

Lesson 4

Sixty Years Later

Rationale

The purpose of this lesson is for students to analyze current patterns of school segregation and to consider whether or not the promise of *Brown v. Board of Education* has been fulfilled. They begin by taking a quiz to gauge their sense of “how things are” in schools today and then examine statistical data to verify their responses. Students next review a case study about a school district struggling with resegregation and a proposed plan to address it. They participate in a role play that allows them to apply their own ideas about diversity and desegregation to the case study.

[NOTE: In this lesson, students are asked to discuss their personal feelings about segregation and to participate in a role play that may require them to explore the perspectives of racial and socioeconomic groups different from their own. While the lesson is intended to increase empathy and encourage students to broaden their viewpoints, there is the potential for stereotypical thinking and divisiveness. Before proceeding, consider whether your students are prepared to delve into such sensitive subject matter. You may want to adapt the lesson to create a more structured and safe experience for students, or omit the role play all together if you feel students will not be able to participate in a constructive way.]

During this lesson, it is important to establish ground rules (see [Establishing Ground Rules](#)) and to emphasize respectful ways to express opinions and communicate with others. In addition, students can be provided with opportunities to debrief and process their feelings at various points throughout the lesson if tensions arise or they are feeling unresolved. Wherever possible, small groups should include members of different racial and ethnic backgrounds so that students can learn from one another's experiences rather than work from assumptions that may be overly simplistic or prejudiced. Make sure students understand that the roles created for this activity were kept simple for logistical reasons and reflect broad patterns taken from current demographic data. They do not attempt to capture the varied and complex experiences of all members of any particular group.]

Objectives

- Students will learn about current levels of segregation in U.S. schools.
- Students will analyze charts and graphs in order to better understand the present-day racial, ethnic and socioeconomic composition of U.S. schools.
- Students will relate their historical understanding of *Brown v. Board of Education* and school segregation to current events.
- Students will develop and articulate their personal viewpoints about the issues of diversity and segregation.

Age Range

Grades 9–12

Time

Three class periods or 2 hours 15 minutes

Requirements

Handouts and Resources:

- [Sixty Years After Brown: Are We Living the Dream? Quiz](#) (one for each student)
- [Sixty Years After Brown Answer Key](#) (for teacher reference)
- [School Segregation: Current Trends](#) (2-3 charts for each small group)

Key Words

Achievement gap
Boycott
Busing
Court-order
Demographic
Desegregation
Dominant group
Exposure
Inclusive
Integration
Lawsuit
Magnet school
Majority
Mandatory
Minority
Multiracial
Non-dominant group
Perspective
Protest
Racial ratio
Resegregation
Segregation
Socioeconomic
Substantiate
Trend

- [Lamron County School District Case Study](#) (one for each student)
- [Lamron County School District Community Meeting Roles](#) (one role for each student)

Other Material:

- chart paper, markers

Advanced Preparation

- Reproduce handouts as directed above.
- Make copies of [School Segregation: Current Trends](#) and provide only 2–3 charts from the *Current Trends* to each small group (see Step I #4).
- Cut and separate the [Lamron County School District Community Meeting Roles](#) handout so that each role and accompanying discussion questions are on a separate piece of paper (see Part II #4).

Techniques and Skills

analyzing charts and graphs, case study, cooperative group work, critical thinking, debate, historical understanding, large and small group discussion, reading skills, role play, substantiating factual information

Procedures

Part I

1. Write the following quote on the board or read it aloud:

“And so we must face the tragic fact that we are far from the promised land in the struggle for a desegregated society. Segregation is still a glaring fact in America...”

