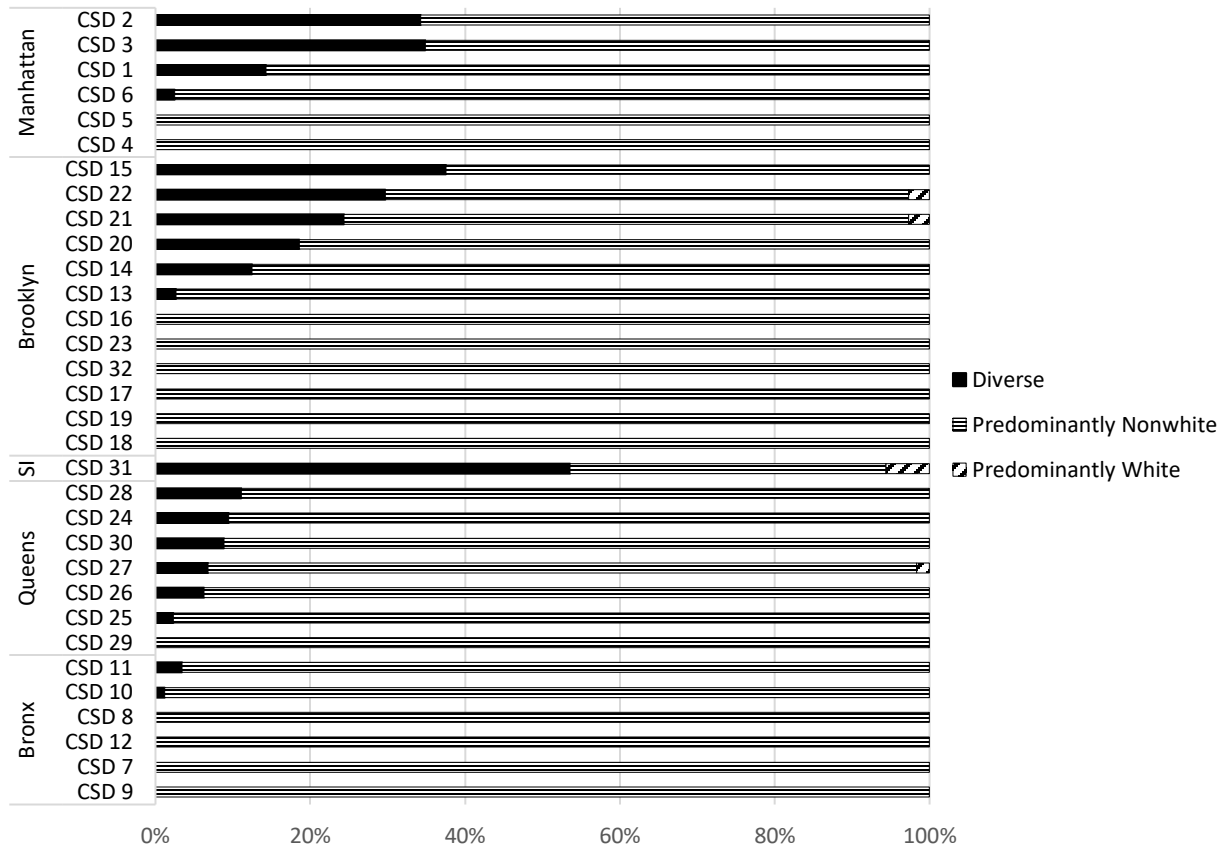
	Diverse	Predominantly Nonwhite	Predominantly white
2010-11	11.45%	86.72%	1.83%
2014-15	11.45%	87.36%	1.19%
2018-19	11.48%	88.04%	<1

*Note.* Nonwhite category includes black, Latino, Asian, and American Indian racial/ethnic groups.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Figure 35 makes clear that there is great variation within Boroughs and also within districts in the share of white student enrollment in schools. For instance, CSD 2 and 3 in Manhattan have relatively high shares of schools that are diverse, while CSD 4, 5, and 6 in Manhattan are comprised of predominantly nonwhite schools. The figure also shows the extremely low diversity in Bronx schools. Staten Island has the highest shares of white students in the city, and they are relatively distributed throughout the schools, with over 50% diverse.

