DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 259 430   EA 017 711

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TITLE   Private Schools and Black-White Segregation: Evidence
                from Two Big Cities.
INSTITUTION   Stanford Univ., Calif. Inst. for Research on
                Educational Finance and Governance.
SPONS AGENCY   National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO   IFG-P/NP-1
PUB DATE   Oct 84
GRANT   NIE-G-83-0003
NOTE   46p.; Paper prepared for the Conference Comparing
                Public and Private Schools (October 25-26, 1984).
AVAILABLE FROM Publication Sales, Institute for Research on
                Educational Finance and Governance, School of
                Education/CERAS Building, Stanford University,
                Stanford, CA 94305 ($2.00).
PUB TYPE   Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   Black Education; Black Students; *Catholic Schools;
                *Classroom Desegregation; *Educational Research;
                Elementary Secondary Education; Hispanic Americans;
                Neighborhood Schools; *Private Schools; Racial
                Integration; School Districts; *School Segregation;
                Tax Credits; Tuition; Urban Schools; White
                Students
IDENTIFIERS   Illinois (Chicago); Ohio (Cuyahoga County); *Public
                and Private Schools (Coleman et al)

ABSTRACT
        The public controversy surrounding recent government
proposals for supporting private schools through tuition tax credits
has prompted an interest in studying the impact of private schooling
on racial segregation in education. This report examines the degree
of black-white segregation in the Catholic schools in the Chicago and
Cleveland metropolitan areas with a view to finding out whether the
Catholic schools do or do not promote racial segregation. Elementary
schools were found to be highly segregated, but Catholic high schools
were less segregated than the public high schools were when
traditional nearest-school student assignments were used. The
accounting model used in the Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore study of
the issue was analyzed, and after an examination of both sides of the
argument, it is tentatively concluded that the accounting model
researchers were overly optimistic and that the data from the present
study gives little reason to believe with them that the impact of the
private schools is simply benign. At the same time there is
insufficient data to support what may be the more likely conclusion:
namely, that private schools further school segregation under certain
conditions and encourage integration under others. (AA)

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TWO BIG CITIES

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Abstract

The public controversy surrounding recent proposals to support
private schools through tuition tax credits has prompted an interest
in the impact of private schooling on racial segregation in education.
The first section of this paper examines the degree of black-white
segregation in the Catholic schools of two large metropolitan areas.
In the second part, the accounting model used by Coleman, Hoffer and
Kilgore to answer the question of whether the presence of private
schools competing with public schools has created more or less
segregation will be critically analyzed. The accounting model used to
measure the segregative impact of private schools appears to be in
error, and Catholic schools have created racial segregation in
American education.

The public controversy surrounding recent proposals to support private schools through tuition tax credits has prompted an interest in the impact of private schooling on racial segregation in education. Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore's report (1981) and book (1982) divide this issue into four questions:

1. Do private schools enroll more o. fewer minorit' students than do public schools?

2. Are the minorities presently attending private schools more racially segregated or integrated than minorities attending public schools?

3. Has the presence of private schools competing with public schools created more or less segregation?

4. If some form of private school subsidy were enacted, would the accelerated transfer of whites and minorities to private schools increase or decrease segregation. in education?

Using the 1980 data from the High School and Beyond survey of high school sophomores and seniors, they concluded that although minorities are underrepresented in private schools (question 1) they are also highly desegregated there (question 2). Using a simple accounting model, tney conclude that the presence of private schools in the United States has not increased the segregation of black students in American education (question 3). Question 4 requires an exercise in predictive modeling, and is hence the most dif-

ficult ; their answer is equivocal.

In the first section of this paper we will examine the degree of black-white segregation in the Catholic schools of two large metropolitan areas. In both areas, the elementary schools are highly segregated--as segregated as the public schools ever were. The Catholic high schools are less segregated than the public high schools were when traditional nearest-school student assignments were used. In the second part we will critically analyze the accounting model used by Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore to answer question 3. We conclude that the accounting model used to measure the segregative impact of private schools on the combined public + private system of schools is in error. It appears that Catholic schools, which are the majority of private schools in the U.S., have created racial segregation in American education. It is very difficult to predict how a subsidy for parents sending their children to private schools would affect racial segregation but there is no compelling reason to think that a subsidy would reverse the present pattern in which the transfer of students to private schools appears to have increased racial segregation.

Racial Segregation in Private Schools

Coleman, Hoffer, and Kilgore used data for 84 randomly sampled Catholic high schools and 27 randomly sampled non-Catholic high schools to compute indices of segregation. They find that segregation of Blacks from (non-Hispanic)

whites is lower in either group of private schools than it is in public schools. (In this paper, "whites" always means "Non-Hispanic whites".) For Hispanics, the pattern is muddier; they seem less segregated in Catholic schools, more segregated in other private schools.

The index they used is often called the "exposure index", Ebw, and is simply the mean, computed across all students of one race, of the percentage of their school which is made up of opposite-race students. If there were no internal segregation within high schools, the mean percentage of students who are black in the average white student's high school could be thought of as the probability that the student sitting next to any white student is black (with a parallel interpretation for the exposure of black students to whites). The index ranges from a low of 0 to a maximum of the percentage of students of the opposite race in the set of schools as a whole. (Under conditions of perfect racial integration, a school district which was 30% black would have each of its schools 30% black, and Ebw, the mean percentage of black students in the high schools attended by white students, would be .30. If the district was perfectly segregated, each white would be in a school with no blacks, and the mean percent black of the schools attended by whites would be 0.) The index can be standardized by dividing by the percentage of the entire universe of students which is of the opposite race, and subtracting this from 1.0. This yields an index which ranges from 0 when

schools all have the same racial compositions to 100 when they are totally segregated. The formula for the indices are

$$\text{unstandardized:} \quad E_{bw} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} W_i b_i}{\sum_{i=1}^{n} W_i}$$

$$\text{standardized:} \quad S_{bw} = 1 - \frac{E_{bw}}{b}$$

Where i = number of whites in the ith school, bi the percentage black of the ith school, and b the percentage black of the entire universe (usually a school district).

