

White Growth, Persistent Segregation:

Could Gentrification Become Integration?

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Proyecto Derechos Civiles

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Foreword

Gentrification has been the central reality in large and growing segments of Washington, DC since the 1970s, producing a dramatic change in the population of the first major city to become majority black in the mid-twentieth century. The combination of massive black migration to sectors of the suburbs, declining birth rates and a large immigration of Hispanics means that the city now has a black minority and a substantially increased share of whites. Conditions would seem positive for ending the long pattern of intense racial and economic segregation in the DC public schools. However, our major report from February 2017, *Our Segregated Capital: An Increasingly Diverse City with Racially Polarized Schools*, showed a continuing pattern of severe segregation in the schools, particularly in the large charter system created since the early 1990s. We did see a substantial gain in the white share of regular public schools, but it was a small gain and fell well short of the possibilities.

After that publication two excellent Civil Rights Project researchers, Professor Kfir Mordechay and Dr. Jennifer Ayscue, decided to zoom in on the areas that experienced substantial gentrification since 2000, and look more closely at their school age population and the composition of their schools. Their report shows a continuing pattern of intense segregation of students of color even in gentrifying areas, but it also illustrates some of the possibilities. In the gentrifying areas, the overall school composition was still 80% African American in the 2014 school year, but there are some signs of a different future. The first one is that as racial change and gentrification take place in the housing market, the schools in the area are not losing enrollment, as often happens when families of color are replaced by white families with fewer children and less interest in public schools. The DC schools in gentrifying areas gained significantly in enrollment between 2000 and 2014, with African American enrollment up 72%. White enrollment, though still small, increased more than tenfold, and the Hispanic enrollment tripled. It is also interesting that white enrollment in charter schools, the most segregated sector, also increased slightly in gentrifying areas, reaching 6%. The report shows that in a few of the gentrifying areas, there has been explosive growth in white enrollment. These trends signal the possibility of significant future integration, if these changes continue for another decade or two. In such cases, there is, of course, the risk that the community and the school will resegregate in the white direction, just as many suburban Washington schools are resegregating in a black or Latino direction. Supporting integration means having a plan to keep communities diverse. This is where strong housing strategies, using housing subsidies and other tools to buy into communities in early gentrification, could help protect the rights of significant numbers of long-term African American residents to remain in the gentrifying neighborhoods as the communities and the schools gain resources. It need not be a zero-sum gain. With the right policy mix all groups could gain better opportunities.

The neighborhood changes have occurred with very little supportive policy from either the school district or the housing and community development officials. I think there is considerable potential for a viable and equitable future, if the District recognizes that crossing over very deep racial and economic divisions in the city requires an explicit commitment and coherent policies directed at achieving lasting integration in schools and communities. This means positive action to encourage students from all racial and ethnic groups to enroll in the public schools in their community, as well as housing and development policies that do everything possible to support long-time residents. A conscious integration policy should include strong programs to welcome newcomers into the schools, involve them actively, and simultaneously make needed changes in curriculum, training, and methods by school staff that benefit all children. What the middle class newcomers want is what all children deserve. In this way, more schools can fulfill the kinds of things newcomer professionals tend to demand for their children, such as a challenging curriculum and strong instruction that puts children on a path to college. Active outreach should also be directed to African-American and Latino middle class and professional families, since their presence in the schools and long-term commitment to neighborhoods offer the schools a great resource, and add a powerful dimension to integration. Good housing policy would, for example, make it possible for teachers to settle in affordable housing in these gentrified communities, perhaps through city development of special apartment or townhouse developments for teachers in neighborhoods that have not yet become very expensive. Given the substantial group of teachers and administrators of color in the DC Public Schools, such a policy would support continued integration of gentrifying communities, bring educators into more direct contact with students and parents, and provide future community leaders.

Gentrification has been proceeding for a half century in DC without a serious plan to turn what can be a problem for long term residents into an advantage in terms of educational opportunity. The greatest gains would come from creating lasting integration in strongly improving schools. What young white professional families with children desire for their children's future is much the same as what African American and Hispanic families want--DC schools that help children realize their dreams.

I think about these possibilities not only as someone who is deeply interested in school integration and civil rights, but also as a parent (whose children all started school in DC public schools) and a former DC PTA leader. I participated in a community campaign back in the early 1970s to integrate what had been an all-black, 99% free lunch school in a Capitol Hill community, where gentrification was taking hold. That process at Peabody School changed the neighborhood and the school, and its lasting impact continues. I now have two grandchildren being educated in what became a cluster of integrated schools in the area. This can be done. It is not rocket science. It is about bringing together diverse communities who share common dreams

for their children, and supporting real integration in schools and neighborhoods. But leaders have to decide to do it.