(from a December 1956 address in New York City by Martin Luther King to the National Committee for Rural Schools, which sought to equalize public education in the rural South)

2. Ask students whether or not they feel that Dr. King’s words still ring true. With regard to public education, has *Brown’s* promise been realized? Have schools been successfully desegregated? Ask students to note ways in which they think school desegregation efforts have been effective and ways in which segregation is still a problem. Challenge them to back up their opinions with evidence from the news or their personal observations.
3. After some discussion, provide students with a copy of [Sixty Years After Brown: Are We Living the Dream? Quiz](#). Let them know that this true/false quiz asks for their opinions on the state of segregation in schools today. Emphasize that they are not expected to know the answers, but rather to indicate their beliefs or their sense of how things are today in U.S. schools. Divide students into groups of 4–5 students each. Explain to students, as a group, they are to go through each question and discuss their belief about whether it is true or false and why, using information and experiences to support their position.
4. After students have had sufficient time to complete the quiz, provide each group with two or three pages from [School Segregation: Current Trends](#). Explain that this collection of charts and graphs presents current demographic data related to the racial, ethnic and socioeconomic composition of schools and patterns of school segregation and desegregation. Make sure each group has no more than two or three graphs/charts to study so that the information does not become overwhelming. Tell students that they will be examining the handouts in order to learn more about the state of segregation in schools today, and to find the answers to the quiz they took earlier.
5. After about ten minutes, reconvene the class and review the quiz one item at a time. For each item, ask if anyone found information to substantiate a true or false response. Use the [answer key](#) to fill in any missing facts and to extend the discussion.
6. Conclude by asking students what facts were most troubling or surprising to them, and by restating the questions posed at the lesson’s outset: Has *Brown’s* promise been realized? Have schools been successfully desegregated?

Part II

1. Now that students have some understanding about the resegregation that is taking place in schools today, engage them in a discussion about what they feel the societal response should be. Use some of the following questions to frame your discussion.
 - Are diversity and integration goals still worth striving for? Why or why not?
 - Is it important for public schools in a democracy to be diverse? Why or why not?
 - What are the benefits of diversity for both “majority” and “minority” groups?
 - Do you think that diverse schools affect students’ achievement and/or future opportunities?
 - Do you think that diverse schools lead to improved relations among people from different groups?
 - If you think integration is an important goal, what is the best way to accomplish it?
 - Should desegregation be an option or a requirement for local schools?
 - Should students be required to attend certain schools in order to achieve racial balance?
2. Inform students that they will be participating in a role play that will allow them to apply their ideas about diversity and desegregation to a case study. Distribute copies of [Lamron County School District Case Study](#) and explain that it is a fictionalized account of a school district struggling with the problem of resegregation and a proposed plan to address it. Note that although the situation in the case study is made up, it is based on very real events that have taken place in a variety of communities in recent years. Read the case study together as a class or have students read it to themselves, and answer any questions students may have.
3. Next divide the class into small groups of 3–4 students. Explain that each group will play the role of one of the community members listed below. Depending on the number of students participating, certain roles may be omitted or assigned to more than one group.
 - Student of Color
 - White Student
 - Parent of Color
 - White Parent
 - City Hall Representative
 - School Official
 - Community/Youth Group Representative

Explain that, in the role play, the community members will be preparing for an upcoming meeting where local residents will be able to express their support and/or concerns about the proposed diversity plan to school officials. Each group will take the perspective of their assigned community member and brainstorm the opinions, feelings, and concerns that they think such a person might express.

4. Assign each group a role and provide students with the appropriate section of the handout, [Community Meeting Roles](#), which provides a brief synopsis of each role and some questions to consider. Encourage students to take notes and record key points as they discuss the case study.
5. After groups have prepared their ideas, gather the class and conduct the mock “community meeting.” The teacher’s role should be that of moderator, setting the stage and the rules for discussion. One way to conduct the meeting is to ask each group to make a brief statement indicating approval or disapproval for the plan with supporting reasons. Another approach is to facilitate an open discussion in which “community members” express viewpoints and debate the issues in a free-style fashion. To conclude the meeting, students may wish to participate in a mock vote on the plan (either in their roles and/or as themselves) in order to learn where the class as a whole stands.