The indices can be used to measure the segregation of any two groups from each other -- for example, whites from non-whites, non-whites from whites, blacks from hispanics, blacks from whites, etc. Ewb, the percent white of the average black's school is not the same as Ebw, the percent black of the average white's s.... ., but when the index is standardized the indices of segregation of whites from blacks and of blacks from whites are identical: Sbw = Swb

Using the exposure index, Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore found that private high schools were less segregated than public high schools: the standardized indices measuring segregation of blacks from whites were public schools .49,

9

Catholic schools .31 and other private schools .21.[1]

Whites in private schools attend schools with a smaller proportion of black students than do whites in public schools; 7% of the average public school white student's classmates are black, compared to 4% for a white in a Catholic school and 2% for a white in an other private school), simply because there are fewer blacks in private schools: 14% of the students in public school are black, compared to 6% in Catholic schools and 3% in other private schools. Standardization controls for this, and the standardized index indicates that those blacks who are present in private schools are more evenly distributed across the schools than are blacks in public schools.

One criticism (Page and Keith, 1981) argued for an index which took the small number of blacks in private schools into consideration, and standardized the indices of white exposure to blacks, Ebw, of both public and private schools by using the percentage black of all U.S. high schools, both public and private. Since the percentage black is lower in private schools, private schools appear more segregated than public schools when this standardized index is used.

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[1] Taeuber and James (1982) note that of several indices available, this index, which they call the variance ratio index and we call the standardized exposure index, is most sensitive to the racial mix of the schools. They compute a dissimilarity index (discussed below) and find segregation levels of public and private schools to be more similar: public .70, private .63.

Whether one agrees with the criticism is a matter of values.
There is no particularly compelling reason for using either
standardized index; standardized indices are commonly used,
but only because it is appropriate for evaluating the degree
to which a school district deviates from a norm of all
schools having identical racial composition, a measure that
is useful in assessing the success of school desegregation
plans, or for analyzing factors associated with segregation
in particular school districts. In these cases the number
of students of each race is taken as given; but a private
school system's minority enrollment is not fixed by exoge-
nous factors. It can recruit more or accept fewer minori-
ties if it wishes. How should one evaluate a private school
system which desegregates its minority students, but has
very few? Using the unstandardized index, we find whites in
private schools have fewer Black schoolmates, and are in
that sense more segregated. Blacks have more white school-
mates in private schools and are in that sense less segre-
gated there. Which way to look at the problem is mostly a
matter of taste.

Sampling error is never an issue in single district
segregation studies, since the entire school district is
used, rather than a sample. But with a national sample con-
taining only 84 Catholic and 27 non-Catholic private
schools, we should be wary of sampling error. In the report
version Coleman, Hoffer, Kilgore, (1981) suggest that
the high index of segregation for Hispanics in non-Catholic

11

schools may be due to sampling error, and note that 64 percent of the Hispanics in non-Catholic private schools are in a single school. It may well be that a larger sample would show something different. But this is, of course, also possible for the sample of Blacks in non-Catholic schools or the samples of Blacks and Hispanics in Catholic schools. Sampling-error statistics are not presented for the segregation indices, so it is impossible to say what the confidence interval around each of these figures is. However it may well be very high. If the sample of Catholic schools had contained two all-black schools instead of the one that appears to be in the sample, the index of segregation for Catholic schools would increase by approximately .10. Sampling error affects not only the segregation indices but estimates of the number of minority students in private schools. If it is a sampling fluke that caused 64 percent of all the Hispanic students in non-Catholic private schools to be in a single predominantly Hispanic school, then that same sampling fluke may have given us an extremely high mis-estimate of the total number of HIspanics located in non-Catholic private schools.

Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore's analysis of school segregation is unusual in another way; the indices are computed for the entire nation rather than for particular school districts. In all previous research, segregation indices have been computed separately for individual school districts and not for very large units, such as the entire United States.

12

One problem with a national segregation index is that it is
impossible to separate the index into that amount contri-
buted by segregative policies and practices in individual
school systems and the amount of segregation which arises
because Blacks and whites are distributed differently across
regions and city types. If many Blacks live in New York
City and very few live in the Pacific Northwest, a high
segregation index will arise regardless of local public
school desegregation policies. Similarly, if private
schools tend to be concentrated in areas which range widely
in their racial mix, the index would have a very large value
even if the private schools in each area worked hard to
desegregate. Conversely, if the areas where private high
schools are located tend to be more homogeneous in racial
mix than the United States as a whole, then it would be pos-
sible for a lower segregation index to exist without private
schools exerting much effort to desegregate

The segregation of private schools in individual communi-
ties is of scholarly interest because private schools nor-
mally use a different geographic attendence rule than do
public schools. Public schools almost always assign stu-
dents on the basis of geography; a student at a certain
address must attend a certain school. Normally a school
draws all its students from a single geographic zone sur-
rounding the school. This is sometimes called "nearest
school" or "neighborhood school" assignment, even though
attendence zones are normally drawn to accomodate school

needs and student safety, not to conform to natural urban neighborhoods, and do not send all students to their nearest school.

In desegregated school districts, schools also have a geographic assignment policy, but often with two non-adjacent geographic zones, one in a minority neighborhood and the other in a majority neighborhood, sending students to the same school. Recently school districts have begun experimenting with voluntary desegregation plans in which students are allowed to attend schools without geographic restriction. In contrast, Catholic high schools almost always have no geographic restrictions; schools select students on other criteria, not according to where they live. What impact does this have on racial segregation?.

