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2015 ERASE Racism Education Equity Forum

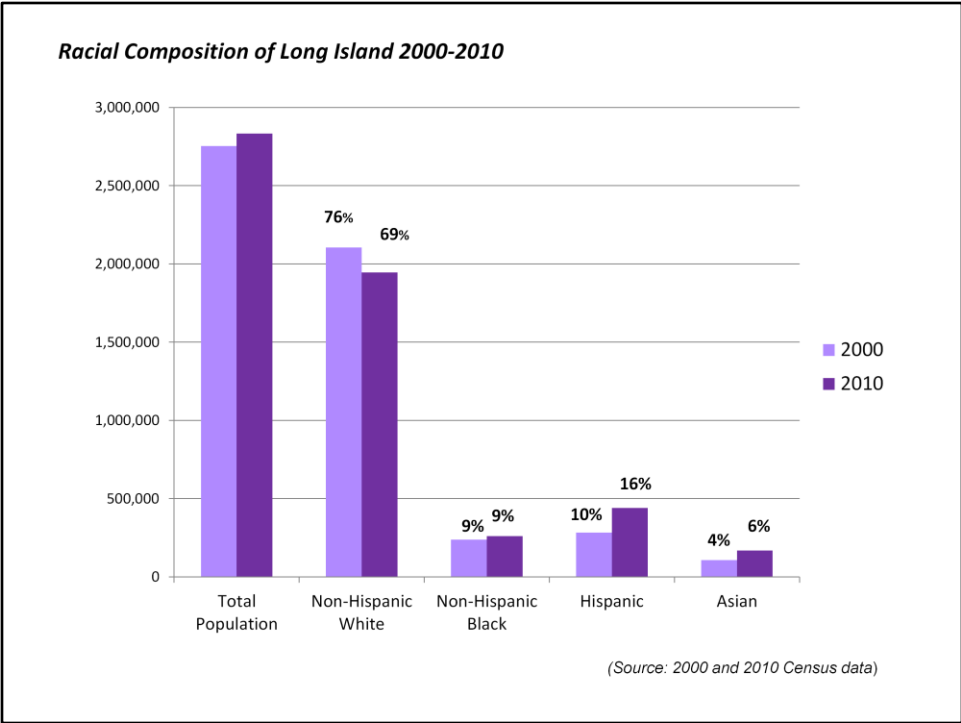
Heading in the Wrong Direction: Growing School Segregation on Long Island

V. Elaine Gross, President, ERASE Racism

Like most regions throughout the nation, Long Island is increasingly becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. This change is occurring most rapidly in the student population. There are many benefits to having a racially diverse learning environment: black and Latino students who attend racially integrated schools perform better than in racially segregated schools (Mickelson, 2011); students who attend racially integrated schools overwhelmingly report positive experiences, which include creating valuable cross-race and cross-cultural relationships and becoming more comfortable interacting with diverse people (Wells, et al., 2005); and long term societal benefits of racially integrated schools include greater social cohesion and tolerance, more cross-racial relationships, and more integrated neighborhoods (Eaton and Chirichigno, 2011). However, these benefits cannot be fully realized unless we put systems in place that will support an increasingly diverse student body and integrated schools and classrooms.

Residential Segregation

With the release of the 2010 Census data, ERASE Racism undertook an effort to compare the levels of segregation and the racial disparities between 2000 and 2010. The results are cause for great concern.