VARIATION

If there is time and interest, this activity can be approached as a longer term project. Students can prepare for their roles over the course of several days or weeks by researching and reading current news articles, interviewing family and community members, and studying the statistics included in this lesson more thoroughly. The following Web sites offer useful news and reports on the issue of desegregation:

- School Desegregation and Equal Education Opportunity (The Leadership Conference, www.civilrights.org/resources/civilrights101/desegregation.html)

- Desegregation (*Education Week*, www.edweek.org/ew/issues/desegregation/)
 - *Brown v. Board*: Equity and Opportunity for All (National Education Association, www.nea.org/brownvboard/)
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Sixty Years After *Brown*: Are We Living the Dream? Quiz

DIRECTIONS: Over sixty years after the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, how successful do you think U.S. schools have been in achieving integration? Read the following statements and indicate whether you think the statement is true or false by placing a T for true or an F for false on the line before each statement.

- _____ 1. The most segregated group in the nation's public schools is white students.
- _____ 2. The percentage of black southern students in majority white schools has been decreasing since the early 1990s.
- _____ 3. The three most integrated states for black students are New York, California and Massachusetts.
- _____ 4. There are more students of color than white students in our public schools.
- _____ 5. The Southern states have the highest percentage of black students in predominately minority schools.
- _____ 6. More than half of students in predominately minority schools are in schools that also have high poverty rates.
- _____ 7. The most segregated states for Latino students are New York, California and Texas.
- _____ 8. Research has shown that desegregation has a positive impact on student achievement.
- _____ 9. Desegregation efforts in U.S. schools have not worked and have only led to increased racial separation.

Sixty Years After *Brown*: Are We Living the Dream?

Answer Key

1. The most segregated group in the nation's public schools is white students.

TRUE. While white students are attending schools with slightly more students of color than in the past, they remain the most isolated of all racial groups. The average white student attends a school where 72.5% of the student enrollment is white. (Table 1)

2. The percentage of black southern students in majority white schools has been decreasing since the early 1990s.

TRUE. At its peak of integration in 1988, 44% of black southern students were in majority-white schools, the kind of schools that provided strong potential opportunities for diverse learning experiences. By 2011, that number had declined to 23%, a drop by nearly half, and the decline has accelerated in recent years. The percentage of students in majority white schools is lower than it was in 1968. (Table 2)

3. The three most integrated states for black students are New York, California and Massachusetts.

FALSE. The three most integrated states for black students are West Virginia, where 92.6% of black students are in majority white schools; Iowa, 67.7% in majority white schools and Kentucky, 61.1% in majority white schools. Those same three states have the lowest percentage of students in 90-100% minority schools: 0.0% for West Virginia, 2.4% for Kentucky and 2.4% for Iowa. (Table 3)

4. There are more students of color than white students in our public schools.

FALSE, but barely. White students make up 51.5% of public school students. Combined together, students of color make up 48.4% (15.4% black, 5.1% Asian, 24.3% Latino, 1.1% Native American, 2.5% multiracial) of the public school population. And because in 2011, for the first time more children of color were born than white children, that will shift the overall percentages in school soon. (Table 4)

5. The Southern states have the highest percentage of black students in predominately minority schools.

FALSE. Of all the regions, the Southern states have the lowest percentage of black students in predominately minority schools (34.2%). The Northeast region has the highest percentage of black students in schools with 90-100% minority students (51.4%). (Table 5)

6. More than half of students in predominately minority schools are in schools that also have high poverty rates.

TRUE. In schools that are 81-100% black and Latino, over three-quarters of the students are also enrolled in schools where more than 70% of the students live in poverty. And half of students in 91-100% black and Latino schools are in schools that also have more than 90% low-income students. These figures represent extreme overlaps of poverty and racial concentration and help to explain why schools with high concentrations of black and Latino students often have fewer educational resources and lower student outcomes. (Table 6)

7. The most segregated states for Latino students are New York, California and Texas.

TRUE. In these states, the percentage of Latino students in schools that are 90-100% minority is the highest of all states (New York, 56.7; California, 55.4% and Texas 53.5) and Latino exposure to white students is lowest in these states (California, 15.9%; Texas 18% and New York 20.5%). (Table 7)

8. Research has shown that desegregation has a positive impact on student achievement.

TRUE. Studies have shown that desegregation is associated with enhanced learning, higher educational and career goals and positive social interaction among members of different races. During the era of desegregation, the graduation rate for students of color increased and the gap between white and minority test scores grew smaller, even as poverty and unemployment worsened during the same period. The achievement gap has widened again throughout the 1990s, however, as segregation has increased.