Are private school systems more or less segregated than public systems? We are unlikely to find the definitive answer to this question soon. No doubt the degree of racial segregation in private school systems will vary with the size and the racial and religious mix of the community being served, the school assignement policies used by the private school systems, and the school assignment policy used by the public schools with which the private schools compete for students.

The Data for Two Large Cities

While data on the racial composition of some private

schools are available, they are not assembled into a single
compendium as is the case with data on public schools in the
United States.<1> However, we have obtained data from two
large Northern metropolitan places: Chicago and Cuyahoga
County (Cleveland).<2> Table 1 presents the data for these
school districts. For comparison purposes we have also
included the data on level of segregation for the public
schools. Table 1 analyzes only data for desegregation of
Blacks from non-Hispanic whites. Introducing Hispanics and
other minorities into the computation complicates the prob-
lem greatly, because in some cities Hispanics are racially
segregated residentially much more than in other cases; in
some cities they disproportionately use private schools. In
general, the segregation of whites from all other minorities
is considerably lower than the segregation of whites from
Blacks only (see Farley, 1981). We used 1968 data for the
public schools in order to be certain that we were calculat-
ing indices for the schools when they adhered to a strict
"nearest-school" policy. Beginning in the early 1970s both

<1> Since 1967, the United States Government has recently
published on computer files and bound volumes the racial
composition of all schools in all but the smallest school
districts. The first of these was "Directory of Public
Schools in the United States with enrollment and staff by
race, 1967: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S.
Government Printing Office, 1969. Volumes are readily avai-
lable only for even numbered years after that.
<2>The data for Chicago was provided by Joe T. Darden, Urban
Affairs Programs, Michigan State University; the data for
Cleveland were provided by Richard Obermanns of the Cuyohoga
Plan of Cleveland, a group concerned with housing segrega-
tion issues.

Table 1: Segregation in Public and Private
School Systems in Two Large Metropolitan Areas

	Chicago		Cleveland	
	Public	Catholic	Public	Catholic
	1968	1981	1968	1981
Elementary:				
Total Enrollment	437,343	81,988	119,119	41,966
% black	55.3%	27.9%	58.2%	10%
% other minority	10.1%	19.9%	1.6%	3.8%
B-w dissimilarity index, d	94	94	90	90
% black of average whites school, E_{bw}	6.0%	3.9%	8.6	2.1%
Standardized index, Sbw	.90	.92	.86	.79
% of all black students who are in schools less than 50% black	2.3%	4.9%	.8%	16.8%
% of wll white students who are in schools less than 50% white	4.4%	1.5%	5.5%	0.6%
High School:				
Total Enrollment	136,719	33,880	35,627	--
% black	46.0%	16.9%	47.0%	9.1%
% other minority	7.2%	13.4%	1.7%	2.4%
B-w dissimilarity index, d	80	73	87	65
% black of average whites' school: E_{bw}	14.0%	7.2%	9.1%	7.4%
Standardized index, S_{bw}	.72	63	81	19
% of all blacks who are in schools less than 50% black	9.5%	31%	7.6%	100%
% of all whites who are in schools less than 50% white	9.2%	1.9%	5%	0%

public school districts allowed at least small amounts of desegregation to occur, and Cleveland now has an extensive desegregation plan in place.

The table uses three indices of desegregation. Table 1 shows the exposure index Ebw (the percentage Black of the average white's school), and the standardized index, Sbw. It also shows the other commonly used index, the index of dissimilarity, which is based upon the sum across all schools of the difference (in absolute numbers) between the number of whites and the number of Blacks in each school building. Specifically the formula is ...

$$D_{bw} = 100 \, \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \left| \frac{B_i}{B} - \frac{W_i}{W} \right|}{2}$$

Where Bi and Wi are the number of Blacks and whites in the ith school and B and W the number of Blacks and whites in the total district.

The dissimilarity index ranges from 0 (perfect desegregation) to 100, (meaning perfect segregation). The dissimilarity index can be interpreted as the percentage of students of either race who would have to be relocated in order that every school in the district have the same racial mix. Both indices are calculated using only the whites and blacks in the school. Hispanics and other minority students are removed from the computation entirely; a school with 2 blacks, 3 whites and a hundred members of other minority

17

groups is treated as a school whose total enrollment is only 5 students. We think this is the simplest way to compare segregation of whites from blacks, since other minority groups often serve as a kind of buffer group which is more integrated with both Blacks and whites than Blacks and whites are with each other. Thus the more non-black minorities present, the higher the apparent amount of integration of (non-Hispanic) whites with others and the higher the integration of Blacks with non-blacks, even though whites and Blacks may remain highly segregated from each other.

Table 1 shows that the two Catholic school systems differ from their counterpart public systems and also from each other. Both systems are smaller than the public schools, have proportionately fewer Blacks but more non-black minorities. The dissimilarity index shows the elementary schools highly segregated. The Chicago public schools in 1968 were as highly segregated as any system in the North. It and other highly segregated public schools have all desegre_ 1 to at least a small degree; this means that the Chicago Archdiocese may be the most segregated elementary school system, public or private, in the U.S.. Cleveland's public and Catholic elementary schools are also highly segregated, their dissimilarity indices both being .90. It is not surprising that Chicago and Cleveland have similar levels of segregation; the cities were demographically quite similar until the recent wave of Hispanic immigrants came to Chicago but not Cleveland.

The exposure indices show the same pattern. In Chicago Catholic schools, the average white child is in an elementary school which is only 3.9% black; for Cleveland the figure is 2.1%. The standardized index for Cleveland is only .79 because the Cleveland Catholic schools are only 10% black.

