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## Despite the Best Intentions: Making School Integration Work in Integrated Schools<sup>1</sup>

John B. Diamond & Amanda E. Lewis

In recent decades, the so-called racial “achievement gap” has been a central focus in U.S. educational policy, practice and research.<sup>2</sup>

While black/white differences in educational outcomes narrowed substantially since the 1970s and most of the 1980s (at least in part as the result of school desegregation efforts), the gaps have since largely stagnated and significant differences persist in grades, test scores, and high school and college graduation rates—with whites having better educational outcomes on average than their black (and Latina/o) classmates. These gaps are reflected not only in national test score data but can also be seen in specific schools and districts. Riverview, a middle-income suburban school with a racially mixed student population,

is just such a district. (To protect the identities of those we interviewed, we don’t name the city or school where we did our study but use the pseudonym Riverview. Rather than being idiosyncratic, however, Riverview shares many similarities with diverse suburban districts nationally.) Riverview has experienced many of the positive academic and social outcomes associated with integration; however, racial differences in school still remain. A key challenge for those who support integration efforts is to make sure that schools like Riverview live up to their promise to enhance the educational outcomes of all of their students.

About a decade ago, a principal from Riverview called and asked us to help him better understand what was going on and to hopefully make changes in the school. That initial request led to us conducting 171 interviews with students, parents, teachers, administrators and school staff and to analyze survey data from 25,000 students across 15 school districts including Riverview. It culminated in our recent book, *Despite the Best Intentions: How Racial Inequality Thrives in Good Schools* (Oxford Univ. Press, 2015).

When we started this research, we were familiar with the research on the achievement gap but felt that it had limitations. For example, some work used large data sets to focus on racial differences in students’ socioeconomic

backgrounds but was unable to fully account for racial outcome differences. This led some scholars to argue that in addition to examining the implications of inequalities outside

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The articles in this edition of *Poverty & Race* are drawn from some of the workshops at the recent conference, “21st Century School Integration: Building the Movement for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,” held at Howard Law School on September 24-25. For a full list of workshops, videos, presentations, and more, go to [www.school-diversity.org](http://www.school-diversity.org).

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schools, we also needed studies that more carefully unpacked the micro-level dynamics inside schools that might contribute to the gap.

In addition to this, we were concerned that race itself was under-theorized in work on racial achievement gaps. The idea of race is everywhere in the field of education. However, after reading much of the research, we found that too much of it treated race as variable, showing that race had statistical significance in examinations of test scores but not explaining how or why it mattered in the day-to-day life of schools. We still found ourselves asking “what’s racial about these gaps?”

Finally, we were interested in understanding how race mattered in a self-proclaimed progressive community that prided itself on its egalitarian beliefs. As one of the school’s security guards stated in describing the community, “Diverse—ethnically, socially, academically, spiritually. I mean, just diverse. And I think that’s what makes this place so wonderful.” Or as one white parent argued, “[The diversity] was a real plus when we were deciding to come here.” Riverview is in some ways a model of stable diversity. When we began our study, the school was about 48% white, 41% black, 8.5% Latina/o, and 2% Asian.

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## Does Oppositional Culture Explain the Gaps?

We embarked on our work first by taking up one of the most common explanations for racial differences in educational outcomes—the oppositional culture argument (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 2008). This argument suggests that because of racial discrimination in schools and in the labor market, black students inherit a general opposition to dominant insti-

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### *The idea of race is everywhere in the field of education.*

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tutions like schools from their families and communities. This opposition is theorized to lead to black adolescents criticizing their black peers for engaging in behaviors that are identified with whites (some of which are school-related behaviors that contribute to academic success).

This storyline has become a taken-for-granted explanation for the black-white achievement gap, both for those inside and outside schools, showing up frequently not only in research literature but also in newspapers, magazines, and even in the political discourse. It was at his famous speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention that then Senate candidate Barack Obama argued for the need to “eradicate the slander that says a black youth with a book is acting white.” But like most previous studies that have tested this phenomenon, we found no evidence of race-based oppositional culture among black students. In fact, black students were more pro-school than their white counterparts and received positive messages about education from their parents and peers. Moreover, students’ pro-school academic orientations had only minor implications for their academic outcomes and therefore do almost nothing to explain race-based achievement disparities.

## Performance Expectations: Academic and Behavioral

### Academic Expectations

What was going on at Riverview? While race is ever-present in the discussion of educational outcomes, much less attention has been paid to how it shapes students’ day-to-day lives in schools. One of the first things we learned was that race was linked to how students were treated at Riverview, both in the academic and disciplinary domains. We learned early in our interviews that people’s beliefs about race were intertwined with their beliefs about intelligence in the academic domain at Riverview. As a teacher, Ms. Tyson, stated:

Well, if you are a student of color, could be an African-American student or Latino, there are assumptions that you don’t care about school, that you...you don’t have the capability of being successful in school. And so those are negative messages that they have to deal with...every day.

So black and Latina/o students are forced to deal with these low expectations as they navigate the school and deal with teachers. How students cope with these low expectations was brought home to us early in our study when one black female student sat for an interview. She explained that every semester she approached the teachers in her mostly honors classes to let them know she was a serious student because she assumed they would hold low expectations of her. Prior to the interview, she had placed her honor roll certificate on the table in a very deliberate fashion, perhaps sending us researchers a signal similar to the one she sends her teachers.

Beliefs about race and intelligence also shape how peers perceive and interact with each other. As one white student stated even more bluntly, “I think that usually the perception is throughout almost most places that

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# Inviting NYC Students onto the Scene of School Integration

## *A Snapshot of IntegrateNYC4me's First Year on the Ground*

Sarah Camiscoli

Last year, as I sat with my 10th grade advisory, I listened to students vent about poor free-lunch quality, excessive test prep, unfair discipline, and an overall resignation with school. I had heard this kind of venting before, but I was no longer interested in responding to it as if it were typical teenage angst. With the UCLA's report on New York's Extreme Segregation in nearly every major newspaper in New York, I felt it was time to invite them to be part of a new conversation. I knew I did not enter into the field of education to pacify young people's resistance, nor did I enter into education to be compliant with a system of unequal access and distribution of resources. I entered education to fulfill my commitment to create racial and socioeconomic justice and to facilitate an experience of liberation for young people. My students needed to know that. And they needed to know that thousands of people around the country were talking about the unconstitutional nature of the complaints they were sharing. Up until that point, I had been listening to their concerns through a filter of what I saw as pos-

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*To learn more about the work of IntegrateNYC4me and the possibilities of integration, visit [www.integrateNYC4me.com](http://www.integrateNYC4me.com)*

sible at the school level. I feared I could not deliver if I opened up a new realm of possibilities. I feared I would offend colleagues or disrupt systems that so many of us had created to remedy structural inequities. I feared I might put my job or my school at risk for scrutiny. But mostly, I feared students wouldn't buy it. I was afraid they

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### ***Students wanted to share their voice.***

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wouldn't believe in the possibility that brought me to them each day. But I let that go, and IntegrateNYC4me was born.

Through our conversations, I realized how the divide between my response to their complaints and my activism around systemic inequality was a dishonor to their experience, to their power, and to myself as an activist and an educator. IntegrateNYC4me was created out of this moment. It was created out of the choice to be actively engaged in conversation and action around the inequities experienced in racially and socioeconomically segregated schools. It was born out of the choice to believe in the curiosity, power and brilliance of students to transform the realities of segregation and to create the possibility of integration in and outside of our community.

At first, our advocacy efforts centered around social media. Students wanted to share their voice. We began surveying students, parents and teachers about their vision for public schools in The Bronx. "Better lunch!" "More sports!" "After school clubs!" And with just a few dozen tweets and several conversations, the project took off. Students, teachers and activists

around the city resonated with our concerns and shared our vision. We were encouraged to speak at City Council hearings, received a request from other schools to collaborate, and noticed an outpouring of support from other activists who were inspired by our energy and pizzazz. Our resignation about segregation and inequality had been transformed into a new conversation about integration: How could we integrate people and resources in a place like the South Bronx? After discovering a re-tweet from Councilmembers Danny Dromm and Brad Lander, Francisco, a student activist, said, "One day, when I'm older, and I see a bunch of kids like me with a bunch of kids who aren't like me, I'm going to remember this. I'm going to remember I was part of this."