9. Desegregation efforts in U.S. schools have not worked and have only led to increased racial separation.

FALSE. During the years that it was enforced, desegregation plans were successful in bringing students from different racial groups together. By 1981 every U.S. school system was less segregated than before desegregation was ordered. In addition, districts with the most extensive desegregation orders have shown the highest levels of long-term desegregation and some of the lowest levels of white flight. However, there have been significant increases in segregation as states have discontinued their plans in the past ten to fifteen years due to the Supreme Court authorizing termination of desegregation plans.

Reference

Orfield, Gary, and Frankenberg, Erica. 2014. "Brown at 60: Great Progress, a Long Retreat and an Uncertain Future." Los Angeles, CA: The Civil Rights Project. <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/brown-at-60-great-progress-a-long-retreat-and-an-uncertain-future/Brown-at-60-051814.pdf>.

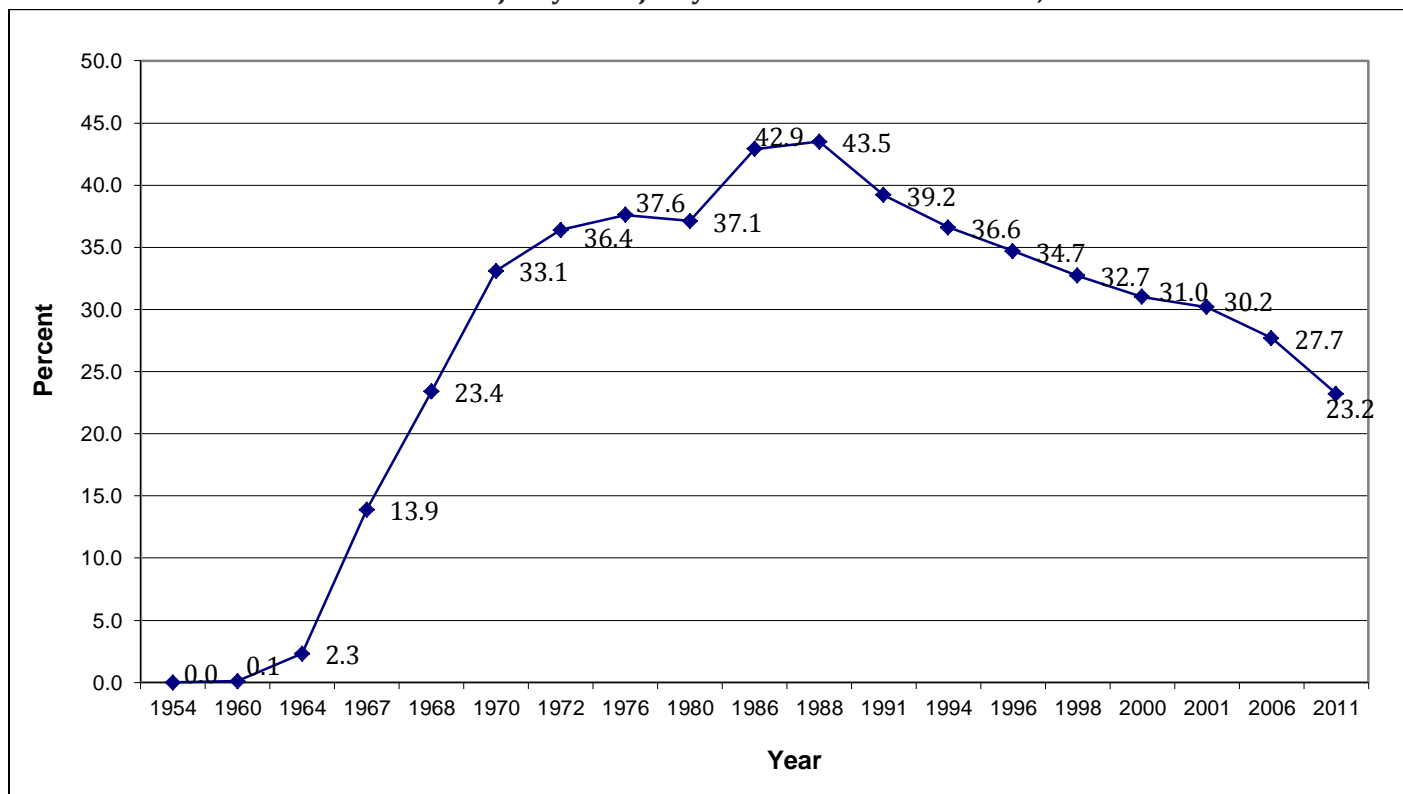
School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 1. Racial Composition of Schools Attended by the Average Student of Each Race, 2011-12