Gary Orfield, December, 2017

White Growth, Persistent Segregation: Could Gentrification Become Integration?

Kfir Mordechay and Jennifer Ayscue

Executive Summary

A major force in urban neighborhoods across the country, gentrification is also transforming the nation's capital. In 2011, Washington, DC reached a non-black majority for the first time in more than a half century, and since 2000, the city's white population has increased from just over a quarter to well over a third of the total population. This radical demographic transformation has deemed Washington, DC a "hotbed" of gentrification. Since gentrifying neighborhoods have the required residential integration to facilitate school integration, this report examines whether the potential educational and social benefits that could come from greater racial and socioeconomic diversity are being realized in the city's most rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods.

Our analysis of neighborhoods and school enrollment patterns reveals that in Washington, DC's most rapidly gentrifying areas, racial segregation has declined, more so in traditional public schools (TPS) than in charters. While this trend is promising, a high level of racial segregation remains, and substantial progress is still needed to ensure that these newly integrated neighborhoods also mean integrated schools.

Several major findings emerge:

- In the city's most rapidly gentrifying census areas, the white population increased from approximately 5% in 2000 to just under 50% in 2015. During this same period, the white school enrollment in the same areas increased from 1% to 8%. As 17% of the school-aged population in the gentrifying areas is white, the asymmetry between neighborhood and school demographics cannot be explained by age alone. This finding likely suggests that a large share of white "gentrifier" parents are opting out of neighborhood schools.
- Between 2000 and 2014, a larger share of schools in gentrifying areas than in non-gentrifying areas experienced more extreme increases in the white share of enrollment. 12% of schools in gentrifying areas -- but no schools in non-gentrifying areas -- had more than a 50-percentage point increase in the white share of enrollment.
- Between 2000 and 2014, the black share of enrollment decreased while the Hispanic share almost doubled in schools located in both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas. However, the black share of enrollment in gentrifying areas started higher in 2000 and remained higher in 2014 than in non-gentrifying neighborhoods. The reverse is true for Hispanics, as the Hispanic share of enrollment began lower in gentrifying neighborhoods in 2000 and remained lower in 2014 than in non-gentrifying neighborhoods.

- In 2014, over three-fourths of schools in gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas were intensely segregated, enrolling 90-100% non-white students. In 2014, a slightly larger share of schools in non-gentrifying areas (63%) than in gentrifying areas (55%) was hypersegregated, enrolling 99-100% non-white students.
- In both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas, larger shares of charters than traditional public schools are majority minority, intensely segregated, and hypersegregated. In 2014, nearly three-fourths of charters were hypersegregated—71% of charters in non-gentrifying areas and 70% of charters in gentrifying areas. In non-gentrifying areas, 54% of traditional public schools were hypersegregated and in gentrifying areas, less than half (41%) were hypersegregated.
- While segregation persists at high levels in both charters and traditional public schools, segregation levels have declined substantially more in traditional public schools than in charters in gentrifying neighborhoods. Between 2007 and 2014, the share of hypersegregated TPS in gentrifying areas fell from 67% to 41%. During the same time, the share of hypersegregated charters in gentrifying areas declined more modestly from 77% to 70%.

Multiple coordinated and targeted policies could help manage gentrification such that it supports school integration. These recommendations underscore the deep and fundamental relationships among housing, communities, and schools:

- The federal government should prioritize the production of affordable housing and well-designed mixed-income developments.
- The preservation of existing affordable housing through rental assistance demonstrations, housing choice vouchers, and preservation-friendly incentives should be a major focus of local housing authority.
- Urban magnet programs with strategies and guidelines for racial and economic diversity should be used to create more integrated schools.
- Placing requirements for racial and economic diversity on charter schools in gentrifying areas also presents an opportunity for desegregation.

Gentrification is changing the demographic landscape of neighborhoods across the country and can potentially introduce social and financial capital to neighborhoods and urban school districts that previously lacked it. It is therefore essential that the gentrification process be managed to ensure that it creates inclusive communities and schools, rather than displacing low-income residents and residents of color.

White Growth, Persistent Segregation: Could Gentrification Become Integration?