Within two months, our efforts moved towards building relationships. The students requested doing a school

*(Please turn to page 4)*

### **Jacqueline Berrien**

We dedicate this issue of *Poverty & Race* to Jacqueline Berrien, former Chairwoman (2010-14) of the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commn., who passed away on Nov. 9, 2015. She earlier was Assoc. Dir.-Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense & Educ. Fund. At EEOC she took action against systematic employment practices and work rules that discriminated against classes of people on the basis of ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disabilities and religious beliefs.

(INTEGRATENYCAMÉ: Cont. from p. 3)

exchange with a predominantly white school. They wanted to explore what different worlds there were in K-12 public schools around the city and meet young people who they had never had the opportunity to interact with before. Several months after that, they met with advocates and lobbyists around the city who had been in the work for decades, accomplished amazing feats in districts throughout Manhattan and Brooklyn, who wanted to support our organizing. Leslie, one student activist from The Bronx, said, “Before I started this work, I knew something wasn’t right but I didn’t have language for it and didn’t think anyone would listen to us as kids. Now I know about segregation and that it’s illegal and that people will listen to us.” Organizing around integration became the means by which students were able to build connections with people from around

New York City, to articulate the severity of the structural racism they had experienced in their lives, to explore the resource allocation throughout NYC public schools, and to use their power to take action to create a new world of possibilities.

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***Students were able to explore a community they had never been exposed to, investigate the impact of segregation, and collaborate with inspiring young people.***

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By the Spring, students took political action. District 7 and District 2 students engaged in an unprecedented school-to-school exchange that transformed their perceptions of race, class and access forever. With two days in

each school exploring classes, lunchtime, recess and activities, students were able to explore a community they had never been exposed to, investigate the impact of segregation, and collaborate with inspiring young people who they were missing out on as a result of segregation. After completing the exchange, Sam, a rising 11<sup>th</sup> grader, stated, “I feel that it is essential for New York State to change how students are accepted into schools with an abundance of resources and guidance because certain kids are rejected, and in the end, all children should have proper resources and guidance.” Cate, a rising 12<sup>th</sup> grader from the Upper East Side, stated, “During the exchange, I also saw how segregation affects us socially. My [exchange] partner from The Bronx wrote me notes and whispered to me things he wished he could’ve contributed to the class conversation. He kept his head down and avoided eye contact in the hallways. It was odd to me; how did he feel so uncomfortable in a place that felt to me like a second home? We’d been segregated for so long that it was almost impossible for him to feel like he belonged.” Students were moved, and they wanted to continue to share their vision with NYC.

To take their advocacy to the next level, students, together with teachers and the talented muralist Sophia Dawson, compiled these reflections, created a design and worked together to paint a collaborative mural project on a wall between the two schools in East Harlem. At the mural’s unveiling, students shared about their experience with community members from The Bronx, Manhattan, Columbia University, and gave thanks to supporters such as NYC Appleseed. This work led to IntegrateNYC4me’s invitation to become a member of the National Coalition on School Diversity—an opportunity that created the possibility of sharing student voice and vision with advocates around the country.

It was only a matter of time before this zeitgeist of student organizing in The Bronx and Manhattan spread to student activists in other NYC boroughs. In the Spring of last year, Park

## **New York City’s School Diversity Accountability Act**

In late May the New York City Council passed the School Diversity Accountability Act, consisting of Intro 511 and Resolution 453. Intro 511-A is a local law requiring the New York City Department of Education to issue an annual report detailing levels of diversity in New York City schools. The NYC Department of Education is required to report data at the community school district level, individual school level, and special programs within a school. The reported data will be disaggregated by grade level, race and ethnicity, gender, and English Language Learner status. Furthermore, the Department is required to report on the admissions process used for each school or special program (e.g., lottery, geographic zone, or standardized test), as well as any efforts taken in the preceding year to encourage a more diverse student body. The first report for K-12 is due December 31, 2015; all subsequent reports will include information on pre-K diversity, and will be due on November 1st each year. Resolution 453, recognizing the exceptional segregation of NYC schools and the academic as well as social benefits of integrated classrooms, calls on the NYC Department of Education to “officially recognize the importance and benefits of school diversity and to set it as a priority when making decisions regarding admissions policies and practices, creation of new schools, school rezoning and other pertinent decisions and commit to having a strategy in each district for overcoming impediments to school diversity.”

For the text of the two sections of the School Diversity Accountability Act, go to <http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/Legislation.aspx> and search for Introduction No. 511-A and Resolution No. 453.

— Michael Hilton

## ***Please help support PRRAC!***

Dear friend of PRRAC,

What a year it has been! A resounding affirmation of the Fair Housing Act by the Supreme Court – followed by the release of the final Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Rule at HUD – and an overflow crowd at our sixth national housing mobility conference in Chicago in July, energized by new research on the long-term benefits of housing desegregation for young children.

Then in September, PRRAC and the National Coalition on School Diversity brought together 300+ activists, educators and students at Howard Law School for “21st Century School Integration: Building the Movement for Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity,” a conference designed to both expand the national movement for school integration and to celebrate some of the policy and organizing advances we have made in the past two years.

Many of the advances we have seen in the past year have affirmed the power and discretion of the federal executive branch to promote civil rights through programmatic reform, which is part of our basic theory of change. But as we have continued to work in the trenches of housing and education policy, we also know how much is still left undone—especially at HUD, at the Treasury Department, and at the Department of Education!

So as we enter the final year of the Obama Administration, we really do need your support more than ever. Please consider a generous tax-deductible contribution to PRRAC this year.\*

Sincerely,



Philip Tegeler  
Executive Director

\* You can donate online at [www.prrac.org/support.php](http://www.prrac.org/support.php), or mail a check to PRRAC at 1200 18th St. NW #200, Washington DC 20036. (If you are a federal employee, you can also donate through the Combined Federal Campaign – our # is 11710).

Slope Collegiate students, parents and principal collaborated to investigate the history of segregation, possibility of integration and the significance of the existence of a scanner (metal detector) in the front of their building. Through their political education and design workshops, students designed a public mural to show the connection between segregation and the existence of scanners in schools and to illustrate their vision for scanner-free, diverse public schools for their community. This work caught the eye of Council Member Brad Lander, who was moved by the resonance between student activism and his own commitments to making integration a priority for the New York City Council and the Department of Education.

After an exciting year of creation, transformation and vision, Integrate NYC4me has been able to establish an elective course in one of its member schools, take on 22 new student activ-

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***It was only a matter of time before this zeitgeist of student organizing in The Bronx and Manhattan spread.***

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ists in District 7, and inspire other NYC public schools to create youth-led student initiatives around school integration. Through these new initiatives, students will explore not only the areas in which segregated schools are affected, but also the mechanisms

through which they can make their voices heard by local authorities. With the power and commitment of resilient, visionary young people, and the support of school communities committed to integration and anti-racist organizing, IntegrateNYC4me plans to change hearts, minds and systems in the 2015-2016 school year. □

**Visit PRRAC's  
website at:**

**[www.prrac.org](http://www.prrac.org)**

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# Next Generation Schools

Bill Ferguson & Sarah McLean

Our children are growing up in an increasingly diverse nation at a time when changes in technology are rapidly reshaping the workplace and our society. As parents of young children and former teachers, we know that Maryland's education system must innovate to meet these changes. Marylanders must step outside the status quo and lead the charge to create "Next Generation" schools where students learn 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills by creatively solving real-world, community-based problems alongside peers who mirror the rich diversity of the American public.

The knowledge and skills demanded of our children by the modern workplace require them to employ integrated skills to complete complex tasks. Currently, our children are not learning these integrated skills. By the year 2020, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the United States could face a shortage of up to 95 million high- and medium-skilled workers. Maryland seems to be following this trend. Since 1992, Maryland's 4<sup>th</sup> grade scores on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test have increased only 5 points. Our 8<sup>th</sup> grade NAEP scores have increased only 8 points over the past 23 years.