Percent Race in Each School	White Student	Black Student	Asian Student	Latino Student
% White	72.5%	27.6%	38.9%	25.1%
% Black	8.3%	48.8%	10.7%	10.9%
% Asian	3.9%	3.6%	24.5%	4.7%
% Latino	11.8%	17.1%	22.1%	56.8%
% Other*	3.5%	2.9%	3.8%	2.5%

*Other represents students who identified as Native American or Multiracial.

Table 2. Percent of Black Students in Majority in Majority White Schools in the South, 2011-12



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data, 2011-12.

Reprinted with permission from Gary Orfield and Erica Frankbeng, "Brown at 60: Great Progress, a Long Retreat and an Uncertain Future" (Los Angeles: The Civil Rights Project, 2014), <http://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu>.

School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 3. Most Integrated States for Black Students, 2011–12

Rank	% Black in Majority White Schools		% Black in 90-100% Minority Schools		Black Exposure to White Students	
1	West Virginia	92.6	West Virginia	0.0	West Virginia	76.9
2	Iowa	67.7	Kentucky	2.4	Iowa	59.7
3	Kentucky	61.1	Iowa	2.4	Kentucky	55.5
4	Minnesota	47.2	Kansas	7.8	Kansas	44.4
5	Kansas	42.7	Nebraska	11.8	Minnesota	44.2
6	Nebraska	36.6	Delaware	13.4	Nebraska	42.3
7	Delaware	35.9	Oklahoma	14.5	Delaware	40.1
8	Missouri	34.4	Virginia	16.7	South Carolina	37.3
9	South Carolina	33.5	Minnesota	17.2	Oklahoma	37.2
10	Arizona	32.3	South Carolina	18.2	Massachusetts	35.8
11	Alabama	31.5	North Carolina	19.6	Arizona	35.8
12	Rhode Island	31.4	Nevada	19.7	Rhode Island	35.3
13	Massachusetts	30.8	Arizona	20.8	Virginia	35.2
14	Oklahoma	30.4	Rhode Island	24.2	North Carolina	34.1
15	Arkansas	29.7	Massachusetts	25.4	Arkansas	33.9
16	Virginia	28.9	Arkansas	26.8	Indiana	33.4
17	Louisiana	28.6	Indiana	27.4	Missouri	32.8
18	Wisconsin	28.2	Louisiana	29.6	Louisiana	31.2
19	Pennsylvania	28.1	Connecticut	29.8	Ohio	30.6

Table 4. Public School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Region, 2011–12

Region	Total Enrollment	% White	% Black	% Asian	% Latino	% Native American	% Multiracial
South	5,957,201	44.7%	24.1%	3.1%	25.3%	0.5%	2.3%
West	11,310,045	40.2%	5.3%	8.3%	41.4%	1.7%	3.1%
Northeast	7,731,000	60.1%	14.4%	6.4%	17.3%	0.3%	1.4%
Border	3,548,325	63.7%	19.1%	2.8%	8.2%	3.4%	2.8%
Midwest	9,451,340	68.1%	13.5%	3.1%	11.2%	0.9%	3.1%
Alaska	113,093	48.2%	3.7%	8.7%	6.4%	25.3%	7.6%
Hawaii	182,529	14.3%	2.4%	68.1%	6.4%	0.5%	8.2%
Other	489,846	0.2%	2.5%	8.4%	88.6%	0.1%	0.2%
U.S. Total	48,783,379	51.5%	15.4%	5.1%	24.3%	1.1%	2.5%

Note: Regions are defined as follows: **South** - Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia; **West** - Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming; **Northeast** - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont; **Border** - Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Oklahoma and West Virginia; **Midwest** - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data, 2011-12.