Kfir Mordechay and Jennifer Ayscue

The landscape of urban America has changed radically over the last two decades as extensive gentrification, often depicted as an influx of white middle-class residents moving into poor, minority neighborhoods, has become a major force in some of the nation's largest urban areas. Once relegated to a select few urban communities, it is now spreading to neighborhoods across the country. In Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Washington, DC, Durham, Charlotte, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Houston, Los Angeles, and Portland, gentrification is making many neighborhoods hardly recognizable from a short time ago. This pattern is a reversal of a decades-long trend of white and middle-class flight out of urban central cities. One question this trend raises is whether or not these stark demographic shifts on the neighborhood level correspond to school-level demographic changes. New middle-class families who move into neighborhoods that are low income often opt out of the neighborhood schools (Keels, Burdick-Will, & Keene 2013). However, there is increasing evidence that young, largely white, and middle- to upper-class families are beginning to engage with urban school districts (Kimelberg & Billingham, 2012; Stillman, 2012; Siegel-Hawley, Thachik, & Bridges, 2017). In this brief, we examine the nation's capital as a case study of some of the nation's most rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods and the impact of gentrification on racial diversity in local public schools.

Washington, DC: A Case Study

Over the past three and half decades, Washington, DC has undergone dramatic demographic and economic change. Over the last quarter century, the city's black population has declined from nearly 70% to less than 50%, while the Latino population has increased by more than a factor of three (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Since 2000, the city's white population has increased from 27% to well over a third of the total population. This rapidly changing demographic context has deemed Washington, DC a "hotbed" of gentrification (Jackson, 2015).

While the city's racial changes have not been as stark at the school level, the racial changes in school enrollment have been noteworthy (Orfield & Ee, 2017). In 1990, of the 77,000 total public school enrollment, blacks made up over 90% and Latinos 5%, with whites comprising fewer than 1 out of 25 students (3.8%). By 2015, the total enrollment was approximately 81,000, an increase of over 15% since 2003. Of the total enrollment, the black share declined to less than 72%, while the white share increased to close to 10%, and the Latino share to over 15%.

These dramatic demographic transformations playing out at both the city and school level raise several questions: 1. To what extent are public schools in gentrifying areas of Washington, DC desegregating? 2. How does the racial diversity of schools in gentrifying areas of Washington

compare to that of schools in non-gentrifying areas? 3. How do the student bodies in charter schools compare to those of traditional public schools in gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas of Washington?

Urban Neighborhoods and Schools

The “flight” of the middle class from urban public schools has been a major concern of researchers and policymakers for decades (Coleman et al., 1966; Logan, Oakley, & Stowell, 2008), as the depletion of financial, social, and cultural resources associated with the movement of middle-class families out of city schools is frequently cited as a contributing force behind the social isolation of poor urban neighborhoods. The flight of the middle class effectively deepens segregation for the most disadvantaged, and it undermines key local institutions (Kahlenberg, 2001; Wilson, 1987). For many years, the abandonment of inner-city schools had become a common feature of families with the financial means to move. Only recently have scholars begun to turn their attention to middle-class families who make the opposite choice—that is, to remain in the city and send their children to local public schools (Butler & Robson, 2003; Cucchiara & Horvat, 2009; Posey, 2012).

Following decades of public policy and private initiatives to regenerate central cities, scholars are increasingly paying attention to the causes and consequences of neighborhood ascent or upgrading (Owens, 2012), much of which has coalesced around gentrification as a particular type of neighborhood ascent. Historically, gentrification has been a minor feature of urban change in most cities, but it is becoming a major force in a number of knowledge hubs and strong market cities where the demand for urban living amongst the young and middle class is accelerating (Florida, 2003; Petrilli, 2012). These particular cities attract new businesses, highly skilled workers, major developers, and large corporations, all of which drive up both the demand for and cost of housing. Once begun, that process can develop strong momentum and make the neighborhoods attractive to more middle income households. Historically, many of these neighborhoods have long faced the reality that as neighborhoods become poorer, they experience decline and depletion of financial, social, and cultural resources. This amplifies the social isolation of poor urban neighborhoods, effectively deepening the concentration of poverty and undermining key local institutions, especially schools (Wilson, 1987). Gentrification may, however, reverse that drain by introducing social and financial capital to neighborhoods that previously lacked it.