A globalized economy requires that our children be able to work in a diverse environment. The United States Census Bureau is projecting the American population to be majority-

minority by 2043. As of this year, the public school student population is majority-minority, where the number of black, Latino and Asian students has surpassed the number of white students. Yet schools are more segregated than ever. As of 2011, more than 85% of Maryland's black students and 78% of Latino students are enrolled in majority-minority schools. Over 50% of Maryland's black students attend a school that has a 90-100% minority student enrollment. We are at a crucial moment. The time for bold action on behalf of our kids is now.

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***The time for bold action on behalf of our kids is now.***

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Last session, legislation was introduced, and will be re-introduced this session, to create Next Generation Schools in Maryland, pushing the state to re-imagine what students learn, how they learn, and with whom they learn.

If adults across racial and socioeconomic lines are going to solve problems together in an increasingly diverse and globalized society, first they must learn how to solve complex problems together in the classroom.

While the traditional public school system has worked for some children, we need a new approach to ensure all Maryland children receive a rigorous and highly effective education. In order to provide opportunities for students to learn amongst diverse peers, we need to incentivize the creation of schools that are built on an explicit commitment to diversity. Specifically, Next Generation Schools are committed to socioeconomic integration. The research is clear. Both majority and minority students benefit, academically and socially, when learning in purposefully integrated environments. Moreover, continuing the current segregated academic environment is not only morally questionable, but also completely impractical as we consider the increasing diversity of our state and

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## Next Generation Schools

In early February 2015, a bill was proposed in the Maryland Senate regarding Next Generation Schools. The proposed bill recognizes the academic, cultural and professional benefits of students attending schools with significant socioeconomic diversity, and notes the high degrees of segregation for Black and Latino students in Maryland schools. The bill proposes a new school model, one open to all students statewide based on a space-available or lottery admissions process, employing an experience-based learning model, and which has a target demographic of no less than 35% and no more than 55% low-income students. Next Generation Schools would be operated under supervision of the State Board and subject to the same accountability mandates of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as other state schools, as well as being subject to the requirements of federal civil rights laws.

For the text of the proposed Next Generations Schools bill, see <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2015RS/bills/sb/sb0683f.pdf>.

— Michael Hilton

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*Bill Ferguson (bill@billforbaltimore.com), in his second term as a Maryland State Senator, was first elected in 2010 as the youngest State Senator in the state's history. His district is entirely within the City of Baltimore.*

*Sarah McLean (skm510@mail.harvard.edu) is a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Development Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.*

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# EmbraceRace: An Emerging Community of Support for Raising Kids in the Context of Race

Andrew Grant-Thomas

A couple years ago, my daughter, Lola, and I signed up for a weekly evening course called "Watching the Nighttime Sky" at a local college. Lola was 5, a voracious reader, and waaaay into learning about the solar system and the universe. The little girl could name Jupiter's four visible moons!

The class was taught by a retired professor, a white man. On clear nights we peered at the sky through a telescope; on cloudy nights, we got a lecture on the history and science of astronomy. Fun subject, daddy-daughter bonding, what could be better?

It didn't take long to observe that while the instructor referred consistently to the only other kid in the class, a 7 year-old Asian-American boy, as a "scientist," he completely ignored my brown-skinned girl. During lectures he'd call the little boy up to the front of the room to participate in demonstrations ("How did the Greeks define an ellipse?"). Lola? Nothing.

I told the man— on three separate occasions—about Lola's budding astronomy expertise, and, more to the point, about the need to engage 5-year-olds in the course of 90-minute talks to the degree possible. (I put it a bit more diplomatically.)

The instructor never pushed back or appeared defensive, but nor did his behavior change. I became increasingly frustrated. One evening, my bored, squirmy girl responded to the man once again calling on the boy "scien-

tist" by whispering in my ear, "But, Daddy, I'M a scientist too!" We left.

Part of my unhappiness was simply that of a father who saw his daughter denied an experience that could have been much more rewarding for her. Part had to do with how the incident troubled that well of fear in my mind that many parents of African-Ameri-

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***The first goal is to educate and inform adults about the pervasive impact of race in children's lives.***

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can kids and girls know well, the fear that scenarios like that one will play themselves out unrelentingly in the years to come, sometimes with a great deal at stake.

And then there was this: At 5, Lola didn't have a robust set of tools with which to read the dynamics at work in that class. (She is markedly more sophisticated about race and gender now

than she was just two years ago.) She was bored, not hurt; she felt a bit puzzled, not diminished. I worry that as Lola and her younger sister become more alert to the identity and contextual dynamics that will pervade their engagements with peers, teachers, employers and others, the social harms the biases of others may cause them might be compounded by harm to their psyches.

How can my partner and I help our girls become racially literate, and alert as well to the challenges posed by class, gender, disability and so on, while also building their capacity for resilience in the face of the hard-edged realities their growing discernment reveals? It truly does take a village to provide good answers to such a question.

## EmbraceRace

Figuring out how best to support the development of healthy racial sen-  
*(Please turn to page 8)*

## My last issue of *Poverty & Race*!

This issue of *Poverty & Race* is the last for which I am Editor, having done that for 25 years, from when *P&R* was a quarterly to its now bi-monthly status (and the Board is now considering switching back to a quarterly again), as I will be ending my formal employment at PRRAC at the end of 2015, creating space for younger staffers to take on the appropriate tasks. Needless to say, it's been a pleasurable, productive experience. I depart confident that PRRAC is in good hands, with Phil Tegeler as ED and Jack Boger as Board Chair, backed by our first-rate Board of Directors and Social Science Advisory Board. Megan Haberle, PRRAC's Policy Counsel (mhaberle@prrac.org, 718/614-9804), is succeeding me as Editor. Welcome, Megan! I'll be living in San Francisco and plan to remain on the Board of various organizations and take on occasional PRRAC-oriented consultant gigs. Please keep in touch – after Dec. 31, my email will be chartman2@aol.com; my mailing address 360 Elizabeth St., San Francisco, CA 94114; my phone 415/824-1628. And thanks especially to all of you who have contributed such important articles over the years.

— Chester Hartman

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(EMBRACERACE: Cont. from page 7)

sibilities in children is difficult, uncertain work. While teachers can find substantial support at Teaching Tolerance, Teaching for Change, Facing History and Ourselves, Border Crossers, and elsewhere, the online resources to help parents and other caregivers do that work are neither plentiful nor readily available. Moreover, as far as we know, no one has organized the available materials in one place. All this is especially true of materials aimed at parents of young children, though we know that even toddlers have begun to make sense of race, whether or not we choose to engage them explicitly on the subject.

EmbraceRace is a multiracial, online community of parents, teachers, mentors, childcare providers, and other adults, young people, and experts who present and discuss our questions, experiences, beliefs, concerns and resources.

Our Facebook page is up ([www.facebook.com/weembracerace](http://www.facebook.com/weembracerace)); we

launch the site and other platforms in December. EmbraceRace will feature lots of blogging by community members, webinars and discussion groups, a podcast, and a resources section. The basic idea is to invite a wide range of people to examine their beliefs, experiences and concerns; to engage others in discussion that is as forthright and incisive as we can make it; and to

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**We want to support parents and other adults to nurture resilient children of color and racially literate children of all stripes.**

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have that thinking and discussion informed by the best information, resources and expertise we can find.

We do all this in pursuit of three goals.

The first goal is to educate and inform adults about the pervasive impact of race in children's lives. Regu-

lar readers of the PRRAC newsletter know about the aversion many Americans have to talking about race, in general, or to acknowledging its continuing influence on the social, economic and political outcomes that matter. Knowledge is no panacea for the ills of racism and poverty, but some part of the road to healthy people, family and communities is paved with the kinds of information and insight that EmbraceRace will help make more widely available.

Second, we want to support parents and other adults to nurture resilient children of color and racially literate children of all stripes. At a time when race remains perhaps the sharpest edge along which Americans divide ourselves, we must find ways to help our children develop the tools, knowledge and sensibilities they will need to meet the challenges that race poses.

Third, through EmbraceRace we hope to collect, organize and highlight resources that will help adults be effective racial equity advocates for children. My kids will likely face fewer, less serious obstacles to fulfillment than many millions of their peers, especially other black and brown children, will face. And they will do so under the watchful eyes and care of parents, family, and friends able to advocate for them more forcefully and with more resources than most. It's our hope that EmbraceRace will bring more, better advocacy resources to its members than they otherwise would have, and help close the gap between those with more resources and those with fewer.