The last two rows of the top panel indicate the extent of segregation in another way; they show that in Chicago Catholic schools, only 4.9% of Black students are in predominantly white schools and only 1.5% of whites are in predominantly Black schools. In 1968 the Chicago public schools had fewer Blacks in predominantly white schools (2.3%) and more whites in predominantly Black schools (4.4%). This partly reflects the fact that the public schools had fewer predominantly white schools and more predominantly Black ones; but it also reflects the rigid geographic school assignment policies then in use in the public schools, wherein Black students were not allowed to transfer to predominantly white schools but white students were also not allowed to flee from predominantly Black schools. The pattern in Cleveland's Catholic schools is the same but more pronounced; 16.8% of Blacks but only .6% of whites are in schools where they are in the minority.

Catholic high schools are less segregated than public schools. Both the dissimilarity and exposure indices show this. The last two lines of the table show why this is

19

true. In Chicago, 31% of all blacks in Catholic high
schools are in predominantly white schools. Older than ele-
mentary school students, high school students are apparently
more willing to embark on long bus rides to get to a school
in a white area. Only 1.9% of whites in Chicago Catholic
schools go to predominantly Black high schools, The data
for Cleveland are more striking because all 18 Catholic high
schools in Cuyohoga County are predominantly white. This
yields an extraordinarily low standardized exposure index.
The dissimilarity index is rather high, because this index
is sensitive to a maldistribution of Blacks within these
schools; blacks are concentrated in 9 of the 18 schools,
although there are not enough Blacks to make a majority in
any of these schools.

One would have expected the Catholic elementary schools
to show less segregation than the public schools because the
absolute number of Black students enrolled is smaller. In
cities with a high level of residential segregation, the
amount of desegregation which occurs under a neighborhood
school policy is basically a function of the relative size
of the boundary zone between Blacks and whites (where inte-
grated neighborhood schools might appear) compared to the
size of the Black residential area. At the extreme, if the
Black population is not large enough to fill one public ele-
mentary school, the public school serving this area under a
neighborhood school policy would necessarily have to have an

FIGURE 1: LEVEL OF SEGREGATION
BY NUMBER OF BLACK STUDENTS IN DISTRICT,
FOR 72 CITIES USING NEAREST-SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT
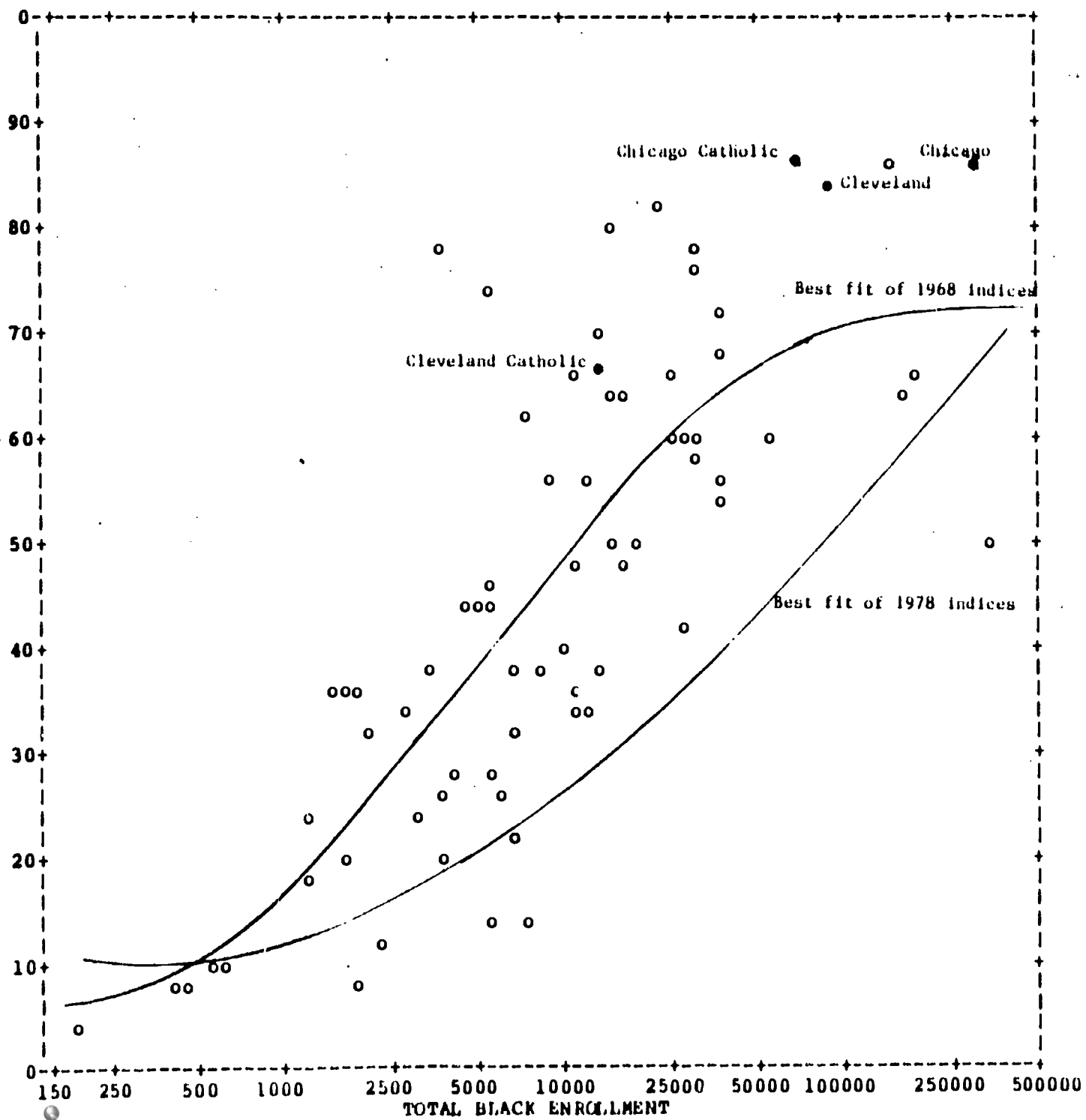
attendance zone large enough to include some whites and
result in the school being integrated. At the other extreme
where there are very large Black residential areas, as is
the case of these cities, the number of Black students liv-
ing on the boundary of the Black residential area and thus
likely to attend integrated schools with whites under a
neighborhood school policy is small relative to the total
Black school age population. If Catholic schools serve a
small black population they can only do so by providing ele-
mentary schools which serve extremely large areas; even
with a large black residential area, if attendance in
Catholic schools occurs with relatively low density, then
the areas served by each Catholic elementary school might be
very large and could easily go outside the Black residential
area to include whites as well. Figure 1 shows the data
from public schools supporting the hypothesis that districts
with small Black populations are less segregated. In that
figure we have plotted the 1968 exposure indices (for ele-
mentary and secondary schools combined) for the 72 largest
northern public school districts plotted against the
(natural log of) total black enrollment in the school dis-
tricts. Generally, the fewer blacks in a district, the
lower the level of segregation in 1968, when nearly all
these public school systems used a simple neighborhood
school policy. We have shown this by fitting an s-shaped
curve to the 1968 data. An s-curve is appropriate since
there are both floor and ceiling effects in the standardized