Since gentrifying neighborhoods have the required residential demographics necessary for school integration, this paper explores whether or not the potential educational and social benefits that could come from greater race and class diversity in schools are being realized in some of the nation’s fastest gentrifying areas. Gentrifiers are often childless young professionals, artists, and gay and lesbian couples (Kennedy & Leonard 2001), and those who do have children tend to pay for private school or exercise school choice when available in urban districts (Keels, Burdick-

Will, & Keene 2013; Pearman & Swain, 2017). Studies have observed that gentrifiers tend to put their children into select charter or public schools with other gentrifying families, resulting in little change to other schools in the area (Kimelberg & Billingham 2012). However, if gentrifiers enroll their children in public schools, it is possible that historically segregated schools could become more desegregated and begin to accrue the benefits associated with desegregation.

Desegregated schools are associated with numerous positive outcomes, including improved academic achievement (Mickelson & Nkomo, 2012) and reduction in prejudice and stereotypes (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In general, students who have attended desegregated schools have higher levels of civic engagement (Kurlaender & Yun, 2005) and a greater likelihood of living and working in diverse environments later in life (Braddock & McPartland, 1989; Wells & Crain, 1994). They also experience increased educational and occupational attainment, more prestigious jobs with greater economic returns, health benefits, and reduction in adult poverty and incarceration (Johnson, 2011). It is likely that the benefits associated with desegregated schools would have a positive impact on individuals as well as neighborhoods.

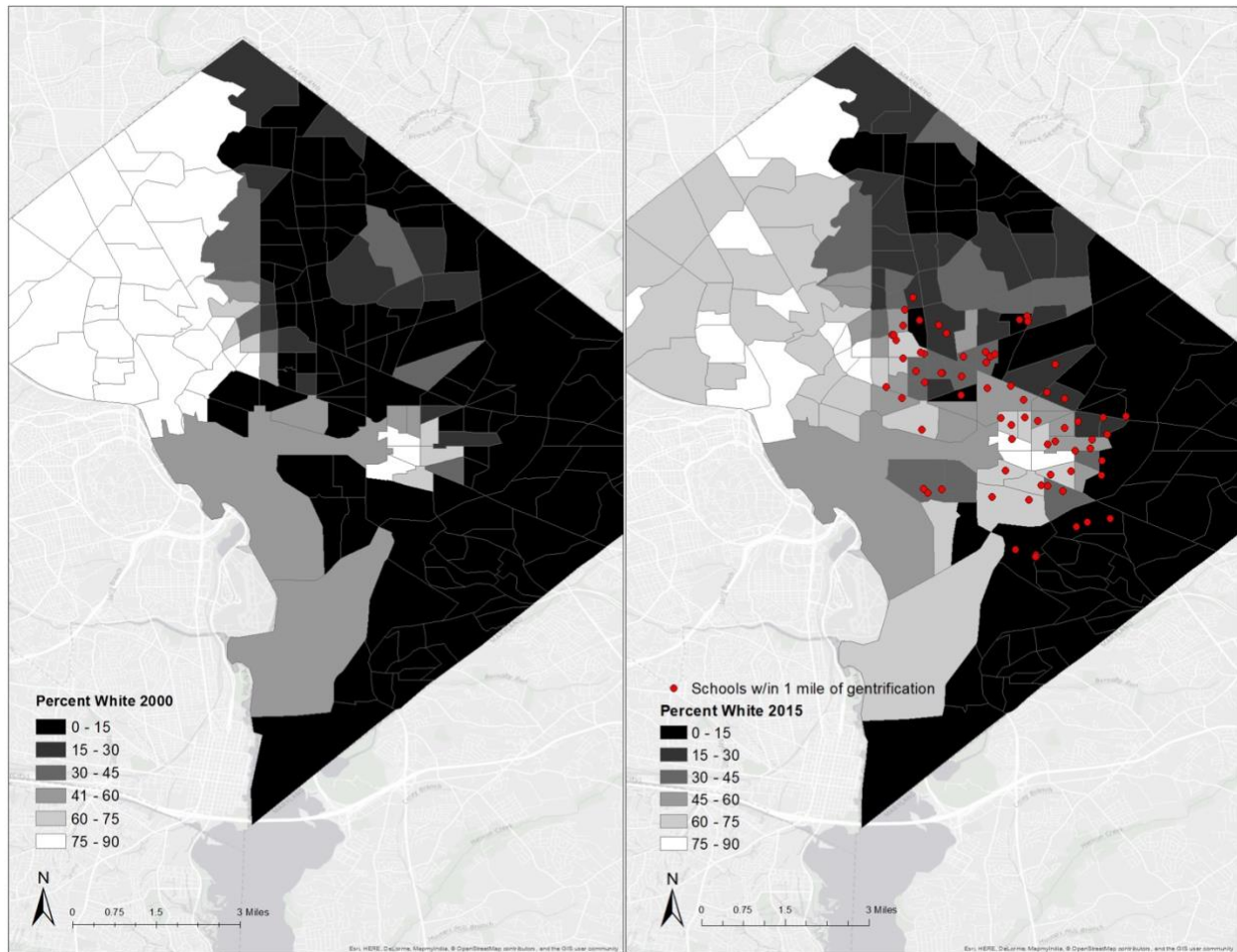
In recent years there has been a resurgence in the debates over gentrification and its effects. Proponents call it neighborhood revitalization and reinvestment for declining urban neighborhoods (Byrne 2003; Caulfield 1994). Opponents call it forced displacement and ethnic cleansing (Lydersen 1999; Powell & Spencer 2003). To date much of the gentrification literature has tended to focus primarily on housing and, until recently, tended to overlook its impact on local schools. However, a small but growing number of studies have begun to document the relationship between gentrification and schools (Cucchiara & Horvat, 2009; Kimelberg & Billingham, 2012; Stillman, 2012; Siegel-Hawley, Thachik, & Bridges, 2017). This study proposes to expand upon existing research by exploring the potential of neighborhood gentrification for urban school integration and reform in one of the nation's fastest gentrifying cities (Jordan & Gallagher, 2015). DC's white population has grown from 27.8% of the total in 2000, to over 35% by 2014 (Table 7), countering decades of white losses (Orfield & Ee, 2017). Between 2002 and 2015, the city's white public school demographic more than doubled, growing from 4.3% of the total to 9.6%.