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School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 5. Percentage of Black Students in 90-100% Minority Schools, 1968, 1988, 1991, 2001 and 2011

Region	1968	1988	1991	2001	2011
South	77.8%	24.0%	26.1%	31.0%	34.2%
Border	60.2%	34.5%	34.5%	41.6%	41.0%
Northeast	42.7%	48.0%	49.8%	51.2%	51.4%
Midwest	58.0%	41.8%	39.9%	46.8%	43.2%
West	50.8%	28.6%	26.6%	30.0%	34.4%

Note: Regions are defined as follows: **South** - Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia; **West** - Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming; **Northeast** - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont; **Border** - Delaware, District of Columbia, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Oklahoma and West Virginia; **Midwest** - Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Table 6. Relationship Between Segregation by Race and by Poverty, 2011-12

Percent Black and Latino Students in Schools										
% Poor in Schools	0-10%	10-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%	51-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
0-10	11.4	10.0	3.6	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.9	2.1	2.2
11-20	11.8	16.2	11.3	4.2	2.8	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.3
21-30	13.4	14.7	14.4	10.1	5.2	3.7	2.5	2.2	1.7	1.5
31-40	16.1	15.0	15.2	14.8	10.7	7.2	4.8	2.7	2.2	1.8
41-50	16.3	14.3	15.5	16.5	15.1	12.7	8.6	4.9	3.0	2.4
51-60	13.4	12.7	14.9	17.1	16.7	16.9	13.4	8.0	4.6	3.5
61-70	9.0	9.3	12.5	15.7	19.1	17.8	18.5	15.5	9.2	5.4
71-80	4.7	4.7	7.7	11.3	16.0	18.8	20.8	22.0	18.3	10.5
81-90	2.0	1.9	3.4	5.7	8.7	13.2	17.5	23.2	29.3	20.6
91-100	1.9	1.2	1.5	2.6	3.4	5.6	10.0	17.0	28.0	50.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
% of U.S. Schools	33.2	13.9	9	6.9	5.9	4.9	4.4	4.2	5	12.7

Note: Excluded schools with 0% free and reduced lunch (FRL) students.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data, 2011-12.

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School Segregation: Current Trends

Table 7. Most Segregated States for Latino Students, 2011-12

Rank	% Latino in Majority White Schools		% Latino in 90-100% Minority Schools		Latino Exposure to White Students	
1	New Mexico	6.0%	New York	56.7%	California	15.9%
2	California	7.8%	California	55.4%	Texas	18.0%
3	Texas	11.0%	Texas	53.5%	New York	20.5%
4	New York	16.5%	Illinois	45.9%	New Mexico	21.2%
5	Nevada	17.2%	New Jersey	42.8%	Illinois	26.0%
6	Maryland	21.3%	Rhode Island	39.8%	New Jersey	26.4%
7	Arizona	21.4%	Arizona	39.4%	Arizona	26.6%
8	New Jersey	22.3%	Maryland	37.9%	Nevada	26.7%
9	Florida	22.7%	New Mexico	34.5%	Maryland	27.1%
10	Illinois	22.9%	Florida	30.1%	Rhode Island	28.0%
11	Rhode Island	23.6%	Pennsylvania	29.5%	Florida	29.0%
12	Connecticut	25.8%	Massachusetts	29.2%	Georgia	34.6%
13	Massachusetts	30.9%	Georgia	27.7%	Connecticut	35.1%
14	Georgia	31.3%	Nevada	22.7%	Massachusetts	35.1%
15	Delaware	33.7%	Connecticut	21.7%	Colorado	38.2%
16	Virginia	35.3%	Colorado	18.4%	Pennsylvania	39.2%
17	Colorado	36.0%	Washington	14.6%	Oklahoma	39.9%
18	Oklahoma	37.4%	Wisconsin	13.8%	Delaware	40.2%
19	Pennsylvania	39.4%	North Carolina	13.5%	Virginia	40.3%
20	North Carolina	40.7%	Michigan	12.7%	North Carolina	42.6%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey Data, 2011-12.