**Figure 35. Share of Schools in Districts by Degree of White Enrollment (2018)**



Note: SI stands for Staten Island. Schools that had 60% or more nonwhite students were designated as predominantly nonwhite; if the schools had more than 20% but less than 60% nonwhite students they were assigned diverse, and if a school had more than 80% white student enrollment we categorized the school as predominantly white. Schools are considered resegregating if their designation changed from diverse to either predominantly white or predominantly nonwhite, and integrating if the opposite occurred.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

We explored racial/ethnic stability from 2010 to 2018 by comparing the 2010 school designations to those of 2018. We identified schools as *resegregating* if their designation changed from diverse to either predominantly white or predominantly nonwhite, and *integrating* if the opposite occurred. Schools over the eight year timespan have been mostly stable. Slightly less than 5% (68 schools) changed categories.<sup>123</sup> Of those that did, 53% integrated, either transitioning from predominantly nonwhite (31%), or predominantly white (22%) to diverse. The remaining 43% of schools segregated, changing from diverse to predominantly nonwhite. Schools that integrated were in all districts except the Bronx, and mainly in CSD 2 in Manhattan, CSD 15 in Brooklyn, and CSD 31 in Staten Island. CSD 15 has been leading the charge in integration efforts, though the implementation of their diversification plan postdated the data in this report. Several reasons could underlie the results, including residential housing pattern changes and/or community outreach on the part of advocates, but these cannot be confirmed by

<sup>123</sup> Analysis includes only schools that were operational both in 2010 and 2018.



our analysis. Resegregating schools were mainly in Districts 20 and 21 in the Bronx, and 25 in Queens. CSD 25 in the Bronx has the most schools that are resegregating. This is also a district that has low shares of black and Latino students where most schools are predominantly white and Asian.

**Table 25. Integrating Public Schools by Community School District (2010 -2018)**

Borough	District	School	2010	2018
Manhattan	1	Neighborhood School	PNW	D
	2	NYC iSchool	PNW	D
	2	Baruch College Campus High School	PNW	D
	2	Ps 198 Isador E Ida Straus	PNW	D
	2	JHS 167 Robert F Wagner	PNW	D
	3	Ps 84 Lillian Weber	PNW	D
	6	Muscota	PNW	D
Brooklyn	14	PS 132 Conselyea School	PNW	D
	14	PS 31 Samuel F Dupont	PNW	D
	15	New Horizons School	PNW	D
	15	New Voices School of Academic and Creative Arts	PNW	D
	15	Math and Science Exploratory School	PNW	D
	15	PS 146 Brooklyn New School	PNW	D
	15	PS 261 Philip Livingston	PNW	D
	15	PS130 Parkside	PNW	D
	15	PS 32 Samuel Mills Sprole	PNW	D
	21	Rachel Carson High School for Coastal Studies	PNW	D
	22	JHS 234 Arthur W Cunningham	PNW	D
Queens	24	PS 91 Richard Arkwright	PNW	D
	30	PS 122 Mamie Fay	PNW	D
	27	PS 47 Chris Galas	PW	D
Staten Island	31	IS 72 Rocco Laurie	PNW	D
	31	PS 6 Corporal Allan F Kivlehan School	PW	D
	31	IS 75 Frank D Paulo	PW	D
	31	PS 56 Louis Desario School	PW	D
	31	Tottenville High School	PW	D
	31	PS 53 Bay Terrace	PW	D
	31	PS 50 Frank Hankinson	PW	D
	31	PS 42 Eltingville	PW	D
	31	PS 36 J C Drumgoole	PW	D
	31	PS 32 Gifford School	PW	D
	31	IS 24 Myra S Barnes	PW	D
	31	PS 8 Shirlee Solomon	PW	D
	31	PS 3 Margaret Gioiosa School	PW	D
	31	PS 1 Tottenville	PW	D
31	IS 34 Tottenville	PW	D	

*Note:* Schools that had 60% or more nonwhite students were designated as predominantly nonwhite (PW); if the schools had more than 20% but less than 60% nonwhite students, they were assigned diverse (D), and if a school had more than 80% white student enrollment, we categorized the school as predominantly white (PW). Schools are considered resegregating if their designation changed from diverse to either predominantly white or predominantly nonwhite, and integrating if the opposite occurred.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Table 26. Resegregating Public Schools by Community School District (2010-2018)**