## **Partnering with EmbraceRace**

The successful development of a large and vibrant community that can meet the goals we have established can only be the work of many. We are grateful to the NoVo Foundation and to several individual donors for their early investment in the promise of EmbraceRace. We thank the bloggers

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## **CERD 50th Anniversary**

On December 21, 1965, the United Nations General Assembly established the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The treaty was signed by President Johnson that same year, and was eventually ratified by the U.S. Congress in 1994.

From the website of the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights:

“2015 marks 50 years since the adoption of the Convention. It was forged during the time of great civil unrest in parts of the world. The drafting took place during the civil rights movement in the United States, whose Civil Rights Act was passed just prior to its adoption. Apartheid was at its height in South Africa, with the Sharpeville Massacre bringing the cruelty of the regime into international focus. And many countries in Africa were doing away with colonialism for independence.”

The CERD treaty, overseen by the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, has become a powerful tool for civil society groups fighting racial injustice in their countries. With the coordination and leadership of the U.S. Human Rights Network, the treaty has also become an effective tool in U.S. efforts to address structural racial inequality. To read about some of PRRAC's work on the CERD treaty over the past ten years, go to [www.prrac.org/projects/cerd.php](http://www.prrac.org/projects/cerd.php).



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# City Garden Montessori School in St. Louis: A Story of Education Reform, Gentrification and Housing Advocacy

Christie Huck

When I moved into the Shaw neighborhood in the City of St. Louis in 2005, the cost of houses that had been rehabbed were already a stretch for my family and many middle-income families. Still, Shaw and the neighborhoods surrounding it offered one of the only spots in the city where white and minority families live side-by-side, and where people of varied income brackets coexist.

It only took me a few weeks, though, to realize that there are essentially two separate neighborhoods within Shaw—a white neighborhood and a black neighborhood. At neighborhood meetings, mostly attended by white residents, the topic of conversation was often "problem properties," occupancy permits for businesses that might bring "trouble," and the latest crime horror stories.

As my children approached school age, I started to realize how this separation and skewed power dynamic played out in our area schools. I would watch most of the African-American

kids in the neighborhood walk home from the neighborhood district school (which was failing and has since closed), or get off the bus in the afternoon. When I would (very occasionally) get up for a 5:30 a.m. run, many African-American young people were waiting at bus stops throughout the

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***It only took me a few weeks to realize that there are essentially two separate neighborhoods within Shaw.***

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neighborhood. Meanwhile, the white families I knew were considering to which magnet or private schools they would send their children.

The formation and evolution of City Garden Montessori's charter school was developed in response to this.

In 2005, my oldest son, Jude, was four and attending City Garden Montessori's existing preschool program. Reine Bayoc, an African-American parent, had also moved into the Shaw neighborhood, seeking a diverse neighborhood for her family. Reine's four-year-old daughter and my son had become preschool buddies, and Reine and I tagged along with them on field trips and outings. We began to discuss the school situation somewhat obsessively, deeply frustrated that diversity, high quality and affordable or free did not seem to exist in schools around us. We approached City Garden's founder, Trish Curtis, about the possibility of expanding upon the preschool that she had been operating since 1995 (which our children attended), to open an elementary school that embodies all of these qualities.

We got to work with Trish and other parents, envisioning and creating a charter school that would serve this pocket of the city, the goal being that the school would be rooted in these neighborhoods, and reflect the diversity that existed here. The school would implement the Montessori approach, which holds respect for self, others and the community at the core of its philosophy.

This was no small task, and, lacking public school, legal, financial or other expertise, we were way out of our league in many respects.

However, over the next two years, we managed to write a charter, secure a sponsor and, most incredibly, we won a U.S. Department of Education start-up grant of \$560,000.

We knocked on doors and talked to families in neighborhood shops, playgrounds and daycares, working to build relationships and trust in order to create a solid and diverse community of families who would embark on this great experiment with us. We recruited Montessori teachers to join us in building a school that fulfills Maria Montessori's original vision to serve and empower children of all backgrounds.

Various powers that be, in our neighborhoods and beyond, watched us with caution and skepticism; others simply ignored us, dismissing this small group of "nobody" parents.

Though the challenges were steep, amazingly, we succeeded.

Now, City Garden Montessori serves 275 children in preschool through eighth grade. In 2012, we were able to move into a newly renovated 30,000-square-foot building, and we have been ranked the highest-performing charter school in St. Louis according to state evaluations for sev-

*(Please turn to page 10)*

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*Christie Huck (christie@citygardenschool.org) is Executive Director of City Garden Montessori Charter School. With a background in community organizing and social activism, Christie entered the education reform movement as a parent and community member concerned about education equity and integration in schools. She worked with City Garden's founder and parents to develop the first Montessori and neighborhood charter school in Missouri. City Garden, which opened as a charter school in 2008 and provides children with a rigorous, individualized education with a focus on social justice. Christie lives in St. Louis's Shaw neighborhood with her three children.*

(MONTESSORI: Cont. from page 9)

eral years. We have held true to our vision to be an integrated school, with about 50% students of color and 50% white students, and close to half are eligible for the federal Free or Reduced Lunch program (though this number has been steadily decreasing annually).

Interestingly, however, we are in some ways becoming victims of our own success, so to speak.

The neighborhoods served by City Garden had already begun to gentrify when the school opened. However, since that time, there has been an incredible loss of the African-American population in the three major neighborhoods we serve, and a steep loss of low-income households. Housing costs have continued to rise at a rapid rate.

There are many factors at play here. Two major universities and their accompanying medical centers have significant interest in and investment in this part of the city. Over the past couple of decades, the Missouri Botanical Garden, which is located in this area, made intentional efforts to overhaul the better part of one of the neighborhoods, removing low-income housing and replacing it with brand new,

market-rate housing. The area contains a burgeoning commercial district, a new research park and, most recently, the first IKEA store in the region. The architecture is beautiful, and highways are easily accessible. All of these things have drawn middle- and upper-income individuals to these neighborhoods.

Middle-class families *with children* are moving into our neighborhoods at a record pace, however, in order to be eligible to apply to City Garden Montessori. Every week, we hear from young couples that have bought a home nearby—some moving from other parts of the city, some from the suburbs, and some who relocated to St. Louis from other states or even other countries and specifically chose

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***We know that our small pocket of St. Louis is a microcosm of the larger world.***

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our neighborhood because they want to send their children to City Garden.

This is flattering—and, it poses an interesting challenge.

The geographic area we serve is one

of the only parts of the City of St. Louis where people are moving *in* instead of *out*, and where houses often don't stay on the market longer than a few days. Given St. Louis's history of white flight and population loss, this is pretty incredible.

Many middle-class families are moving into the area because, like my family, they like the diversity. Ironically, the rapid pace at which many of these families are moving is resulting in higher demand for property, which leads to higher housing prices and more redevelopment—all of which is driving out lower-income households, and *decreasing* diversity.

In 2013, our board began to discuss the dilemma this presents for us and to wrestle with how all of this impacts our mission. We know that our low-income families are facing the effects of these changes in a profound way, and feel a great deal of responsibility to help sustain the unique diversity that is present in our neighborhoods—it is the very reason we situated our school in this location. We also recognize that, as a high performing charter school with many community partners, we hold some influence in the community that can perhaps be leveraged. We also have deep relationships with families and neighbors from all backgrounds, offering us a unique opportunity to raise these issues in a public way, initiating community dialogue, and to connect grass “roots” to grass “tops.”

Our board created an Affordable Housing Task Force to examine the changes that are occurring, how exactly these changes are impacting our families and how to respond. We began to explore what our role might be in advocating for continued and increased access to affordable housing for low-income residents.

We reached out to partners we already had, like US Bancorp Community Development Corporation and Habitat for Humanity, and began to develop relationships with new partners, like the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University and a grassroots organization in our neighborhood called Voices of Women.