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Lamron Country School District Case Study

Lamron County is a suburb of a medium sized Mid-Western city. In the 1800s, Lamron was a prosperous town due to the many grain and lumber mills built along its Central River. However, the development of new technologies and the Great Depression of the 1930s left the mill town depressed throughout the mid-1900s. Over the past thirty years, due to overcrowding in the neighboring city, many businesses and residents have gradually moved out to Lamron and a successful computer technology industry has taken hold. Today the county is a mixture of working class and professional people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Most recently, a small but growing community of Pakistani immigrants has made Lamron their home.

The 15,000-student Lamron school district has fifteen elementary schools, six middle schools, and three high schools. Roughly 70% of the district's students are White, 13% are African American, 11% are Latina/o, 4% are Asian, and the remaining 2% are multiracial or Native American. In the 1970s and 1980s, Lamron schools were part of a court-ordered desegregation plan, which required black and Latina/o students from the city to be bused into town. Many Lamron students (mostly white) were transferred out of their neighborhood schools in order to accommodate the new students and create racial balance. Though most of the community expressed their approval for diverse schools, they responded negatively to forced busing. Protests and school boycotts led eventually to a lawsuit, and in 1992 court-ordered desegregation in Lamron was ended.

Despite the opposition to forced busing and transfers, Lamron was successful in desegregating its schools. By 1988 no school was more than 60% White, and the few mostly minority (and mostly poor) schools that once existed were multiracial. Between 1975 and 1990, the achievement gap—or difference in test scores between white students and black and Latina/o students became smaller and graduation rates for all students increased. However, following the end of mandatory desegregation, these trends slowed down and even started to reverse. Once city residents were no longer required to bus their children to the suburbs, most chose to return to local schools. The majority of Lamron families also went back to neighborhood schools rather than remaining in more diverse schools that were farther from their homes.

Today, Lamron schools are quickly resegregating. Two of the district's three high schools are more than 80 percent White. The third high school, in addition to being mostly Black and Latina/o, has more than twice the number of poor students. In addition, the shrinking achievement gap of the 1980s has started to grow again and there have been several racially motivated incidents involving local teenagers. The most recent clash occurred after several Pakistani students found graffiti on their lockers branding them terrorists.

In response to these trends, the Lamron District School Board has proposed a new plan. According to the proposal, district lines will be redrawn to create three racially balanced attendance zones, each with five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. Students will be guaranteed a spot at a school in their attendance zone, but not necessarily their local neighborhood school. Under the plan, students may voluntarily transfer out of their assigned neighborhood schools if the transfers would improve or have a neutral effect on racial balance, but transfers that would worsen racial balance are prohibited. In addition, the long-term plan calls for creating several new magnet schools, which would offer smaller class sizes and special programming that would encourage diverse enrollment. Attendance at these schools will be voluntary and the schools will maintain strict racial ratios of no more than 60 percent white students and no more than 40 percent students of color.

Lamron residents have had strong reactions to the plan. Some families have praised the effort to create inclusive schools and to overcome the barriers that divide local communities. Others have threatened to boycott the schools if their children are forced to leave local neighborhoods. Some residents feel that racially and economically diverse schools are the only way to achieve equal opportunity. Others feel that desegregation doesn't work and that the answer is to put more resources into schools with minority and poor students. A series of community meetings have been scheduled so that local residents can learn more about the plan and express their concerns to school officials. A vote on the plan is expected before the end of the current school year.

Lamron Country School District Community Meeting Roles



Student of Color

You are a student of color at Lamron Central High School, which is 90% Black and Latina/o and has more than twice the number of poor students as the other two district high schools. If the proposed plan is passed, it is likely that you will be transferred to a school in another part of town that will require you to take a bus. There would be fewer students from your neighborhood in the new school—and fewer students of color overall—but you have heard that the new school has a brand new computer lab, better athletic facilities, and a greater number of students who go on to college.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on remaining in your neighborhood and going to school with friends and peers from your own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require you to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will make a difference in your grades and your opportunities for the future?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences?