While it is still the case that most urban low-income students in the United States attend high-poverty, racially isolated schools, the movement of middle-class families into some cities and neighborhoods and schools within them raises important questions about the extent to which such changes disrupt existing patterns of segregation and inequality. The present study examines whether demographic changes in the most rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods in Washington, DC have produced corresponding demographic changes in the local school population and increases in school diversity. The findings provide insight into the extent to which gentrification in this city has created more equitable and integrated school opportunities for children and neighborhoods that have lacked them for generations.

Data and Methods

This paper draws on data from a variety of sources. To determine which individual census tracts experienced the most dramatic increase in white residents between 2000 and 2015, demographic data was obtained from the 2000 US Census Bureau 5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) and the 2015 American Community Survey¹. Student demographic data came from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). In addition, we utilized data from NCES (2014-2015) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map the spatial distribution of schools and create a series of maps and figures to descriptively illustrate the growth of whites taking place on the neighborhood level (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of White Residents, Washington, DC, 2000 and 2015

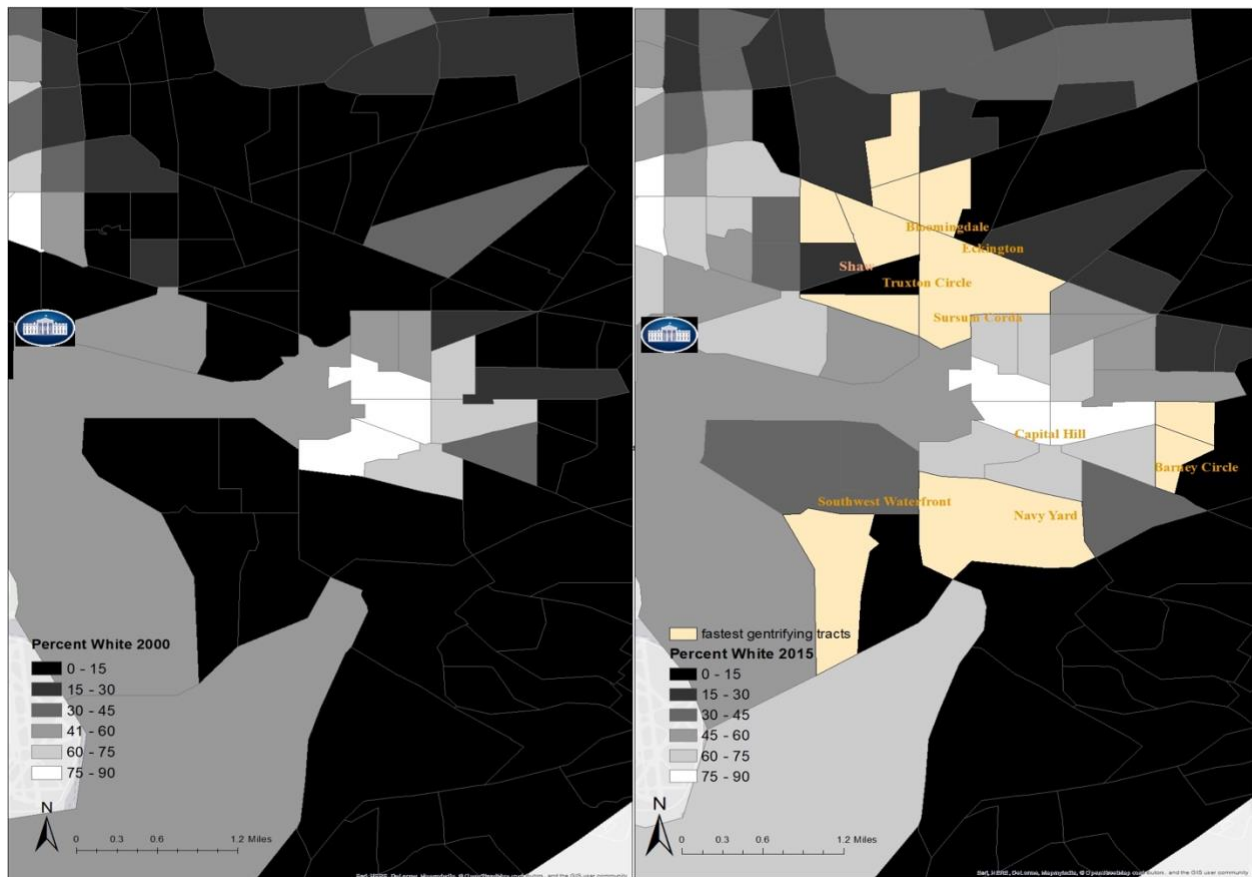


Source: 2000 decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000) and 2015 (5 year average) American Community Survey microdata.

¹ 2015 ACS data is based on a 5 year moving average (2011-2015).

In 2015, of the city’s 179 census tracts, 85 had at least 30% or more white residents, up from 64 out of 188 census tracts in 2000 (Table 8). Of those with a minimum of 2,000 residents in 2015, 11 census tracts experienced an increase of *25 percentage points or more* in white residents between 2000 to 2015. These 11 census tracts were selected for the analysis and will be referred to throughout this paper as the “fastest” or “most rapidly” gentrifying census tracts (Figure 2). In addition to the stark racial change