

Bridging the Divide: School Integration Designs



Remarks

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Education and the Path to One Nation, Indivisible

Linda Darling-Hammond

“Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental. ... The freedom to learn ... has been bought by bitter sacrifice. And whatever we may think of the curtailment of other civil rights, we should fight to the last ditch to keep open the right to learn.”

—W.E.B. DuBois, *The Freedom to Learn* ([1949], 1970, p. 230)

In 1968, the Kerner Commission Report concluded that the nation was “moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal.” Without major social changes, the Commission warned, the U.S. faced a “system of apartheid” in its major cities. Today, 50 years after the report was issued, that prediction characterizes most of our large urban areas, where intensifying segregation and concentrated poverty have collided with disparities in school funding to reinforce educational inequality.

While racial achievement gaps in education have remained stubbornly large, segregation has been increasing steadily, creating a growing number of apartheid schools that serve almost exclusively students of color from low-income families. These schools are often severely under-resourced, and they struggle to close academic gaps while underwriting the additional costs of addressing the effects of poverty—hunger, homelessness, and other traumas experienced by children and families in low-income communities.¹ For all these reasons, research has found that the extent to which students attend schools with other students from

low-income families is one of the strongest predictors of their achievement.²

These trends once again threaten the very fabric of our nation, as gaps in educational opportunity and attainment continue at a time when those without education are locked out of the knowledge-based economy we face.

Growing Segregation and Poverty

The root of inequality in educational outcomes in the United States is the combination of growing poverty and resegregation, along with inequality in school funding and resources. U.S. childhood poverty rates have grown by more than 50% since the 1970s and are now by far the highest among OECD nations, reaching 22% in the last published statistics.³ More than half of children attending U.S. public schools now qualify for free or reduced-price lunch—the highest percentage since the National Center for Education Statistics began tracking this figure decades ago.⁴ Furthermore, American children living in poverty have a much weaker safety net than their peers in other industrialized countries, where universal health