	District	School	2010	2018
Manhattan	1	Children's Workshop School	PW	PNW
	2	School of The Future High School	PW	PNW
Bronx	8	PS 304 Early Childhood School	D	PNW
	10	PS 24 Spuyten Duyvil	D	PNW
Brooklyn	20	PS 247	D	PNW
	20	PS 229 Dyker	D	PNW
	20	PS 204 Vince Lombardi	D	PNW
	20	The Seeall Academy	D	PNW
	20	PS 127 Mckinley Park	D	PNW
	21	Kingsborough Early College School	D	PNW
	21	PS 226 Alfred De B Mason	D	PNW
	21	PS 209 Margaret Mead	D	PNW
	21	PS 121 Nelson A Rockefeller	D	PNW
	22	PS 207 Elizabeth G Leary	D	PNW
Queens	24	PS/IS 119 The Glendale	D	PNW
	24	PS 87 Middle Village	D	PNW
	24	PS 71 Forest	D	PNW
	25	World Journalism Preparatory	D	PNW
	25	PS 209 Clearview Gardens	D	PNW
	25	JHS 194 William Carr	D	PNW
	25	PS 184 Flushing Manor	D	PNW
	25	PS 169 Bay Terrace	D	PNW
	25	PS 79 Francis Lewis	D	PNW
	27	PS 232 Lindenwood	D	PNW
	28	The Academy for Excellence through the Arts	D	PNW
	28	PS 220 Edward Mandel	D	PNW
	30	Frank Sinatra School of the Arts High School	D	PNW
	28	Academy for Excellence through the Arts	D	PNW
28	PS 220 Edward Mandel	D	PNW	
30	Frank Sinatra School of the Arts High School	D	PNW	
Staten Island	31	PS 46 Albert V Maniscalco	D	PNW
	31	PS 11 Thomas Dongan School	D	PNW

*Note:* Schools that had 60% or more nonwhite students were designated as predominantly nonwhite (PW); if the schools had more than 20% but less than 60% nonwhite students they were assigned diverse (D), and if a school had more than 80% white student enrollment we categorized the school as predominantly white (PW). Schools are considered resegregating if their designation changed from diverse to either predominantly white or predominantly nonwhite, and integrating if the opposite occurred.

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Segregation in Specialized High Schools.** New York City’s choice system includes eight highly selective high schools enrolling 2% of the city’s students. Entry to these schools is determined by the Specialized High School Admissions Test.<sup>124</sup> Attendance in the specialized high schools is highly skewed with heavy white and Asian student enrollment, and has been highlighted as inequitable as very few black, Latino, and American Indian students gain entry. On average, 82% of enrollment in these schools is comprised of white and Asian students and only 15% is black, Latino, and American Indian students. Stuyvesant High School and Staten Island Technical High Schools each have 92% white and Asian student enrollment and 1% black and 2%-3% Latino students.

**Table 27. Enrollment at the Eight Specialized High Schools in NYC (2018)**

	Enrollment	% White/Asian	% White	% Asian	% Black	% Latino	% Black/Latino/American Indian
Bronx High School of Science	3,020	87%	22%	65%	3%	7%	10%
Brooklyn Latin School	699	68%	13%	55%	12%	12%	25%
Brooklyn Technical High School	5,934	85%	24%	61%	6%	7%	13%
High School Mathematics Science and Engineering at City College of NY	490	60%	30%	30%	9%	17%	27%
High School of American Studies at Lehman College	412	78%	57%	22%	4%	10%	14%
Queens High School for The Sciences at York College	475	88%	6%	82%	3%	4%	8%
Staten Island Technical High School	1,332	92%	42%	50%	1%	2%	3%
Stuyvesant High School	3,319	92%	19%	73%	1%	3%	4%
Average all Specialized High Schools	16,617	82%	23%	58%	4%	10%	15%