across these census tracts, when combined they experienced close to a two-fold increase in inflation-adjusted median income, compared to a citywide increase of 28% between 2000 and 2015 (US Census, 2015). Table 9 illustrates the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the 11 census tracts. These combined areas have a population of over 34,000 residents, almost half of whom are white, with a median income of over \$94,000. The influx of higher-SES white residents is used as a proxy for determining which neighborhoods in the city are most rapidly gentrifying (see Smith, 1998). Although racial change as a prerequisite for gentrification is widely debated in the gentrification literature (Freeman 2005; Hwang & Sampson 2014), race is in the forefront of our study because of our interest in understanding patterns of racial segregation and racial change in gentrifying urban neighborhoods.

Figure 2. Fastest Gentrifying Census Tracts, Washington, DC, 2000 and 2015



Mapping the district’s 2014–2015 school addresses, which we overlaid with census tracts, we identified 67 schools that fall within a one-mile radius from the center of each of the 11 most gentrifying census tracts. Because census tracts and school zone boundaries are not equivalent, we included schools that fall within one mile of the gentrifying census tract because most students in Washington, DC who attend traditional public schools travel less than a mile to get to school (DC Public Charter School Board, 2015).

We examine school segregation trends at three time points: in 2000 (pre-gentrification), 2007 (mid-point), and 2014 (most recent year of data available). To analyze school segregation trends in the gentrifying neighborhoods, we use two measures of segregation: concentration and exposure/isolation. To measure concentration, we calculate the percent of schools that are majority minority (enrolling 50-100% non-white students), intensely segregated (enrolling 90-100% non-white students), and hypersegregated (enrolling 99-100% non-white students). Exposure and isolation are measures of the potential contact between groups of students. Exposure refers to the degree of potential contact between students of one racial group and *another* racial group; isolation refers to the degree of potential contact between students of one group and other members of the *same* group (Massey & Denton, 1988).