The Federal Role and School Integration

Brown's Promise and Present Challenges

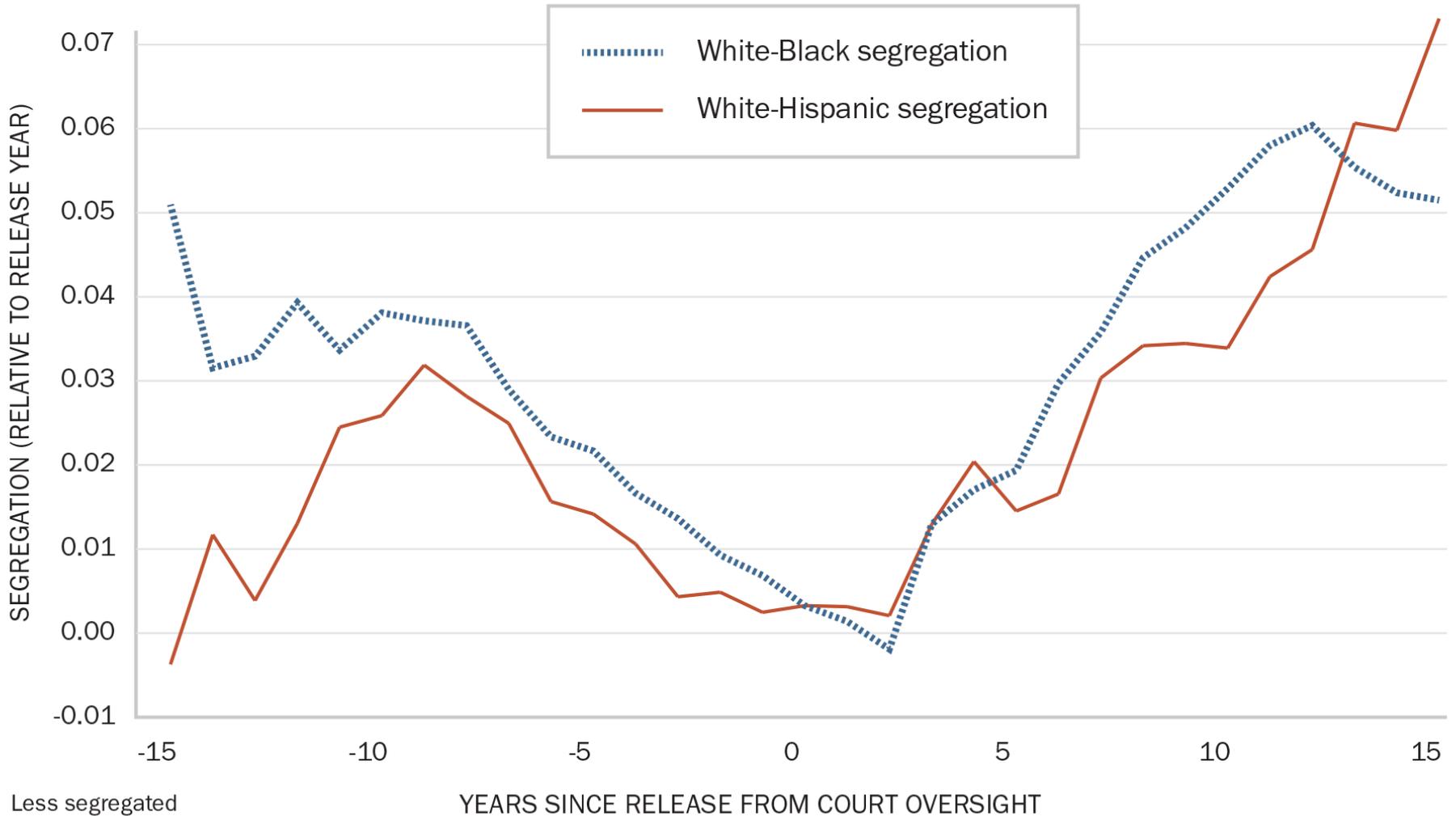
Janel George and Linda Darling-Hammond



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Degree of Segregation in Relation to Court-Ordered Desegregation Plans

More segregated



Source: Darling-Hammond, L. (2018). *Education and the path to one nation, indivisible*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Data Source: Figure developed from data in Reardon, S., Grewal, E. T., Kalogrides, D., & Greenberg, E. (2012). *Brown fades: The end of court-ordered school desegregation and the resegregation of American public schools*. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 31(4), 876–904.



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John Brittain, Larkin Willis, and Peter W. Cookson Jr.

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What Have We Learned, What Do We Have Yet to Learn?

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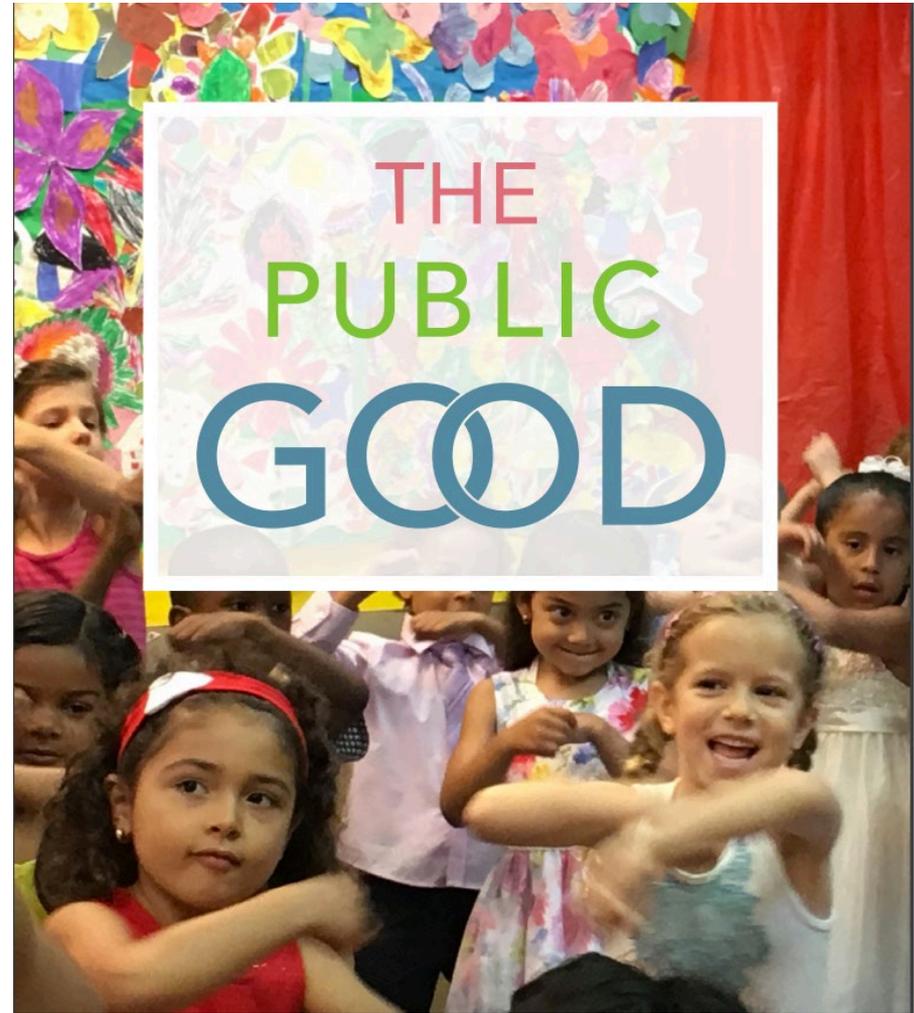
Cutting-edge research on **racial literacy, culturally relevant pedagogy, ethnic studies, culturally sustaining leadership, and youth activism** in the service of high-quality **professional development** for to enable educators to tap into the educational benefits of racially and culturally diverse learning environments for all students.

A Non-Profit Public School Support Organization (PSSO)

Committed to Using Action Research to Sustain Diverse Public Schools through:

- 1. Parent and Community Engagement***
- 2. Professional Development for Educators***
- 3. Strategic Communications to Redefine “Good” Schools as Those that are Racially Just and Equal***

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How Can We Implement What We Have Learned?

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Concluding Remarks

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Wrap Up

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Thank you for coming!

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