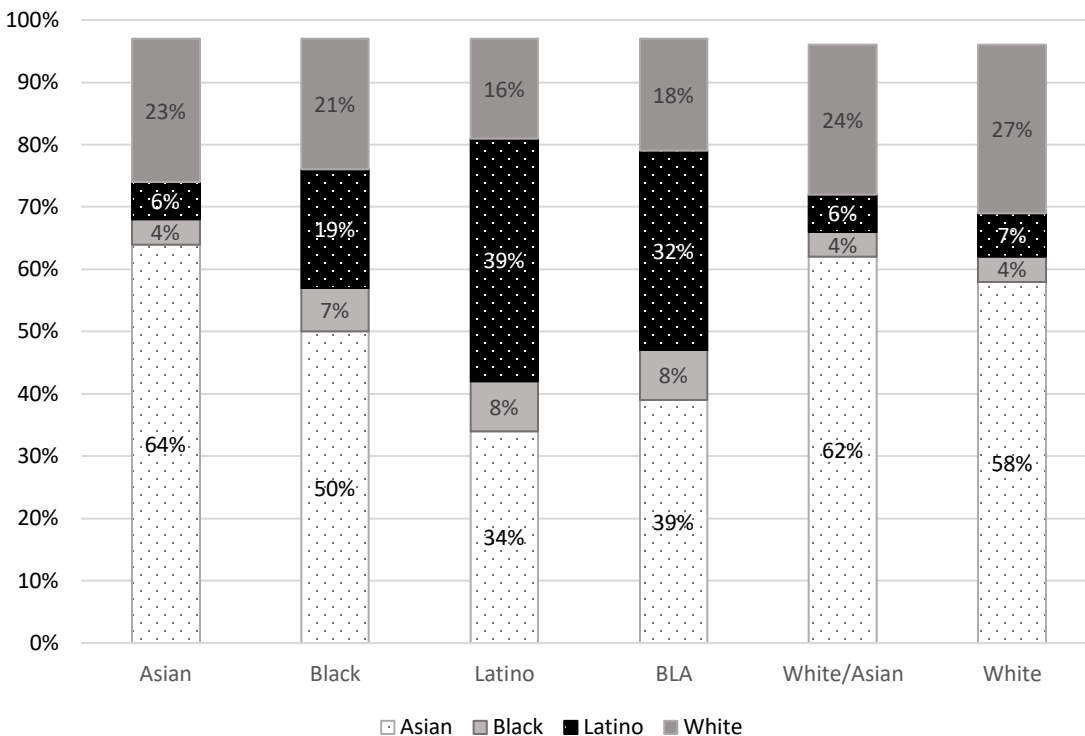
*Note:* Total of Racial/ethnic precents do not total 100% because American Indian and Mixed race students are not included in the table.  
*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

With so few black, Latino, and American Indian students, exposure among white and Asian students to these groups is also very low. The typical white or Asian student attends these

<sup>124</sup> LaGuardia High School is a ninth specialized high school, not included in the analysis on specialized high schools here as admissions are determined by audition.

schools with only 4% black students and 6% Latino students. Black and Latino students have high contact with white and Asian students as these are the majority of students with whom they attend these schools.

**Figure 36. Interracial/ethnic Exposure in NYC Specialized High Schools (2018)**



Note: BLA refers to black, Latino, American Indian students.

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Table 28. Interracial/ethnic Exposure in NYC Specialized High Schools (2018)**

	White/Asian	White	Asian	Black	Latino	Black/Latino/ American Indian
White/Asian	86%	24%	62%	70%	50%	57%
White	24%	27%	23%	21%	16%	18%
Asian	62%	58%	64%	50%	34%	39%
Black	4%	4%	4%	7%	8%	8%
Latino	6%	7%	6%	19%	39%	32%
Black/Latino/ American Indian	57%	12%	10%	27%	48%	40%

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Segregation in Citywide Gifted and Talented Schools.** NYC’s choice system includes five K-8 gifted and talented schools that enroll students regardless of geographic zone. As with the specialized high schools, admission to the citywide G&T schools is highly selective and predicated on achieving at least 97% on entry tests; less than 1% of the city’s students attend

these highly selective schools. There are also 94 district G&T programs housed in district schools that give priority to district residents; a minimum of 90% on the entry tests is required for eligibility to apply to these schools. Only 7% of admitted students to the five citywide G&T schools in 2018 were black and 11% were Latino students, while 74% of students were white and Asian students. The Brooklyn School of Inquiry has 87% of its enrollment white and Asian students, and only 5% black and 5% Latino. The highest share of enrollment of black and Latino students occurs at Talented and Gifted (TAG) Young Scholars School where 17% of enrollment is black students and 15% is Latino. On average for all G&T programs, 40% were Asian, 35% were white, 9% were Latino, and 7% were black students.<sup>125</sup> These selection methods employ test cut points as absolute controls for these extraordinary opportunities, a violation of the ethical standards of the testing profession, which hold that critical life choices should not be made on the basis of a cut point on a single test.