Findings

Enrollment and Segregation Trends in Gentrifying vs. Non-Gentrifying Areas

The white share of enrollment increased in both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas (Tables 1 and 2). The share of white enrollment doubled from 5% to 10% in non-gentrifying neighborhoods. While there was a larger percent change in gentrifying areas, from 1% to 8%, the overall share of white enrollment remains smaller in schools located in gentrifying areas (8%) than in non-gentrifying areas (10%).

Table 1. Enrollment, All Schools in Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

Year	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	FRL
2000	26 (percentage of total)	12,148	176 (1%)	11,107 (91%)	659 (5%)	200 (2%)	9,173 (76%)
2007	40	15,642	553 (4%)	13,744 (88%)	1,119 (7%)	216 (1%)	9,061 (58%)
2014	67	24,030	1,916 (8%)	19,208 (80%)	2,149 (9%)	262 (1%)	22,413* (93%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

*The FRL total for 2014 in the tables throughout the paper likely over-represents the actual number of FRL students because it includes schools using the community eligibility provision in which the entire school receives FRL if a minimum threshold of FRL students is met. In such cases, the data shows 100% of students receiving FRL.

Table 2. Enrollment, All Schools in Non-Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

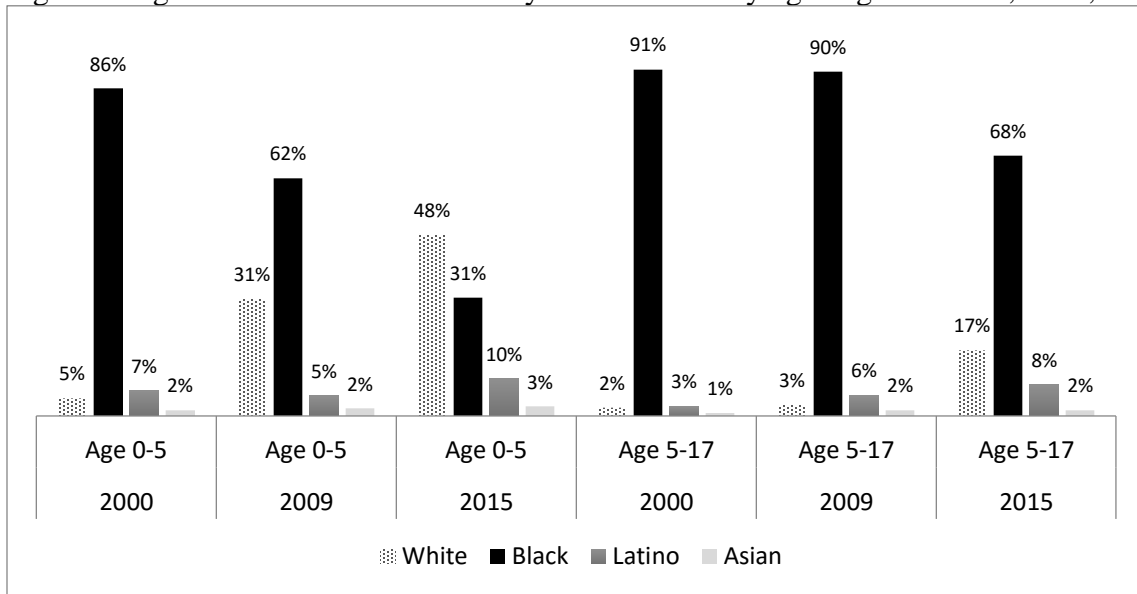
	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	FRL
2000	124 (percentage of total)	53,137	2,671 (5%)	43,987 (83%)	5,556 (10%)	892 (2%)	38,166 (72%)
2007	188	62,466	3,654 (6%)	51,158 (82%)	6,651 (11%)	953 (2%)	29,248 (47%)
2014	142	55,474	5,816 (10%)	37,594 (68%)	9,940 (18%)	886 (2%)	51,034* (92%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

*See note about 2014 FRL data under Table 1.

There are a couple of possible explanations for this trend. First, it could be an indication that gentrification is still occurring, and the white share of enrollment in gentrifying areas will continue to increase in the future years to a level that catches up to or exceeds non-gentrifying areas that had larger white shares originally. Alternatively, this trend might indicate that despite gentrification in these areas, some of the white families moving in are not enrolling their children in the local public schools. Instead, they are either choosing other schools—private schools or public schools that are outside of the gentrifying areas—or they do not have children, in which case the change in the residential population does not have as strong an effect on the local school enrollment as on residential demographics. To test these hypotheses, we examined both the pre-school population (aged 0-5) and the school-aged population (aged 5-17) in the gentrifying areas and found that close to a third (31%) of all preschool-aged children were white in 2009, and almost half (48%) were white in 2015 (Figures 3, 5, 6). The gentrifying areas’ school-aged population was over 17% white in 2015, up from 2% in 2000 and 3% in 2009 (Figure 6). The asymmetry between neighborhood and school demographics likely suggests that a large share of white gentrifier parents are opting out of neighborhood schools.