White Student

You are a white student at Lamron Community High School, which is over 80% White and mostly middle and upper-middle class. If the proposed plan is passed, it is possible that you will be transferred to a school in another part of town that is not within walking distance. Whether you get transferred or not, your school will have at least twice the number of students of color as it does now, and a greater number of students from working class and poor families.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on remaining in your neighborhood and going to school with friends and peers from your own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require you to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will benefit you in any ways?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences?



Parent/Person of Color

You are a person of color with children at Lamron Central High School, which is 90% Black and Latina/o and has more than twice the number of poor students as the other two district high schools. While you like many of the teachers there, you have been frustrated by the overcrowded classes and outdated textbooks. If the proposed plan is passed, it is likely that your children will be transferred to a school in another part of town that will require them to take a bus. There would be fewer students from your neighborhood in the new school—and fewer students of color overall—but you have heard that the new school has a brand new computer lab, better athletic facilities, and a greater number of students who go on to college.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on keeping your children in the neighborhood and sending them to school with people from their own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require your children to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will make a difference in your children's grades and opportunities for the future?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences for your children?
- What are your greatest hopes and fears for your children and how does this new plan affect them?



White Parent

You are White and the parent of students at Lamron Community High School, which is over 80% White and mostly middle and upper-middle class. If the proposed plan is passed, it is possible that your children will be transferred to a school in another part of town that is not within walking distance. Whether or not they get transferred, your children's school will have at least twice the number of students of color as it does now, and a greater number of students from working class and poor families.

Questions to Consider:

- What value, if any, do you place on keeping your children in the neighborhood and sending them to school with people from their own background?
- Do you think that the school system has the right to require your children to attend a school outside your neighborhood in the name of diversity?
- Do you think integrated schools are worth striving for?
- Do you think that going to a more racially diverse school will benefit your children in any ways?
- Do you think that going to a racially diverse school will have any negative consequences? What are your greatest hopes and fears for your children and how does this new plan affect them?

Government Official

You are an official from the local government that represents the interests of Lamron County. You remember the desegregation efforts of the 1970s and 1980s, and all of the protests and violence that came with it. However, you are very concerned about the increasing segregation in Lamron and the racial mistrust that seems to be growing. You want to make sure that all students in Lamron have an equal opportunity to succeed, but you also want to maintain order and ensure that most of the voters approve of your actions.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you think that the proposed plan will ultimately promote increased understanding and better race relations in the community?
- Do you think the plan will lead to violence or increased racial tension?
- Do you think the plan will provide opportunity for Lamron's less privileged students?
- How is this plan different than the desegregation efforts of the 1970s and 1980s?
- Will it be more successful?
- How will supporting this plan help or hurt your reelection campaign?
- Are integrated schools worth striving for?

School Official

You are a local school official that represents the interests of the superintendent's office. You are concerned about the trend toward resegregation in Lamron schools, the increase in the number of racially motivated bias incidents, and the widening gap in test scores between white students and students of color. You want to put a plan in place that ensures the success of the greatest number of students and the least conflict among local parents.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you think the plan will ultimately reduce racial incidents or increase racial tension?
- Do you think the plan will provide increased opportunity for Lamron's less privileged students?
- In what ways do you think the plan will benefit white, middle-class students?
- How will this plan be more successful than the desegregation efforts of the 1970s and 1980s?
- Is this plan worth the unrest it might stir among local parents and the media?
- Are integrated schools worth striving for?

Community/Youth Group Representative

You represent members of local community groups concerned with youth issues, such as the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. You are troubled by the increase in segregation over the past years and the growing number of racially motivated bias incidents in the community. You are also aware of the greater levels of poverty that exist at most segregated minority schools and the limited opportunity for students at these schools. You want to make sure that all students in Lamron have an equal chance to succeed, and that poor students and students of color are provided with the resources they need to thrive.

Questions to Consider:

- Do you think that the proposed plan will ultimately promote increased understanding and better race relations in the community?
- Do you think the plan will lead to violence or increased racial tension?
- Do you think the plan will provide opportunity for Lamron's less privileged students?
- Are integrated schools worth striving for?