**Table 29. Enrollment at the Five Citywide Gifted and Talented Schools in NYC (2018)**

	Enrollment	% White/Asian	% White	% Asian	% Black	% Latino	% Black/Latino/American Indian
The 30 <sup>th</sup> Avenue School	512	76.0%	29.9%	46.1%	4.3%	10.0%	15.4%
The Anderson School	521	77.2%	48.0%	29.2%	2.5%	9.0%	11.5%
Brooklyn School of Inquiry	534	87.1%	66.7%	20.4%	5.2%	4.7%	10.1%
New Explorations into Science, Tech, and Math High School	1,752	73.8%	40.5%	33.3%	7.0%	11.5%	19.3%
TAG Young Scholars	594	57.9%	17.0%	40.9%	16.7%	15.2%	36.0%
Average of the Five G&T Citywide Schools	3,913	73.9%	40.1%	33.8%	7.3%	10.6%	19.0%

*Source:* US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

Interracial contact between white and Asian groups and black, Latino, and American Indian students in these schools is extremely low, as would be expected with such low enrollment of black, Latino, and American Indian students. All students overwhelmingly have high contact with other white and Asian students as these groups comprise the majority of enrollment, and conversely students have low contact with black and Latino students.

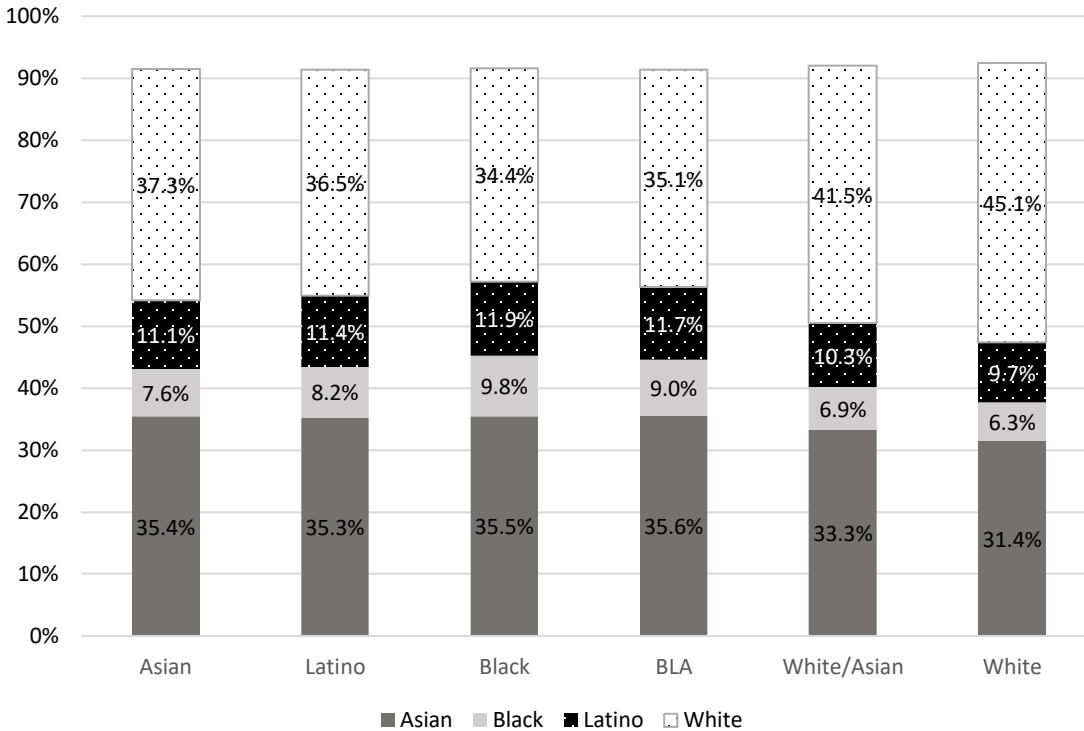
<sup>125</sup> <https://ibo.nyc.ny.us/cgi-park2/2021/03/were-black-and-hispanic-kindergarteners-under-represented-and-racially-segregated-in-gifted-talented-programs-in-2018-2019>.