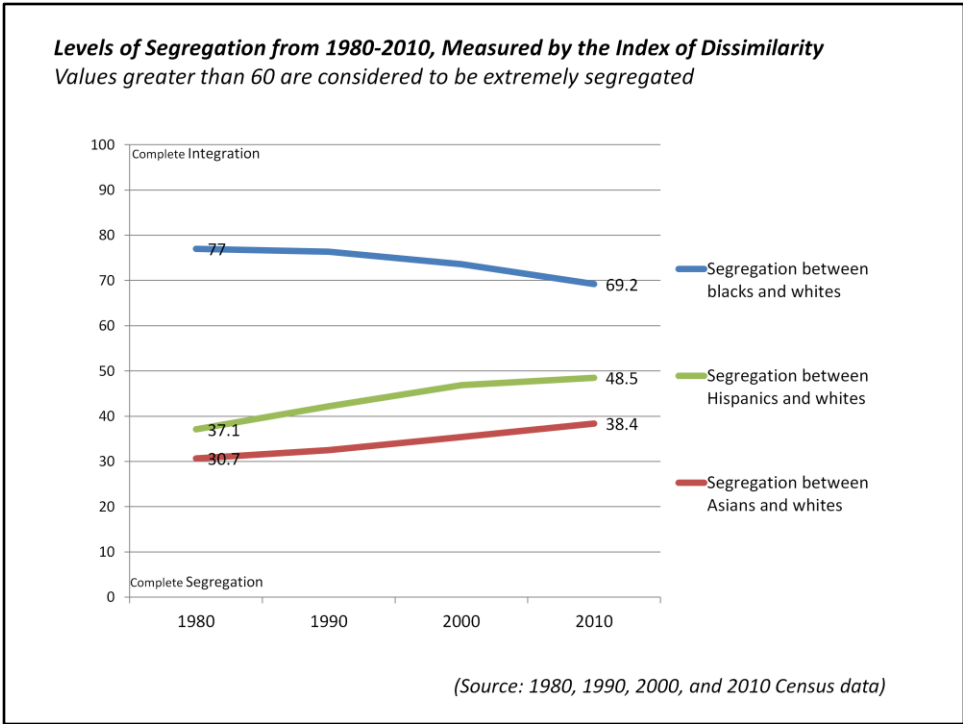
In this first graph we see that Long Island has become more racially diverse; however this increased diversity has not translated into increased integration.

Black-White Segregation (D) in 20 Metro Areas with Largest Black Populations in 2010