22

exposure index. We have identified the Chicago and
Cleveland public schools in the figure; they both show very
high levels of segregation. We have also shown, in the
upper center and upper right, the data points for the
Catholic schools of Chicago and Cleveland. The Catholic
systems, with smaller black enrollments seem inexplicably
segregated. Perhaps this model of segregation as a function
of Black enrollment is not applicable to private school sys-
tems, but it does intuitively seem there should be less
segregation in a school system with fewer minorities. The
relatively low level of high school segregation is more than
offset by the high level of elementary school segregation in
the two Catholic school systems; it looks like these
Catholic systems have more segregation than would appear in
a typical public school system using a neighborhood school
policy. Such a neighborhood school assignment policy has,
with few exceptions, been judged illegal in nearly every
city. Taeuber and James (1982) show data indicating
Boston's Catholic schools much more segregated than the
court-desegregated Boston public schools.

We also see in Figure 1 that public districts are likely
to have reduced their level of segregation in the decade
from 1968 to 1978. A second curve has been drawn to show
the relationship of Black population size to the 1978 stand-
ardized exposure index and this curve is much lower for dis-
tricts with few Black students.

The 1978 curve is furthest below the 1968 curve in the middle of the figure; districts in the left region would benefit little from desegregation since their indexes were already low in 1968, while districts with very large Black populations are unlikely to desegregate.

One explanation for the high level of elementary school segregation in these Catholic elementary schools and the much lower level of segregation at the high school level is that both Catholic school districts do not use a neighborhood attendance boundary system. Most public schools in the era before desegregation assigned students to their nearest school under a strict geographic rule--exceptions were made on a case-by-case basis but generally discouraged. Private school systems typically do not use these kinds of attendance boundary rules. At the high school level this results in a decrease in segregation to the extent that Black students are willing to travel (sometimes long) distances in order to attend predominantly white high schools. For example, in Chicago there are twelve Catholic high schools where Blacks outnumber whites; but 1746 Blacks chose not to attend them, instead traveling to one of 30 predominantly white high schools; there are only two high schools in the Chicago city limits which do not enroll any Blacks at all.

However, an unrestricted free choice system works to further segregation in an important way. Just as Blacks are

free to travel to predominantly white schools, so are whites
free to avoid predominantly Black schools. In Cleveland
only 226 of Cleveland's 36000 non-Hispanic white elementary
parochial school students attend predominantly Black
schools. By comparison, there were nearly 7000 whites in
predominantly Black public schools. At the elementary
school level, parents are much less willing to have their
children travel long distances and this is reflected in a
much higher level of segregation there. In Chicago there
are 95 Catholic elementary schools which are predominantly
white and enroll fewer than 10 Black students--most of them
having none. At the same time, freedom of choice does mean
that whites are free to avoid predominantly Black schools,
and they do. Thus the free enrollment policy of the
Catholic schools seems to result in a pattern where there is
less segregation at the high school level than there would
be under a standard "neighborhood" policy of assigning stu-
dents on the basis of home residence to a nearer school; but
at the same time there appears to be more segregation at the
elementary school level than would result from a neighbor-
hood school plan.

Private schools are not permitted to discriminate in
their pupil-assignment policy, but, there has never been an
effort to require parochial school systems to adhere to the
desegregation policies which are normally required of public
school systems. Certainly no public school system as large
as either of these private school systems and with as small

25

a number of Black students could expect to avoid being
required to desegregate by a court.

The degree of segregation by race in private schools
should vary greatly from one city to another across the
United States. We see that in these data in the difference
between Cleveland and Chicago. Cleveland, for whatever rea-
son, does not have a predominantly Black high school. Con-
sequently, its level of segregation in its high schools is
much lower. By extension, we should expect to find a large
number of cities where the public schools have predominantly
Black public schools and there is no predominantly Black
parochial elementary or high school. This leads us to pred-
ict that there are certain cities in the U.S. where the
Catholic schools may be less segregated than the public
scools. This might occur in some cities which have rela-
tively small total pupil enrollments and large proportions
of Black students in schools. East Chicago, Gary, Oakland,
Trenton, Newark and Hartford are examples of cities which
might fit this description. All of them are relatively
small but have such a large Black proportion of the schools
that their schools are highly segregated and it may be that
one or more of these cities has parochial schools which are
less segregated than the public schools.

