

WEEK

14

Education and School-Age Children



"The developing world is full of entrepreneurs and visionaries, who with access to education, equity and credit would play a key role in developing the economic situations in their countries." — Muhammad Yunus

More than 65 years after the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* declared racial segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional, studies show that public schools across the United States—including in Suffolk and Nassau County—are still incredibly divided by race. For example, even though Long Island's public school population has become more racially diverse at the aggregate, the number of intensely segregated school districts (meaning schools with 90-100% non-White students) has more than doubled in the last fifteen years.

Racial segregation in public schools occurs at three levels: within schools, between schools within a district, and among school districts. Such segregation at any of these levels results in disparate access to resources between White students and students of color, such as the number of AP and IB courses offered in a given school or school district or the ability of students of color to enroll in these courses not available currently at their school. Disparate access to resources then leads to disparities in academic outcomes among students by race, including higher graduation rates for predominantly White school districts or higher disciplinary rates for Black students.

Given the decades of housing discrimination that have caused racial inequities and racially segregated communities, school districts reflect the composition of their neighborhoods and become as racially segregated, if not more in some cases. This means that, even though it is illegal to explicitly use race in the designation of school attendance and/or district zones, race continues to shape these zones and the students in them.

Share your reflections and any resources that help further the discussion on today's topic on social media using the hashtag [#UWLIEquityChallenge](#)

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Because education segregation is a product of structural racism, especially in housing, we can't address one without addressing the other. Strengthening fair housing and rethinking about the big and small steps we can take to create a diverse student body in our classrooms, schools, and districts are great ways to move towards a more equitable education for students in our region.



ACTIVITY ONE

READ: [Breaking Borders: Students Discuss Long Island's Racial/Cultural Issues](#)



ACTIVITY TWO

WATCH: [How America's Public Schools Keep Kids in Poverty](#)

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