**Table 30. Interracial/ethnic Exposure in NYC Citywide G&T Schools (2018)**

	White/ Asian	White	Asian	Black	Latino	Black/Latino/ American Indian
White/Asian	74.8%	76.5%	72.8%	71.8%	69.9%	70.7%
White	41.5%	45.1%	37.3%	36.5%	34.4%	35.1%
Asian	33.3%	31.4%	35.4%	35.3%	35.5%	35.6%
Black	10.3%	9.7%	11.1%	11.4%	11.9%	11.7%
Latino	6.9%	6.3%	7.6%	8.2%	9.8%	9.0%
Black/Latino/ American Indian	18.2%	16.7%	20.0%	21.0%	23.6%	22.4%

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

**Figure 37. Interracial/ethnic Exposure in NYC Citywide Gifted and Talented Schools (2018)**



Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data.

## Conclusion

The results of our analysis provide a clear picture of continued segregation in New York City schools. The demographic transformation of its public schools is not well understood. White enrollment has, of course, declined substantially over the years, but has been rising modestly since 2010. The Asian student population was small but has doubled in the past 30 years. Latino students have increased and are the leading population. Black enrollment within the city has declined significantly. Overall, combined white and Asian student population as a group is increasing. This makes New York City unique with respect to the surrounding counties and suburban rings, where the white and Asian proportions are decreasing dramatically. With New York City's increasing share of white and Asian enrollment, there is a growing pool of more advantaged and higher achieving students who are, on average, attending schools with more resources and higher outcomes. Not all white and Asian students, of course, are more advantaged and high-achieving; there is significant poverty within these groups. However, on average, these groups have far stronger academic outcomes. Broadened access to the schools that they attend presents an opportunity for black and Latino students who now attend, on average, the lowest quality schools in the city, which are heavily nonwhite, with concentrated poverty and many related problems. White and Asian students will, of course, benefit from more contact with the Latino and black students who represent important cultures and histories and are so central to the future of the city.

This new data shows that since 2010, the continuing lack of diversity-focused policy in the city, and other factors, resulted in increased isolation of black, Latino, and American Indian students. Since our last report, black students increasingly attend intensely segregated schools while Latino segregation has remained very high since 2010. Black students are attending schools with greater shares of other black and Latino students as a group than they did in 2010.

There has been a sharp growth of charter schools since 2010, increasing segregation. In traditional public schools 15% of black and 13% of Latino students attend apartheid schools that have fewer than 1% white students, but in the charter schools, an astounding 51% of black and 41% of Latino attend such schools. The highest increase in charter schools is concentrated in the Bronx (double the number in 2010), Brooklyn (more than doubled), and Manhattan (close to doubled). There are also higher shares of intensely segregated charter schools in Queens, though other boroughs have seen a decrease in their intensely segregated schools overall.

Black and Latino students have persistently attended disproportionately high shares of schools with greater than 75% poverty. White and Asian students attend high-poverty schools in much lower proportions. We found that the majority of black and Latino students go to schools in the lowest quintiles of academic achievement in math and English, as do students from poor families. White and Asian students disproportionately go to schools in the highest quintiles. These results further underscore the urgency for greater integration of these groups in schools where all students can access the advantages of quality education. Research has consistently

shown that middle class students lose nothing in terms of test scores from being in contact with more students in poverty who typically gain.

Black and Latino students are the most isolated in Bronx schools, where they attend schools with extremely high shares of other black and Latino students. White students are the most isolated in Staten Island schools, where they attend schools with close to 3 in 4 of their peers white or Asian. Asian students have the lowest contact with black, Latino, and American Indian students in Brooklyn and Manhattan public schools, where they attend schools with high shares of other Asian and white students.