## PRRAC Update

● PRRAC Board member **John Britain** joined two other law professors (Robin Lenhardt at Fordham and Michelle Adams at Cardozo) as Counsel for “53 Current Members of the Texas State Senate and House of Representatives” in an amici curiae brief filed in the US Supreme Court in *Fisher v. University of Texas* (“Fisher II”), which revisits the use of race as part of holistic undergraduate admissions policy. PRRAC also joined an amicus brief in the case led by Human Rights Advocates, Inc., concerning precedents for race-conscious admissions policies in international human rights law.

● Former PRRAC Board member Professor **Florence Wagman Roisman** is one of 10 faculty to receive the prestigious national Beckman Award for college and university faculty who have “inspired their former students to make a difference in their communities.”

● *America's Growing Inequality: The Impact of Poverty and Race*, ed. **Chester Hartman**, has just been issued in considerably less expensive paperback edition by the publisher, Lexington Books—see <https://rowman.com> (search for “growing inequality”)

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We surveyed our parents, researched demographic changes and changes in housing costs and began to examine the policies that either help or hinder low-income individuals and families in our neighborhoods. Professor Molly Metzger and her students from the Brown School of Social Work conducted research on the changes in our neighborhoods and produced a report called “The Right to Stay Put.”

We are currently working to transform the Task Force into a broader Affordable Housing Coalition, made up of many local organizations and individuals, to facilitate the preservation and development of affordable housing in our neighborhood, and a comprehensive plan for retaining economic diversity and housing access in the neighborhoods City Garden serves.

The Coalition’s initial plan will be: to identify and assess the housing needs of City Garden families; to assess the current availability of affordable housing in the neighborhoods that City Garden serves; to convene parents, neighborhood residents, community partners, researchers and developers to seek input and to share information about the impacts of changes taking place in the neighborhoods City Garden serves; to identify current affordable housing resources that are available to parents and residents and develop strategies to communicate these more widely; to identify policies that may present barriers to affordable housing in our area and/or policies that might support affordable housing development in our area; and to identify specific strategies in the target neighborhoods, and support action toward increased affordable housing in the neighborhoods City Garden serves.

It is tricky to navigate this new advocacy role. Some individuals have challenged us, claiming that our school’s involvement in housing is “mission creep,” and that schools really have no business getting involved in housing matters.

However, Montessori’s philosophy and approach is built upon the notion that, to truly serve the whole child and allow his or her full potential to be unleashed, one must identify and re-

move all obstacles to the child’s learning and development. The changes in our neighborhoods present real obstacles for many of our children, as it becomes difficult or impossible for their families to stay in their homes.

Montessori also asserts that, to truly serve the whole child, we must see him or her in the context of an interconnected ecosystem, and that what happens with a child inside a classroom cannot be disconnected from what happens in his or her neighborhood, and beyond.

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***It requires us to recognize our interdependence with one another.***

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There is a particular material in what Montessori calls “Cosmic Education” that is a set of wooden boxes that fit together. The smallest one represents an individual atom, the next one, an individual child. The next is the family, then the community, then the neighborhood, then the city, the state, the country, continent, the earth, solar system, and, finally, our galaxy. This very tangibly represents our individual place in the universe, and how it is we connect to the larger world.

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*(NEXT GENERATION: Cont. from page 6)*

the globalized workforce.

In addition to who today’s students are learning with, we also must re-imagine what content and skills students learn and how they learn them. In order to develop students with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, we must allow for innovation in how we design and structure schools. Next Generation Schools opens up the innovation space by increasing freedom of curriculum so that school leaders, teachers and community members can design and launch new teaching and learning practices focused on equipping all students with 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills.

A shift of this magnitude will require significant political will and resource investment. This does not simply mean more money. It means en-

This vision of interconnectedness is also why we believe in racial and economic integration. We know that integration in schools is not only the way to achieve true equity, but to break down barriers around race and class that exist in our society, and to recognize and embrace our interdependence with one another. As an integrated *neighborhood* school, we have an even more powerful opportunity to live, work, play and learn together, united around our children and their well-being.

The changes taking place in our neighborhoods put all of this at risk.

We know that our small pocket of St. Louis is a microcosm of the larger world. Over the past 15 months in St. Louis, we have seen, more than ever before, that racial and economic segregation in our schools and our neighborhoods is not working. Integration of our schools and our neighborhoods is critical to achieve true equity and reform in our city and in our society. It requires us to recognize our interdependence with one another—as individuals, families, neighborhoods, institutions—and to constantly re-evaluate and re-imagine how we might collectively accomplish this essential task. □

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sure that accountability measures must be designed to serve as encouragements for staff creativity and constant investigation, not incentives to standardize. It means acknowledging what values we want to hold onto from “school” of the last 50 years, but also shedding some constructs so that we can design for the future. It means having to live in a land of gray as we figure out how to move forward, together.

In order to meet the promise of public education in Maryland, we must create a system of schools that prepare all students for a diverse and globalized world and a globalized economy. The question should not be whether or not we can afford to make a shift of this kind; instead, the question should be, can we afford not to? □

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# Neighborhood Schools – an Etymology

Michael Hilton

The term “neighborhood schools” has a long history in struggles over school integration, often used as a rallying cry by enclaves of well-resourced, usually white citizens to protect the uniform character of their schools and combat desegregation (Hannah-Jones, 2014; Williams, 2015).

Following the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, many whites in both the North and the South began to express support for neighborhood schools, which “allowed for nominal integration near borders between black and white communities and token integration by some middle-class blacks[, but generally] relied on neighborhood residential segregation to prevent widespread comprehensive integration” (Todd-Breland, 2015, p. 133; Weinberg, 1967). In 1963, a staff report submitted to the United States Commission on Civil Rights found that, after the dismantling of legally enforced school segregation, a move to neighborhood schools resulted in exceptionally high degrees of segregation, since “[r]acial factors had been used to determine the size and location of schools. Schools were located, taking into account the racial group they were intended to serve” (Staff Report, 1963, p. 61). Since that time, very little has changed with regard to racial segregation in housing, and many recent observers have noted that while neighborhood schools may be an attractive concept, in conjunction with persistent residential segregation, they usually serve to widen already stark educational divides (Spencer, 2014; Kingsland, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 2004).

Some researchers have found that school districts released from court-ordered desegregation plans which implement a “neighborhood schools” approach effectively re-segregate, leading to higher levels of segregation today than were experienced in the 1970s (Joyner & Marsh, 2011). While some parents may desire neighborhood schools purely out of a desire to have their children remain close to home, many observers have noted that the busing of students has generally not been an issue for parent groups until the busing was implemented with desegregative aims (Jackson, 1982; Theoharis, 2015). In fact, research has shown that many parents who proclaim benign reasons for supporting neighborhood schools actually, whether consciously or subconsciously, desire neighborhood schools in order to prevent their children from attending schools in predominantly minority areas—not to avoid a bus ride (Todd-Breland, 2015, p. 134).

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The reaction in Boston to court-ordered busing in the 1970s serves as a useful illustration of the racially charged history of “neighborhood schools” rhetoric. The emphasis on maintaining a segregated system of neighborhood schools in Boston arose in the early 1960s, led by the School Committee Chairperson, Louise Day Hicks. In 1963, Hicks “emerged as a leader of the white resistance to desegregation[, and t]hat fall she campaigned for re-election as a defender of segregation and the ‘neighborhood school’” (Green, 2000, p. 208). In Boston, the birthplace of public education in the United States (Seelye, 2012), “[s]upporting neighborhood schools and opposing school bus rides became rhetoric to fight desegregation without overtly racist language” (Theoharis, 2015). The fight for desegregation in Boston reached a climax in the early 1970s, following a lawsuit by the NAACP regarding the continued segregation of Boston schools, which the School Committee defended against by asserting that the “policy of assigning children to ‘neighborhood schools’ was being evenly applied in a city with clear ethnic neighborhoods, the origins of which were historical and beyond the control of the Committee” (Weinbaum, 2004; Gellerman, 2014). When the court ordered the busing of students to desegregate schools in 1974, violent protest erupted in the city, resulting in the deployment of the National Guard.

While different groups at different times have employed the “rhetoric and ideology of ‘neighborhood schools’ to achieve very different ends,” it is important to be mindful of the charged history of that term during community discussions around public education (Todd-Breland, 2015, p. 133). □

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(EMBRACERACE: Cont. from page 9)

who already have started to submit posts, the people and organizations that have committed their expertise to enriching the community, and the members of our National Advisory Board, who lend their insights and good names to our cause.