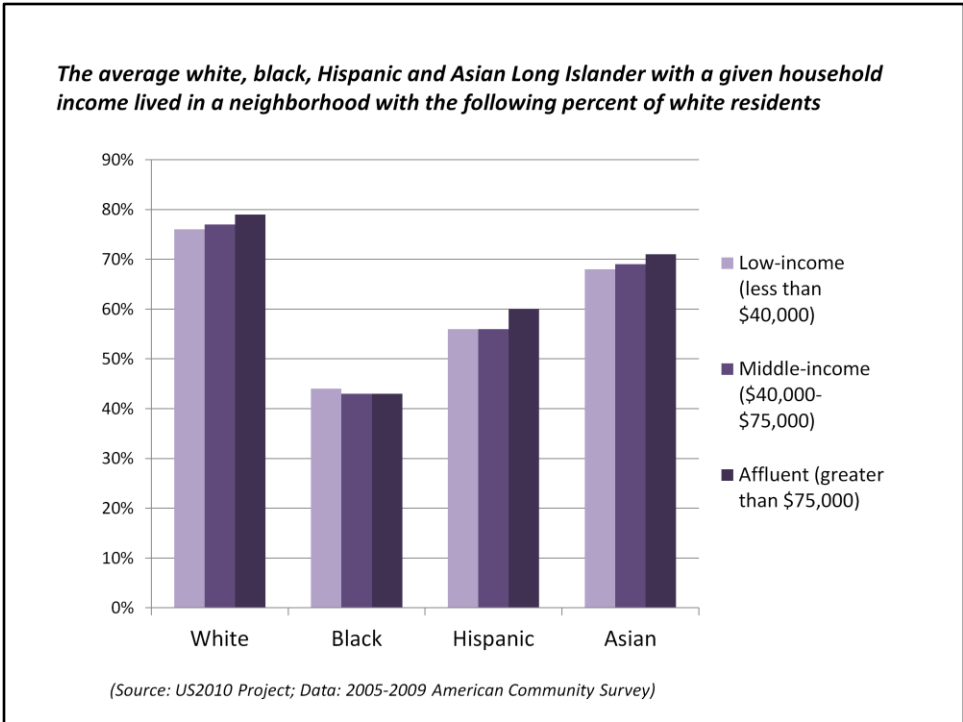
2010 Rank	Area Name	2010 Segregation	2000 Segregation	1990 Segregation	1980 Segregation
1	Detroit-Livonia-Dearborn, MI	79.6	85.9	85.6	83.0
2	Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	79.6	82.2	82.8	83.9
3	New York-White Plains-Wayne, NY-NJ	79.1	81.3	82.0	81.7
4	Newark-Union, NJ-PA	78.0	80.4	82.7	82.8
5	Chicago-Joliet-Naperville, IL	75.9	80.8	84.6	88.6
6	Philadelphia, PA	73.7	76.5	81.4	82.6
7	Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall, FL	73.0	72.4	71.8	79.3
8	Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH	72.6	77.2	82.8	85.8
9	St. Louis, MO-IL	70.6	73.4	77.2	81.6
10	Nassau-Suffolk, NY	69.2	73.6	76.4	76.9
11	Boston-Quincy, MA	67.8	71.5	73.7	79.8
12	Cincinnati-Middletown, OH-KY-IN	66.9	72.6	75.9	78.2
13	Birmingham-Hoover, AL	65.2	68.9	70.3	72.2
14	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, CA	65.0	67.4	73.1	81.1
15	Indianapolis-Carmel, IN	64.5	71.0	74.4	78.8
16	Baltimore-Towson, MD	64.3	67.6	71.4	74.4
17	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	64.1	65.9	68.4	71.4
18	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA	63.3	69.0	68.3	70.0
19	Pittsburgh, PA	63.1	67.4	70.8	73.3
20	Memphis, TN-MS-AR	62.2	65.7	65.5	68.8

(John R. Logan and Brian Stults. 2011. "The Persistence of Segregation in the Metropolis: New Findings from the 2010 Census" Census Brief prepared for Project US2010.)

Long Island continues to be one of the most racially segregated regions in the country, ranking tenth in terms of the highest levels of segregation between blacks and whites.



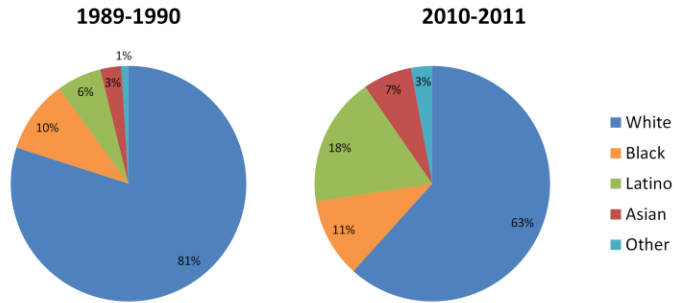
One frequently used measure of segregation is the Index of Dissimilarity (D). It measures the proportion of one group that would need to move to another census tract in order to achieve an equal distribution in relation to another group. In general, values of D above 60 indicate a very high level of segregation between the two groups. Looking at the graph we can see that the level of segregation between whites and blacks has remained over 60 for the past three decades, and while it has decreased the latest measure of 69 in 2010 is still significantly high. For Latinos and Asians we see an increase in the level of segregation that they are experiencing. Clearly diversity does not mean integration on Long Island, which is cause for great concern especially if this trend of more isolation and higher levels of segregation continues.



On Long Island, and throughout most of the nation, there are large income differences between racial groups; however, the high levels of racial segregation cannot be explained by income disparities alone. According to data provided by Brown University sociologist John Logan, different racial groups experience the same level of exposure to whites, regardless of their household income.