Table 2 shows the degree of segregation of Hispanics from
non-Hispanic whites in Chicago and Cleveland. Table 2 has
the same format as Table 1, but we do not show 1968 public

Table 2: Hispanic Segregation
in Chicago and Cuyahoga County
Catholic Schools

	Chicago	Cuyahoga County
Elementary Schools:		
Dissimilarity Index	68%	60%
% Hispanic of Schools attended by average non-Hispanic whites	11 9%	2.3%
Standardized Exposure Index	49	14
% Hispanics in Predominently non-Hispanic White Schools	43.7%	100%
% of non-Hispanic Whites in predominantly Hispanic Schools	3.9%	0%
High Schools:		
Dissimilarity Index	44	38
% Hispanic of Schools attended by average non-Hispanic Whites	11.1	1.6
Standardized exposure Index	26	3
% Hispanics who attend Predominantly non-Hispanic White Schools	72.0%	100
% non-Hispanic Whites Who attend Predominantly Hispanic Schools	1.3%	0%

school data for comparison, since much migration of Hispan-
ics to these cities occurred after 1968. The segregation
levels in both cities are high at the elementary level,
lower for high schools. For comparison, Farley (1981) com-
putes for Chicago a combined elementary and high school His-
panic vs. non-Hispanic white dissimilarity index of 65 and a
standardized exposure index of 50 for 1978.

White Flight to Private Schools

Private schools can also affect the amount of racial
segregation in education by providing havens for whites
fleeing from desegregated schools. If whites transfer from
schools which have larger numbers of Blacks to schools with
fewer blacks, the amount of segregation will increase.

Discussions of white flight to private schools have usu-
ally been concerned with flight from newly desegregated
public school systems. There seems to be a general consen-
sus that white flight does occur in many cases when public
schools are desegregated. White flight is especially likely
to occur when whites are reassigned from their own neighbor-
hood school, and when the school's that they are assigned to
have large Black populations or are in Black neighborhoods
(Rossell, 1983. In one analysis of the Boston school
desegregation plan, Rossell and Ross (1979) concluded that
over half of the flight from public schools by whites after
desegregation was to private schools. The Appendix of their
report lists a number of parochial and other private schools

whose enrollment increased markedly after desegregation;
the types of schools range widely, seeming to include all
types of private schools. In a second analysis of Boston,
Taylor and Stinchecomb (1977) found that the families who
moved from Boston were more tolerant of school desegregation
than the white families who remained behind, suggesting that
most of the families who moved to the suburbs were the
young, well educated, upwardly mobile families who would
have still moved to the suburbs if there had been no
desegregation plan. This supports the idea that much
racially motivated change in enrollment came about because
of movement to private schools, not residential relocation.
Orfield (1978) draws the same conclusion in analyzing the
early stages of the Los Angeles desegregation plan--he found
no softening of the central city housing market but a con-
siderable effort under.ay to establish new private schools.
Another case which provides evidence that private schools
are used to escape desegregation comes from Jacksonville
where Giles (1977) finds a drop in white enrollment for
those particular grades where white students are reassigned
to schools in Black neighborhoods. In the Jacksonville plan
this only occurs in certain middle school grades. For those
grades the white enrollment is considerably lower than it is
for the grades before and after that. This again suggests
that private schools are used, since families who moved out
of the school district would be lost permanently and there
would be no increase in public school attendance among

29

whites in the upper grades (the school district in this case
covers the entire quite large Duval County; it would be
quite inconvenient for families who work in the Jacksonville
area to move beyond the county boundaries to escape desegre-
gation).

None of these studies provide us with a reasonable esti-
mate of how much movement to private schools has occurred
because of desegregation nationally. Boston is probably not
typical of other cities; nearly a third of Boston's whites
attended private schools before desegregation began; less
than a dozen large cities in the United States had a higher
proportion of their white population in private school
(Becker, 1978). Boston schools also experienced more con-
troversy and violence than nearly any other city involved in
desegregation. Thus it seems safe to conclude that there is
a considerable amount of flight from newly desegregated
public schools to private schools in a number of different
school districts, but there is no data to permit us to esti-
mate what proportion of all white flight is to private
schools or the total number of students who moved from
public to private schools because of desegregation.

There is also racially-motivated white flight from segre-
gated school systems as well. Jf, as Rossell argues, whites
flee the public schools to avoid having their children
attend predominantly Black schools, then in many cities with
segregated schools there will be flight from the schools in

changing neighborhoods where the public school is
predominantly Black under a neighborhood school policy.
Becker (1978) analyzes growth in private school enrollment
for the decade of the 1960s, when there was almost no
desegregation of Northern school districts. He found that
the larger the Black enrollment in the public schools, the
larger the growth of the private schools serving that city.
This is in fact the single best predicter in his multiple
regression equation estimating growth in private school
enrollment from a number of demographic factors.

Of the 52 largest cities studied, the city with the
largest increase in the percentage of white students in pri-
vate school was Washington, DC: 37% of its whites were in
private school in 1959 and 46% in 1969.

Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore construct an accounting model
which leads them to conclude that the existence of private
schools does not increase racial segregation in American
education. However, their model is based on an erroneous
assumption and it seems likely that the conclusion of the
model is wrong. However, their model does provide a useful
framework with which to analyze the issues. They argue that
one can analyze the role of private schools by asking a
question, "What would happen if all private schools were
closed and the students presently enrolled in them were
returned to public schools?" If private schools have had a

31

Table 3: Application of the Coleman-Hoffer-Kilgore
Accounting Model to the Chicago Public High Schools

Percent Racial Mix* % High School	Number of School	Before Closing Catholic Schools		After Closing Catholic Schools	
		Number of Whites	Number of Blacks	Increase in Number of Whites (7.6%)	Increase in Number of Blacks (2.6%)
0-5% black	20	31380	306	2385	8
5-20% black	12	19050	2472	1448	64
20-50% black	7	6602	3233	502	84
50-80% black	10	6624	11917	503	310
80-95% black	0	0	0	0	0
95-100% black	23	280	45007	21	1170
TOTAL	72	63936	63005	4859	1636
white + black total		126,941		6495	

*Non-black minorities excluded.