We are eager to add to this valued store of partnerships. Please contact me if you want to know more ([Andrew@embracerace.org](mailto:Andrew@embracerace.org)). We want bloggers; people who can help us identify guests and topics for our podcasts, discussion groups, webinars and forums; and people who want to organize or lead them. We are very interested in launching a programmatic component that would feature the voices of kids—especially pre-teens, but also high school-aged kids—leading thoughtful, heartfelt race work inside or outside schools. We would appreciate any references you have to

such young people and work.

We need people to write race-conscious reviews of kids' books, movies, toys and games, and experts willing to field occasional questions from community members related to our core themes (e.g., race and racial justice, parenting, child social and emotional development, children's popular culture, race and K-12 schools, and especially their intersections). We welcome referrals to experts in these areas. And, of course, we welcome anyone who wants to participate productively in our community conversations.

## Conclusion

We have many daunting questions we need to answer well if we are to realize the potential value of EmbraceRace. How do we build a real sense of community among diverse

strangers taking about race? How do we establish more rather than less civil space that accommodates constructive exchanges and learning even as it embraces truth-telling?

How do we respectfully bring in the voices and perspectives of parents and kids marginalized by racism and poverty? Mark Twain said it ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble; it's what you know for sure that just ain't so. How do I, a long-time racial justice worker with many strong convictions about race, avoid getting tripped up by what I know for sure about race that just ain't so?

How do we, as a community of parents, teachers and other caring adults, prepare children to survive in, thrive in, and shape a racial order we, and they, might hardly be able to imagine?

I hope some of you will help us try to answer these questions. □

black people are dumber than white people and Hispanics are not as smart as everyone else.” Such perceptions were reflected in peer dynamics in classrooms.

These ideas about race and intelligence are reinforced by the distribution of student across course levels. There are essentially three course levels at Riverview—regular, honors, and advanced placement (AP). In a school that is less than 50% white, whites make up nearly 80% of the students in honors class and almost 90% of the students in AP classes. This distribution of students across course levels reinforced the link in people’s minds about academic ability, and led students to define class levels in racial terms. Julius, a black junior, argued that, “The fact is that Riverview is two schools in one. There is the honors white school, and then there’s the other school.” Richard, a white sophomore, explained the composition of classrooms like this, “I mean if you look at the numbers, I’m betting there are more white kids that are in the honors classes, and more black kids that are in minority classes.”

Because these spaces were partially defined by race, black and Latina/o students were often made to feel unwelcome in higher level classes. One administrator shared the following story:

There was a teacher who had a minority student come into their honors class and you know he was your stereotypical baggy jeans, big shirt, hat turned sideways, you know, and she said to him, “You know I think you belong in my next period, you’re too early” and assumed that he was a general student. And he’s like, “No, no, my schedule says I belong here.”

Maria talked about being a Latina in honors classes:

Well, there’s been times where I’ve been in [honors] classes with white kids, and I tried my best at times. When I do, the white girls, they’re always going in their own little clique, and look at the Mexi-

cans as if we were dumb or something. It just makes us feel bad.

These students’ experiences are compelling, particularly considering that they go to school in a self-proclaimed liberal context. However, they also reflect the reality of race in the United States. Racial categories emerged as “folk theories” between the 16th and 18th Centuries and became codified and standardized in the early 18th Century as a way for Europeans to justify slavery, genocide and colonialism (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Over time, stereotypes about African Americans’ lack of intelligence and

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***Such perceptions were reflected in peer dynamics in classrooms.***

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propensity for violence and criminal behavior developed to the point where they became status beliefs—widely shared cultural beliefs about members of social groups (Ridgeway & Erickson, 2000; p. 580). Knowing that these ideas are widely shared in the society, and influence social interaction at the conscious and subconscious level, is essential to understanding how race matters in our schools and classrooms today.

### **Behavioral Expectations**

We found that race also shaped how students were treated with regard to discipline at Riverview. Black students were more likely to be suspended at Riverview than their white counterparts—a pattern that is reflected in schools across the country. In 2009, black students made up 35% of the students in the high school but 70% of those who faced in-school suspension and 60% of those who were suspended outside of school. While this is obviously important, we were more interested in how students experienced the school’s discipline process on a daily basis because most students are never

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suspended but all students have their movement through the school regulated and their behavior scrutinized.

Here again, we found that race mattered within the discipline process. Teachers, students and administrators pointed out multiple ways that discipline practices were unequal. They reported a pattern in which black students were inherently suspect and their white classmates were treated as innocent. One example that came up repeatedly was differences in how freely students were able to move through the hallways during class periods. The Riverview discipline code states that, “Students who ... leave the room during the period must get a valid pass from the teacher or supervisor.... Students without a valid pass ... face school consequences.” However, members of the Riverview community felt that this rule was not applied fairly. As Samantha, a white student, stated:

I think security guards ... point out African Americans a lot more than like white. ... Like I’ll walk down the hall without a pass, and they’ll just let you go.” According to Tim, a white junior, “[Black kids] just get singled out. ... white kids have been trained more to get away with it. I don’t ... think there’s that much of a difference in actual degree of rule-breaking but ... white kids ... there’s always been an expectation that they’re not gonna do it.”

There were also ways that race and gender intersected to impact students’

experiences. The discipline code is very explicit regarding how students should dress: “Brief and revealing clothing is not appropriate in school. Examples include tank or halter tops, garments with spaghetti straps ... clothing that is ‘see-through,’ ... or exposes one’s midriff ... or skirts ... shorter than 3-inches above the knee.” However, one teacher discussed how race shaped the enforcement of this policy. “We had a policy that the girls couldn’t have their belly showing. All you saw walking in the hall [was] girls with their white bellies out. Black girls sent home. They [black girls] were pissed off.”

Tiffany, a junior, argued that the dress code is not enforced equally for black and white girls. “We’re not allowed to wear spaghetti straps. But you see a lot of white girls wearing spaghetti straps, halter tops, tube tops stuff that we [black girls] would get sent home for.” Tiffany argued that a number of her friends had been sent home for the clothes they wore to school and that security guards had disciplined her for her clothing as well. Here different stereotypes are likely at play—in particular the long history of reading of black females bodies as hyper-sexual while white female bodies are seen as innocent (Collins, 2000). In both ways, assumptions about white innocence—bodily and metaphorically—yield a payoff as their whiteness buys some students the benefit of the doubt and less scrutiny for both their dress and their behavior in the hallways.

Within the disciplinary domain, white parents (who had somewhat more resources than black and Latina/o parents) used those resources to influence how their children were treated. One student discussed how students were treated differently if they were caught in school with marijuana:

White kids get caught with pot all the time ... The school can’t be dealing with these folks’ parents, because their parents are going to start suing the school .... When

you get a black kid, and you suspend them for having pot, or you kick them out, what are the parents going to do? They don’t have the money, or they don’t know the resources. ... That’s why I think it continuously happens.

An administrator corroborated Julius’s take on this situation, discussing how white parents intervene in discipline procedures around drugs:

***There is a long history of whites’ efforts to monopolize educational access.***

I have had parents come in to appeal white students’ ...disciplinary actions. And rarely will they say, “my son didn’t do that or would not do that or my daughter would not.” Their issue is “how do we get it out of the record? Can we not call it that because we don’t want it to impact college admissions.” ... I’d say I hear it twenty times a year. A student got caught in possession of some marijuana. The parent never said to me, “he didn’t have it, he didn’t do it.” The parent argued that we call it possession and possession means you have it and you are...it’s yours to manipulate and to sell...” It was never his. He was just looking at it. It was in his hands. So that possession is not real possession.

Such interventions reflect a certain sense of entitlement, but also the ways in which parents use their privileged social position to ensure advantages for their children. This leads to the final lesson we learned from Riverview.

**Opportunity-Hoarding**

In addition to the low expectations and unfair discipline treatment that black and Latina/o students faced at Riverview, we also found one of the key reasons that change is so difficult—white parents. While most members of the Riverview community were middle-class, white parents had greater economic resources than black and Latin@ parents (see Table 1). White parents were thus able to use these greater resources to influence district policy.