Almost half the community school districts have more than 80% intensely segregated schools. Community school districts 29 in Queens, 7, 9, and 12 in the Bronx, and 23 in Brooklyn have more than one-third of schools that are apartheid schools. These districts have extremely low shares of white students (1-2%). These schools deserve extra support and efforts to bring their students into contact with other groups whenever possible.

There is great variation in school diversity among the different CSDs within the same borough. For instance, CSDs 2 and 3 in Manhattan have relatively high shares of schools that are diverse, while CSDs 4, 5, and 6 in Manhattan are comprised of predominantly nonwhite schools. At the other end of the spectrum, almost all the CSDs in the Bronx have extremely low diversity. Staten Island has the highest shares of white students in the city, and they are distributed among the schools, with over 50% of schools in the one CSD being diverse.

Finally, the data shows modest integration in three districts: CSD 2 in Manhattan, CSD 15 in Brooklyn, and CSD 31 in Staten Island. CSD 15 has been leading the charge in integration efforts, though the implementation of their diversification plan postdated the data in this report. Resegregating schools were concentrated in Queens; CSD 25 in Queens has the most schools that are resegregating. Since these outcomes have important consequences, they should receive serious attention at the district and citywide levels.

## **Recommendations**

Since our last report, several plans to diversify schools have been introduced to integrate the state and New York city schools. There are also grassroots efforts being made by organizations to drive integration in NYC schools, such as Teens Take Charge, IntegrateNY, NY Appleseed, and the SDAG. The teens of the city in particular have made great strides to have their voices heard and contribute their experiences to desegregate city schools. It is important to build upon these initiatives.

### **Federal Level**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color and compounded systemic social injustice. It has underlined inequities in education and other U.S.



institutions. The Biden-Harris administration has the opportunity to affirm school integration and its benefits as a national priority. To do this, the administration should enforce the Civil Rights Act, add resources to the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division, and organize collaboration among federal agencies, housing, justice, and education, to develop new policies, monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

With the House-passed Strength in Diversity Act of 2020,<sup>126</sup> this legislation could mark a positive beginning to addressing educational inequity resulting from segregated schools. The Act provides the mechanism for grants to develop or implement diversity and integration plans. We are starting to see in places like New York City that when leadership sets goals, and supports those goals with funding and guidance, local districts may take the opportunity to proactively engage the community and develop diversity plans. On the national level this is a very promising development as this act serves as an important tool for communities to implement voluntary integration programs. The Education Department, now headed by a Secretary with experience in Connecticut’s significant regional desegregation efforts, can also provide research and technical support.

In 2019, the Gallup Poll published the results of a national survey showing that over half the public favored governmental action to reduce segregation, and the large majority of respondents favored magnet schools as a method.<sup>127</sup> Well-structured magnet programs can be effective in promoting desegregation, but The Federal Magnet School Assistance Grant Program (MSAP)<sup>128</sup> has been minimally funded and poorly administered. From 2009 to 2017 funding for the MSAP declined from \$104.8 million to \$91.7 million; it was slightly increased to 109.4 million in 2018 then down again in 2019 to \$105 million.<sup>129</sup> The funding level was inadequate for a serious national effort. Stronger leadership support and prioritized funding for programs that promote diversity in schools are needed. The MSAP is one such program and has strong public support. The federal government should enforce the MSAP mission to integrate and ensure they are not selective and segregated. When families choose magnet programs in residentially segregated communities, transportation must be provided, or there will be no opportunity for many low income families.<sup>130</sup>

The Charter Schools Program (CSP) was established in 1994 and re-authorized in 2015 through The Every Student Succeeds Act. The federal government helps fund charter schools with no diversity requirements for students or teaching staff. As our results show, New York City charter schools are extremely segregated, much more so than traditional public schools. Charter schools receiving federal dollars should be required to have integration plans including diverse faculty.

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<sup>126</sup> <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2639/text>.

<sup>127</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/poll/266756/americans-say-segregation-schools-serious-problem.aspx>.

<sup>128</sup> <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/magnet/index.html>.

<sup>129</sup> <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/school-choice-improvement-programs/magnet-school-assistance-program-msap/funding-and-legislation>.

<sup>130</sup> <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/03/10/2020-04885/applications-for-new-awards-magnet-schools-assistance-program>.