School Segregation

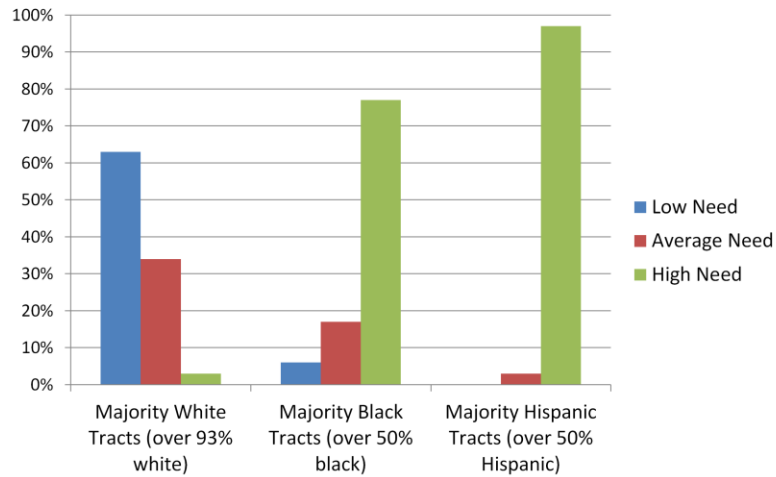
Long Island Public School Enrollment by Race



Source: Kucsera, John and Gary Orfield. "New York State's Extreme School Segregation: Inequality, Inaction and a Damaged Future" The Civil Rights Project, 2014

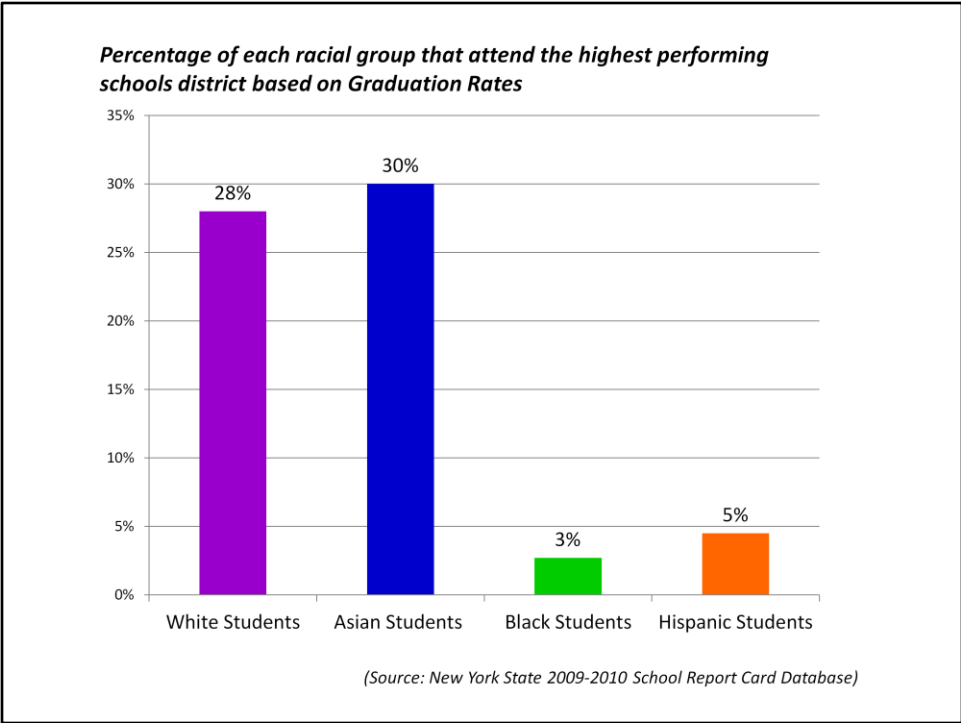
As is clear from this graph, Long Island schools are more diverse than in past years. However, this increased racial diversity has not resulted in integrated schools. Just like the neighborhood trends, data show that while schools have become more racially and ethnically diverse school segregation for black students on Long Island has remained extremely high over the past two decades and segregation for Latino and Asian students has increased.