While Riverview was a self-proclaimed racially progressive community, and many folks moved to the community because of its diversity, as we mentioned above, the high school was segregated at the classroom level by educational tracking. White parents recognized the segregated composition of their children’s classes—with white students having a virtual monopoly on higher-level classes—but they resisted efforts to change this pattern. We refer to this practice as opportunity-hoarding—the process through which dominant groups who have control

*(Please turn to page 16)*

**Table 1: Key Demographic Characteristics of the Riverview Community<sup>3</sup>**

	<i>Median Family income (1999 dollars)</i>	<i>Family living in owner-occupied housing (%)</i>	<i>Individuals below poverty line (%)</i>
white (non-Hispanic or Latino)	\$103,145	58.6	7.8
black (non-Hispanic or Latino)	\$46,422	44.1	13.9
Hispanic or Latino	\$55,729	37.8	14.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	\$63,438	24.1	14.3

over some good (e.g., education) regulate its circulation, thus preventing out-groups from having full access to it (Lewis & Diamond, 2015). There is a long history of whites' efforts to monopolize educational access and exclude others from it, from early laws barring black people from getting any education at all, to creating segregated and unequal educational institutions for black and Latina/o students.

The contemporary manifestation of opportunity-hoarding at Riverview seems much more benign but continues to undermine the educational opportunities of black and Latin@ students. White parents argued that the honors and AP classes were better than regular classes and advocated for their children to be in them even though this led to segregation and the monopolization of educational resources. One middle-class white mother argued that:

I think it's an excellent high school... especially for kids who are in ... the honors program... and AP classes... With our daughter who's now entering in the fall ... [after a debate about whether to send her to Riverview or private school], we told her that, "if you... can't get into [honors]...can't at-

tain the grades, you're out of [Riverview]."

At the same time, these parents also recognized that the school's educational tracks were racially segregated. As Timothy put it in discussing his children's classes, "Their honors and AP classes...there were not many kids who were Hispanic or African-American in those classes." Despite the recognition that tracking undermined diversity, the vast majority of the white parents we interviewed resisted changing this system. One parent put it this way:

***We also need white parents in integrated schools to recognize their role in perpetuating the achievement gap.***

I know there are parents who are great proponents of just "no leveling," but sorry, I don't want my kid to sit in a class of 30 and have it be a waste of their time. I just don't, you know. I've been there...I don't know what I would change, to be honest ...it's a pretty good institution. But...my children are all at the honors level.

In addition to the quality of the classes, there were additional advantages built into these tracked classes. On such advantage was weighted grades. For example, a student who takes a class for honors credit and receives a "B," which is typically a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, would instead get 3.5 points towards their overall GPA. If students take AP classes and take an AP exam, their grades are weighted one whole GPA point. Many administrators recognized that these grade weights contributed to achievement disparities (given the overall racial composition of the courses) but felt that because of parental pressures changes were not possible. Ms. Foster, for example, argued that "some changes [would be] just too much for the district to take," stating that she would "love to get away with the weighted grades...but I think people would just die."

Other administrators expressed frustration that when they tried to make changes that would address racial differences in educational opportunity, these efforts faced resistance from white parents. As one administrator told us,

I counted them at one point. [I attended] over 200 meetings of—with parents of kids ... to talk about the standards and the fact that we needed common standards for all kids, not different standards for different kids; and to reassure people that our high-end kids were not gonna—we're not—this was not about dummifying down the curriculum.

These parents were often able to pressure the school with threats that they would leave the district, and would encourage others like themselves to do the same, if their concerns with not addressed. Such actions shaped district actions in important ways.

## Conclusion

Our examination of race and education at Riverview revealed how past

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examinations have barked up the wrong tree (emphasizing oppositional culture where none exists), how societal beliefs about race shape daily interactions in schools, and how white parents use their greater resources to hoard educational opportunities for their children and exclude others. In order to effectively address these patterns, we need to take the impact of race seriously and acknowledge how it shapes students' everyday experiences in schools. This means that as teachers are trained, inducted and provided with professional learning op-

portunities, they need to interrogate how race can shape their own beliefs and practices and the organizational contexts in which they work in ways that exacerbate racial inequalities. We also need white parents in integrated schools to recognize their role in perpetuating the achievement gap and change their behaviors, and for school leaders to become more skilled at resisting these parents' efforts to hoard educational opportunity. □

<sup>1</sup> This article summarizes our book *Despite the Best Intentions: How Racial Inequality Thrives in Good Schools*. Several passages

and evidence used here also appear in that book and in our other writings on this subject.

<sup>2</sup> As others have argued, the "achievement gap" terminology tends to place the onus of school outcomes on the students without regard to the real opportunity gaps that exist for students from different racial backgrounds (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Carter & Welner, 2013). We use the term here because of its wide use in the literature and in the popular discourse.

<sup>3</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact Finder

## Resources

Most Resources are available directly from the issuing organization, either on their website (if given) or via other contact information listed. Materials published by PRRAC are available through our website: [www.prrac.org](http://www.prrac.org)

### Race/Racism

- **"The complex history of the Federal Housing Administration: Building wealth, promoting segregation, and rescuing the U.S. housing market and the economy"** A paper by J.H. Carr & K.B. Anacker. Published by the Banking & Financial Services Policy Report (2015). [www.thecyberhood.net/content/pages/featured\\_papers](http://www.thecyberhood.net/content/pages/featured_papers) [15015]
- **"Sustaining Racially Diverse Communities and Schools amid Metro Migrations: How Housing and Educational Policy Can Impede Re-segregation in Rapidly Changing Suburbs and Cities,"** by Amy Stuart Wells, is a new Policy Brief from the National Education Policy Center, available at [www.nepc.colorado.edu](http://www.nepc.colorado.edu)
- **"Does School Choice Affect Gentrification? Posing the Question and Assessing the Evidence"** Published by the Urban institute (Aug. 2015). [www.urban.org/](http://www.urban.org/) [15027]
- **"Fair Housing Disparate Impact Claims Based on the Use of Criminal and Eviction Records in Tenant Screening Policies"** A guide by Merf Ehman. Published by Columbia Legal Services. Sept. 2015. [www.columbia.legal.org/DisparateImpactManual2015.pdf](http://www.columbia.legal.org/DisparateImpactManual2015.pdf) [15017]
- **"Forward Through Ferguson: A Path Toward Racial Equity."** Published by St. Louis Positive Change, The Ferguson Commission (Oct. 2015). [forwardthroughferguson.org/](http://forwardthroughferguson.org/) [15026]

- **"Looming large in others' eyes: Racial stereotypes illuminate dual adaptations for representing threat versus prestige as physical size"** A study by Colin Holbrook, Daniel M. T. Fessler & Carlos David Navarrete. Published by *Evolution & Human Behavior* (June 2015). [www.ehbonline.org/](http://www.ehbonline.org/) [15006]
- ***Making Manna*** A book by Eric Lotke. [ericlotke.com/making-manna/](http://ericlotke.com/making-manna/) [15007]
- **"Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity"** published by The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (2015). [racialequityalliance.org/2015/10/30/racial-equity-toolkit/](http://racialequityalliance.org/2015/10/30/racial-equity-toolkit/) [15022]
- **"School Composition and the Black-White Achievement Gap"** published by the National Assessment of Educational Progress & National Center for Education Statistics. [nces.ed.gov/](http://nces.ed.gov/) [15028]
- **Treasury Comments on Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Race, Color, or National Origin in Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance** published by Poverty & Race Research Action Council (Sept. 10, 2015). [www.prrac.org/](http://www.prrac.org/) [15025]

### Criminal Justice

- **"Point of Entry The Preschool-to-Prison Pipeline"** Written by Maryam Adamu and Lauren Hogan, (Oct. 2015), published by the Center for American Progress. [cdn.americanprogress.org/](http://cdn.americanprogress.org/) [15013]
- **"Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration on Families"** A report by the Ella Baker Center for Human

Rights and Forward Together and Research Action Design. (Sept. 2015). [whopaysreport.org/who-pays-full-report/](http://whopaysreport.org/who-pays-full-report/) [15019]