## **State-Level**

Since our last report, New York implemented the New York State Integration Program – Professional Learning Community and appropriated \$1.4 million in Phase I of the program, \$2.5 million to Phase II and, most recently, \$19.4 million in 2020 for phase III grants to promote integration.<sup>131</sup> This is a modest but important initiative, and the state could provide powerful leadership. The first phase covered expenses for participants to partake in sessions to learn about segregation and design local community integration strategies. The second phase funded pilot programs to implement the integration strategies, including community engagement and small focus groups. Phase III funds the full implementation of integration plans developed in Phase I and II. Several community districts in New York City received grants and are in the Phase III implementation stage. The state should provide funding and guidance for comprehensive program evaluation. The implementation of these plans, including data collection, should be investigated to understand how well the plans are implemented, the effectiveness, and results could be used as guides for expansion to other districts. Upon evaluation, additional funds should be made broadly available to all districts, including charter school agencies. The goals of these efforts go far beyond test scores and involve preparing students to live and work successfully in a very diverse society -- and so should the evaluations.

The state received great power over federal education funds and evaluation of school performance in the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, the basic federal aid program for elementary and secondary schools. It should use that power to define integration as an important tool of educational reform in responding to systemic inequality. Progress in reducing segregation could be part of the state evaluations because integration is a powerful educational treatment. The state will receive a great deal of discretionary money under the recent American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and is likely to receive a large amount of infrastructure dollars for facilities if that bill is enacted. It would be beneficial to set aside some funds to foster desegregation efforts and encourage regional efforts, including remarkable schools like those that exist in the Connecticut metros.

## **New York City**

NYC has big goals for school diversification. Many factors and policies contribute to and perpetuate the city's segregated school system. One is the system of choice. An obvious solution is to eliminate specialized schools and the gifted and talented programs. Another approach is to expand these schools, some of the best in the nation, and use systematic efforts to recruit and support students who have not had the opportunity to access them. Magnet programs are another important opportunity for choice; with explicit diversity plans and transportation offerings these schools could help integration efforts. Housing segregation and policy remedies to provide

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<sup>131</sup> <http://www.nysed.gov/news/2020/state-education-department-announces-194-million-support-integrated-schools-and-classrooms>.

access to schools for low-income and students of color are, of course, another clear area that must be addressed. Nonetheless, without conducting a detailed analysis, we cannot reach conclusions and prescribe specific measures to integrate NYC schools. Federal funding to support integration efforts should be used to research integration of the city's schools. We know there are many examples of successful integration and local experts who are in a position to research and evaluate integration efforts. We would be happy to participate in discussions with the city where we can be helpful.

## APPENDIX

This report uses multiple years' Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data of the Common Core of Data (CCD), National Center for Education Statistics. Of all schools in the CCD data, this report focuses on regular schools that are open and are being operated in the survey administration year.

Segregation trends are calculated using a variety of different dimensions. We use exposure statistics to measure segregation and to capture student experiences of segregation. Exposure of certain racial groups to one another or to majority groups shows the distribution of racial groups among organizational units and describes the average contact between different groups. It is calculated by employing the percentage of a particular group of students of interest in a small unit (e.g., school) with a certain group of students in a larger geographic or organizational unit (e.g., state or district) to show a weighted average of the composition of a particular racial group. The formula for calculating the exposure rates of a student in racial group A to students in racial group B is:

$$P = \sum_{i=1}^N \frac{a_i b_i}{A t_i}$$

where

N is the number of small units (e.g., school) in a larger unit (e.g., state or district)

$a_i$  is the number of students in racial group A in the small unit  $i$  (school  $i$ )

A is the total number of students in racial group A in the larger unit (state or district)

$b_i$  is the number of students in racial group B in the small unit  $i$  (school  $i$ )

$t_i$  is the total number of students in all racial] groups in the small unit  $i$  (school  $i$ )

We explore school segregation patterns by the proportion or concentration of each racial/ethnic group in segregated schools as follows:

*Segregated schools*: 50-100% of the student body are nonwhite students

*Intensely segregated schools*: 90-100% of the student body are nonwhite students

*Apartheid schools*: 99-100% of the schools are nonwhite students