Racially segregated neighborhoods and disparities in access to high-need and low-need schools



(Sources: 2010 Census data and 2009-2010 NY State School Report Cards)

When looking at the disparities between predominately white Census tracts (over 93% white) versus majority black tracts (over 50% black) , and majority Latino tracts (over 50% Latino) on Long Island, there are undeniable educational inequities. According to 2010 Census data and 2009-2010 NY State School Report Cards, 63% of the population in intensely white neighborhoods has access to low need, resource wealthy school districts, and only 3% go to high need, low-resource school districts. In contrast, the vast majority of the residents in majority black and majority Latino tracts *only* have access to high need school districts; 77% of students in majority black tracts attend high need school districts and 97% of students in majority Latino tracts attend high need school districts.



Another way to measure educational inequities is by analyzing performance measures, such as graduation rates and averages on test scores. Based on graduation rate, 3% of black students, 5% of Latino students, 28% of white students and 30% of Asian students on Long Island have access to the highest performing school districts.

Education Equity Strategies

Benefits of Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms

- Students who attend a racially integrated school overwhelmingly report positive experiences, which include creating valuable cross-race and cross-cultural relationships and becoming more comfortable interacting with diverse people (Wells, et al., 2005).
- Twenty years of research shows that when compared with their otherwise comparable peers who attend schools with high concentrations of low-income and /or disadvantaged minority youth, students who attend diverse schools are more likely to achieve higher test scores and grades, graduate from high school, and to attend and graduate from college. (Mickelson, 2011).
- Long term societal benefits of desegregated schools include greater social cohesion and tolerance, more cross-racial relationships, and more integrated neighborhoods (Eaton and Chirichigno, 2011).

Diversity is not a benefit to the region if people continue to live in segregated neighborhoods and students continue to be educated in segregated learning environments. We already know that students perform best in racially and socio-economically diverse classrooms. This slide shows just a few studies on the benefits of racial diversity in education.

Aggressive enforcement of fair housing laws at the local, state and federal level:

- HUD (The Department of Housing and Urban Development) must ensure that municipalities receiving federal funding abide by their obligations to affirmatively further fair housing.
- HUD must also monitor fair housing enforcement agencies to ensure that they appropriately handle cases of housing discrimination.

Place affordable housing in high opportunity/low poverty areas and provide access to that housing for people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds:

- Prohibit residency preferences that block blacks and others who do not already live in the community.
- Affirmatively market both new and existing housing units to under-represented populations to ensure that blacks and Latinos gain more housing choice.
- Zoning laws should not routinely block the creation of multi-family housing.

Now more than ever, steps need to be taken to ensure that our schools are heading in the right direction and are becoming more racially integrated rather than more segregated. Education equity can only be achieved by a combination of housing and education strategies. While there are certainly a number of steps that need to be taken at the state level and school district level, which several of our panelists will discuss, it is imperative that we also treat education equity as a housing issue. On the housing front, aggressive enforcement of fair housing laws at the local, state and federal level is essential to any effort to increase neighborhood and school integration.

Next Steps

Join ERASE Racism's Education Equity Working Group

Our objectives for this collaboration include:

- To build a unified group of education equity advocates, including administrators, teachers, school board members, parents and students that understand the challenges and benefits of a diverse school;
- To encourage an environment in which racial and ethnic issues are discussed openly and productively; and
- To work collaboratively to develop action steps that can be carried out within the school, as well as advocacy at the regional and state levels that support racially integrated schools.

To sign up for ERASE Racism's Education Equity Working group visit our website at www.eraseracismny.org

Provide your feedback!

On the index card on your table:

- Of the topics mentioned today, which ones are the most important
- What topics/problems/concerns have we failed to address today?
- What strategies are you already implementing in your schools or communities?
- In what ways would you like to work with ERASE Racism?