## Economic/Community Development

- **The Just City Essays: Visions for Urban Equity, Inclusivity and Opportunity** A series of essays published by Next City, (Oct.19, 2015). <https://nextcity.org/features/view/just-city-essays-toni-griffin-theaster-gates-angela-glover-blackwell> [15002]

## Education

- **“Charters Without Borders: Using Inter-district Charter Schools as a Tool for Regional School Integration”** by Halley Potter, (Sept. 2015), published by The Century Foundation. [apps.tcf.org/charters-without-borders](http://apps.tcf.org/charters-without-borders) [15011]
- **“Does School Choice Affect Gentrification? Posing the Question and Assessing the Evidence”** Published by the Urban institute (Aug. 2015). [www.urban.org/](http://www.urban.org/) [15027]

## Families/Women/Children

- **“Creating Opportunity for Children: How Housing Location Can Make a Difference”** An article by Barbara Sard & Douglas Rice (Oct. 2015). Published by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. [www.cbpp.org/](http://www.cbpp.org/) [15044]
- **“Let Girls Be Girls: How Coercive Sexual Environments Affect Girls Who Live in Disadvantaged Communities and What We Can Do about It”** Publication by the Urban Institute. Written by Susan J. Popkin, Mary Bogle, Janine M. Zweig, Priya Saxena, Lina Breslaw & Molly Michie (Oct. 2015). [www.urban.org/](http://www.urban.org/) [15034]
- **“The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation”** A DVD produced by California Newsreel with Vital Pictures (2015). [www.raisingofamerica.org/](http://www.raisingofamerica.org/) [15003]
- **“Together from the Start: Expanding Early Childhood Investments for Middle-Class and Low-Income Families”** by Halley Potter & Julie Kashen, (Oct. 2015). Published by The Century Foundation [apps.tcf.org/together-from-the-start](http://apps.tcf.org/together-from-the-start) [15010]

## Health

- **Place Matters: A national initiative by the National Collaborative for Health Equity.** [nationalcollaborative.org/?q=node/37](http://nationalcollaborative.org/?q=node/37) [15016]

- **“Health Insurance Soars, But America’s Next Generation Still Lives in Families Struggling to Make Ends Meet”** Analysis and policy solutions published by the Center for Law and Social Policy. (Sept. 17, 2015). [www.clasp.org](http://www.clasp.org) [15018]

## Housing

- **“Gentrification, Displacement and the Role of Public Investment: A Literature Review”** Miriam Zuk, Ariel H. Bierbaum & Karen Chapple, Univ. of California, Berkeley; Karolina Gorska, Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, Paul Ong & Trevor Thomas, University of California, Los Angeles (Aug. 2015). Published by the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. [www.frbsf.org/](http://www.frbsf.org/) [15024]
  - **“Housing Agencies Restoring Vouchers — Let’s Finish the Job in 2016”** An article by Douglas Rice, published by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. (Oct. 2015). [www.cbpp.org/](http://www.cbpp.org/) [15004]
  - **Inclusive Communities Toolkit:** A new resource from the National Housing Conference (2015). [www.inclusivepolicy.org/](http://www.inclusivepolicy.org/) [15037]
  - **“Leveraging the Power of Place: Using Pay for Success to Support Housing Mobility”** a working paper by Dan Rinzler, Philip Tegeler, Mary Cunningham & Craig Pollack. Published by the Community Development Investment Center at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. [www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/wp2015-04.pdf](http://www.frbsf.org/community-development/files/wp2015-04.pdf) [15023]
  - **Regional Housing Initiative: Creating opportunity in Chicagoland—and around the nation** A Regional Housing Initiative by the Metropolitan Planning Council. [www.metroplanning.org/](http://www.metroplanning.org/) [15043]
  - **“Research Shows Housing Vouchers Reduce Hardship and Provide Platform for Long-Term Gains Among Children”** An article by Will Fischer, published by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Oct. 7, 2015). [www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/3-10-14hous.pdf/](http://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/3-10-14hous.pdf) [15005]
  - **“Fair Housing Disparate Impact Claims Based on the Use of Criminal and Eviction Records in Tenant Screening Policies”** A guide by Merf Ehman. Published by Columbia Legal Services. Sept. 2015. [www.columbialegal.org/DisparateImpactManual2015.pdf](http://www.columbialegal.org/DisparateImpactManual2015.pdf) [15017]
- ## International Human Rights and U.S. Civil Rights Policy
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# Poverty & Race Index, Vol. 24 (2015)

*This Index includes the major articles in the six 2015 issues of Poverty & Race (Vol. 24). The categories used frequently overlap, so a careful look at the entire Index is recommended. Each issue also contains an extensive Resources Section, not in the Index below, but available in database form for all previous 23 volumes. We can send an Index for any or all of the first 23 Volumes of P&R; please provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Most issues also contain a "PRRAC Update" column with recent news from/about the organization. Articles are on our website, [www.prrac.org](http://www.prrac.org).*

## Race/Racism

- "Breaking the Implicit Bias, Racial Anxieties & Stereotype Threat" – Jan./Feb.
- "Advancing School Integration: The National Coalition on School Diversity" – March/April
- "Integration: What We Know and What We Need to Do" – July/Aug.
- "Inter-District School Integration" – Sept./Oct.
- "Inclusive Communities Financial Tools" – Sept./Oct.
- "EmbraceRace: An Emerging Community of Support for Raising Kids in the Context of Race" – Nov./Dec.

## Education

- "Advancing School Integration: The National Coalition on School Diversity" – March/April
- "Pre-School Classroom Diversity" – May/June
- "School Sports Opportunities" – May/June
- "Regional HOME and Interdistrict School Integration: What We Know and What We Need to Do" – July/Aug.
- "Inter-District School Integration" – Sept./Oct.
- "City Garden Montessori School in St. Louis: A Story of Education Reform, Gentrification and Housing Advocacy" – Nov./Dec.
- "Inviting NYC Students onto the Scene of School Integration" – Nov./Dec.
- "School Integration and 'Neighborhood Schools': an Etymology" – Nov./Dec.

- "Next Generation Schools" – Nov./Dec.
- "New York City's School Diversity Accountability Act" – Nov./Dec.
- "Despite the Best Intentions: Making School Integration Work in Integrated Schools" – Nov./Dec.

## Housing

- "Regional HOME and Interdistrict School Integration: What We Know and What We Need to Do" – July/Aug.
- "Diverse Neighborhoods: The (mis)Match Between Attitudes and Actions" – Sept./Oct.
- "Reverse Selection: Landlords and the Softening of HCV" – Sept./Oct.
- "The Power of the Supreme Court's Decision in the Fair Housing Act Case *TDHCA v. ICP*" – Sept./Oct.
- "Mobility Works America" – Sept./Oct.

## Transportation

- "Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods" – May/June

## Miscellaneous

- "The Costs of Child Support" – March/April

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Integrated Schools is growing a grassroots movement of, by and for parents who are intentionally, joyfully and humbly enrolling their children in integrating schools. America's schools are arguably more segregated than before the Civil Rights Movement. Because school segregation is as much a story of failed public policy as it is of white &/or privileged families thwarting it, we believe that a cultural shift toward not only valuing but prioritizing integration is long overdue. We call in white &/or privileged families to consider the how the choices we make for our kids' schools affect them. Because the schools that working class children mostly go to are not doing well in the league tables, there's a lot of pressure on their teachers and heads to increase their league table position. That means they focus ruthlessly on reading, writing and arithmetic. Some children in these schools talked wistfully about hardly ever doing art, drama or dance: "These children come from families where their parents can't afford to pay for them to do those activities out of school. When Should You Integrate Technology? Perhaps the best answer to this question might be, whenever it helps. That might seem ridiculously simplistic but consider the alternative when it doesn't help. The complexity of integrating technology begs us to identify the positives and negatives, weigh those, and be sure we're focused on what's best for students. Admittedly most school Mission and Vision statements are enigmatic and ambiguous but they shouldn't be. 15. What will you do when this tech doesn't work? To use another famous quote, "The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry." Be prepared for the inevitability of tech glitches because we all know it's going to happen. Do you know the technology well enough to navigate through the glitches?