segregating influence in America, then closing them and reassigning all the students to public schools should result in a lower index of segregation. They conduct a "thought experiment" which does exactly this, and conclude that if private schools were closed the public schools would be no more racially integrated than the present mix of public and private schools are--hence the private schools do not have a segregating influence. Unfortunately, there is a serious error in their hypothetical model.<3> They assume that when private schools are closed, the white and Black students in them will be dispersed into the existing public school system, with each public school gaining an increase in white and Black enrollment proportional to its present white and Black enrollment. (E.g., Each school would increase its 10th grade white enrollment by 7.6% of its present white enrollment, and increase its Black enrollment by 2.6% of its present Black enrollment. Such a model may seem reasonable at first glance, but a hypothetical example, using Chicago's 1968 public high school data, shown in Table 3, immediately reveals the problem. The students should be returned to the schools that they would attend if the private schools did not exist. Yet this model assumes that all white schools gain a 7.6% enrollment, and this means that students left these public schools or chose not to attend them in a manner which is completely uncorrelated with the racial composition

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<3> This argument has also been presented by Taeuber (1982) and Crain (1981)

33

of the schools. This means, first, that only 4859 whites
would be sent to these schools, even though there were
23,634 whites enrolled in Catholic schools in 1980. Second,
it means that nearly all whites in Catholic schools are
assumed to live in areas served by predominantly white
schools; for example, that only 21 Catholic school whites
lived in areas served by Chicago's 23 high schools which
were 95% or more black. This runs exactly contrary to all
the research on white flight, which indicates that whites
are more likely to withdraw to attend private schools if
they are assigned to schools with large numbers of Black
students. In other words, this model assumes that there was
no "white flight" from public schools to private schools
because of race. Of course, if there were no white flight
for racial reasons, then there is no reason to assume that
the movement from public schools to private schools created
segregation. We do not know the extent of white flight.
Perhaps in the larger scheme of things the white flight in
Boston, Los Angeles and Jacksonville is a negligible drop in
the bucket, and the Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore model is a
sensible approximation of the real world. But we do not
know this and there is certainly no reason to assume some-
thing which runs directly contrary to the existing evidence.

The other problem with the model is that it is based
exclusively on high school data. If Cleveland and Chicago
are representative of other cities, then there is a good
deal more segregation at the elementary level in private

34

schools than at the high school level. Much of the movement
in those cities from public schools to private schools con-
sisted of Blacks leaving segregated public schools to attend
segregated private schools, and whites leaving a mixture of
segregated and integrated schools to attend schools which
are overwhelmingly white.

The Other Side of the Argument: What Private Schools May Be
Doing To Help Desegregation.

The role of private schools in racial segregation in
American education is not simply one-sided. There are three
ways in which private schools may work to help integrate
American schools or at least help integrate the neighbor-
hoods these schools serve. First, Rossell (1983) has shown
that the white flight which occurs after desegregation tends
to be of limited duration. By approximately the fourth year
of a desegregation plan the rate of white loss is, according
to some models, actually less than would have occurred had
there been no desegregation. We suspect that one of the
reasons for this is that many families withdraw their chil-
dren not by moving to the suburbs but by entering them in
private schools while remaining in the city. These families
are likely to return their children to public schools after
they have witnessed a few years of desegregation. Had there
been no private schools at least some of these families
would have moved to the suburbs, and in doing so would have
made it impossible for their children to later return to the

desegregated public schools of the central city. If whites
must flee from desegregation it is clearly preferable for
them to remain in the city sending their children to private
schools than for them to move to the suburbs. (At the same
time, we should note that many families would leave their
children in the public school and not move to the suburbs if
no private schools existed.)

The same argument applies to white flight from segregated
systems. In segregated school systems it is often the case
that a changing neighborhood is served by an all-black ele-
mentary school long before the neighborhood itself loses its
last white family. This is not because blacks have larger
families than whites, but because the whites in older chang-
ing neighborhoods are often themselves older, with children
who have finished school. Thus a number of homes occupied
by whites will have relatively few children of school age,
and some of those will have have always attended parochial
schools for non-racial reasons. In contrast Black families
moving into the area often move there in order to locate a
good public school for their children. For this reason a
neighborhood may be racially mixed but have a school which
is overwhelmingly Black and hence unacceptable to many white
families. In this situation a private school alternative
may enable some families to remain living in their inte-
grated neighborhood rather than moving out and hurrying the
process of "tipping".

It is however possible for public schools to provide the same sort of opportunity. In some urban areas, racially balanced magnet schools serve as alternatives to the neighborhood school for white families in integrated neighborhoods where the local school is overwhelmingly black. Of course a segregated school system can stabilize integrated neighborhoods by adopting a full-blown desegregation plan which guarantees that residents of neighborhoods in transition will be served by an integrated public school for the indefinite future. Cities whose public school systems are desegregated do find their integrated neighborhoods considerably more stable and are experiencing a growth in residential integration as a result. (See Pearce, Crain, and Farley, 1984, and Pearce, 1980.) In the absence of public school desegregation, a private school system may serve to slow neighborhood change by providing a "haven" for white school children whose parents would move out otherwise.

It is also the case that sometimes a predominantly private school system provides an opportunity for voluntary integration for some Black students. In cities like Chicago and Cleveland, the Catholic school system serves as a last resort for families concerned about what they see as low quality of education and serious discipline problems in inner city public schools. If there were no private schools there would be more whites in the public schools in Chicago, but the Chicago public schools still might not be racially desegregated. Many Black students would be trapped in inner

37

city public schools without a reasonable alternative.
Whether the transfer of minority students from public
schools to private schools creates desegregation for them or
not depends of course on whether the private school systems
are segregated. In the two large cities we have studied,
where private elementary school systems are highly segre-
gated there is not much chance that a minority student
enrolling in private school will be attending a desegregated
school. At the high school level in Cleveland, where there
are no predominantly black or predominantly Hispanic high
schools, minorities in private schools will be desegregated.
For cities like Hartford, whose public schools are segre-
gated but have no predominantly Black Catholic elementary
school, the presence of Parochial schools can play either a
segregating or a desegregating roll, depending on whether
the number of Blacks entering the private school system is
larger or smaller than the number of whites using the pri-
vate school system to escape attending integrated schools in
Hartford.

The public schools in large cities with large Black
school enrollments can provide an alternative to segregated
education for these students; in the St. Louis metropolitan
area a large number of Black students assigned to segregated
schools in St. Louis City are taking advantage of the oppor-
tunity to transfer to white suburban public schools under a
Federal court order. Milwaukee and Indianapolis are two
other cities where inner city black students are permitted

38

to attend suburban schools. In Cleveland and Chicago a very large number of segregated Black students could be desegregated if they were allowed to attend suburban school systems. Unfortunately these cities do not permit transfer across district lines.

Private schools are a two-edged sword, encouraging racial integration of the public schools and of central city neighborhoods (and providing desegregated education for some Black students) at the same time that they serve as havens for white flight which destabilizes both segregated and desegregated central city school systems and creates segregated public schools. We do not have all of the data necessary to make a balancing of these competing processes, although the data we have presented thus far seem to indicate that the parochial schools cause more segregation than they prevent.

The Educational Effects of Attending Desegregated Private Schools

Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore and also Greeley (1982) talk about the educational benefits of parochial schools to minority students. Both refer to the idea that the parochial school is a "common school," better able to serve the needs of a wide range of students than is the public school system. Greeley makes this argument explicit, saying that the Catholic schools have had a tradition of educating immigrants entering the United States and therefore are

almost instinctively oriented toward providing avenues for upward mobility of persons not yet in the mainstream of the society. It is clearly the case that the Black students in private schools in the High School and Beyond sample score much higher on standard achievement tests than do Blacks attending public school. There is no way, however, to be sure that the common school hypothesis is correct. There are two alternative arguments. First is that private schools are highly selective and only admit brighter minority students; the second argument is that private schools are educationally superior for minority students than are public schools because they are in many cases racially integrated. Research on public schools has indicated that Black students attending desegregated public schools score higher on achievement tests as a result of that desegregation. In Cleveland and Chicago black students who transfer from public schools to private schools are not very likely to receive a deseegregated education, at least at the elementary school level, so we don't think that there is much chance of an educational benefit being derived because of desegregation in these cities. No doubt there are a large number of smaller cities where Black students can leave segregated inner city schools to attend predominantly white Catholic schools, and here there would be good reason to expect their education to improve because of desegregation.

A recent review of the literature on desegregation and minority achievement seems to yield convincing evidence that

minority students in desegregated schools score higher on
standard achievement tests than they would if they were in
segregated schools. Previous research had been inconclusive
on this, but the latest review (Crain and Mahard, 1983)
identifies a factor which explains reasonably well why pre-
vious research often found conflicting results. Most stu-
dies of desegregation analyze the test scores of Black stu-
dents who attended segregated schools through second or
third grade and then transferred to desegregated schools and
were tested shortly thereafter. In fact, this is a very
unrepresentative situation, since nearly all desegregation
plans in the United States begin in kindergarten and first
grade and nearly all the desegregatd students in upper ele-
mentary school would have attended desegregated schools
throughout their educational career. (The reason why there
are so many studies done of students who have transferred
from segregatd to desegregated schools is because so many
studies are done during the first year or two of desegrega-
tion, and researchers do not attempt to study the achieve-
ment of students in first and second grade because tests
administered to students in the upper elementary grades are
more reliable).

The Crain and Mahard review identified 23 studies that
compared students who had been desegregated from first grade
to Black students in segregated schools or to Black students
in the same grade in the same school district before
desegregation. The authors of these studies analyzed 45

41

samples of students involved in 19 desegregation plans. Of
the 45 studies, 40 show positive effects and for those for
which a size of effect could be estimated, desegregation
appeared to raise achievement by a quarter of a standard
deviation--the equivalent of 25 points on the SAT verbal or
quantitative score.<3>

Thus in some cities a private school system provides an
opportunity for desegregation and improved education which
is not otherwise available. Even this can be viewed as a
two-edged sword, however, because it amounts to a kind of
tracking in which the children from highly motivated fami-
lies are allowed to segregate themselves into schools which
in many cases are selective, excluding students with aca-
demic or behavior problems. The public schools thus become
a sort of bottom track, and evidence from studies of tracked
schools indicate that students in the lower tracks learn
less than they would if they were in heterogeneously grouped
rooms. Thus the operation of two school systems may func-
tion to make inner city low-income schools worse than they

<3> In 1982, a Reagan-influenced National Institute of Edu-
cation organized a panel of mainly conservative experts to
rebut this review. The panelists concluded that desegrega-
tion did raise achievement but that the effects were much
smaller than those found by Crain and Mahard. None of the
panelists elected to test the hypothesis that the effects
would be stronger for students desegregated in kindergarten
or first grade. They arrived at a committee decision to
disregard those studies on the grounds that it is methodolo-
gically too difficult to study students who are desegregated
in kindergarten or first grade and that 21 of the 23 studies
analyzed by Crain and Mahard were methodologically too weak
to be evaluated (National Institute of Education, 1984).

42

would otherwise be. (For a discussion of the public-private
schools as a "tracked" educational system, see McPartland
and McDill, 1982.)

Conclusions

The optimistic conclusions drawn by Coleman, Hoffer and
Kilgore do not seem to be supported by the data from the two
large metropolitan areas studied here. From these data
there is little reason to believe that the impact of private
schools is simply benign. At the same time we do not
believe enough data is available to draw the more compli-
cated conclusion which is probably the correct one: namely
that private schools further the segregation of schools
under certain conditions and encourage racial integration of
either schools or residential neighborhoods in others.

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