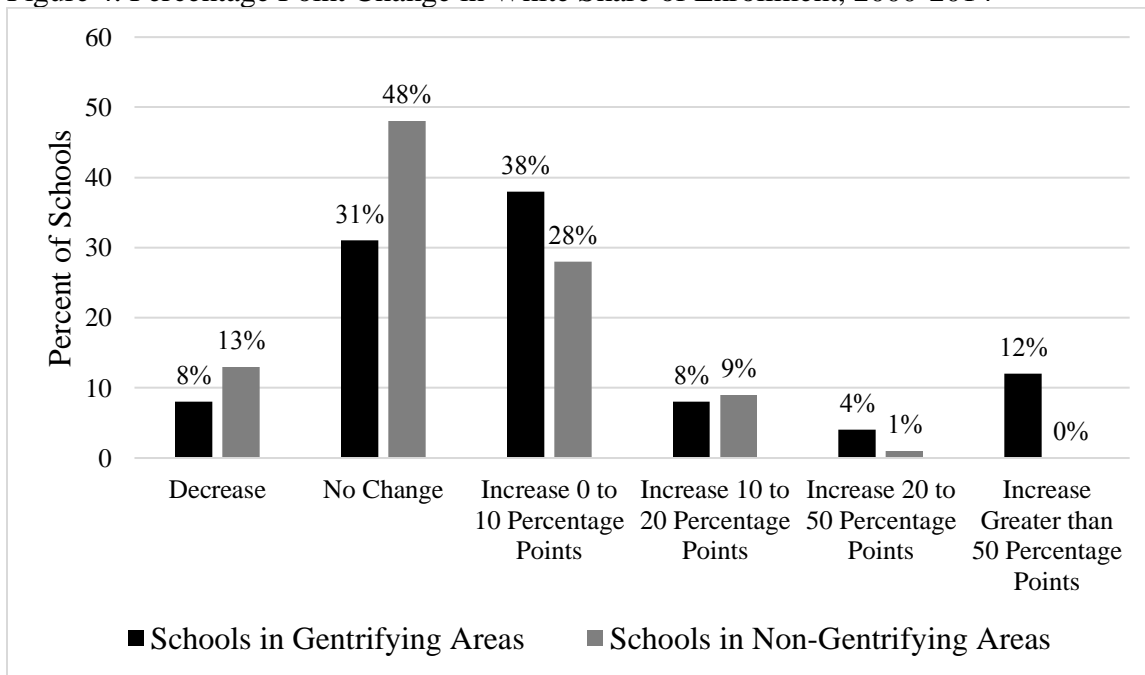
Figure 3. Age Distribution of Children by Race in Gentrifying Neighborhoods, 2000, 2009, 2015



Source: Author’s calculations using 2000 decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000) and 2009 and 2015 (5-year average) American Community Survey microdata.

Between 2000 and 2014, a larger share of schools in gentrifying areas than in non-gentrifying areas experienced more extreme increases in the white share of enrollment (Figures 4; 7, 8 in Appendix). Over this time period, 12% of schools in gentrifying areas (3 schools) but no schools in non-gentrifying areas had more than a 50 percentage point increase in the white share of enrollment. In addition, 4% of schools in gentrifying areas (1 school) and 1% of schools (1 school) in non-gentrifying areas had a white share of enrollment that increased between 20 and 50 percentage points. Conversely, 13% of schools in non-gentrifying areas (9 schools) but only 8% of schools in gentrifying areas (2 schools) experienced a decline in the white share of enrollment.

Figure 4. Percentage Point Change in White Share of Enrollment, 2000-2014



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

Note. This figure only includes schools that were open at all three time points (2000, 2007, 2014).

In addition to the changes in white share of enrollment, the black share of enrollment has decreased and the Hispanic share of enrollment has increased (almost doubled) in schools located in both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas (Tables 1 and 2 above). However, the black share of enrollment started at a higher level in 2000 in gentrifying areas, and remained higher in 2014 than in non-gentrifying neighborhoods. The reverse is true for Hispanics. The Hispanic share of enrollment began at a lower level in gentrifying neighborhoods in 2000, and remained lower in 2014 than in non-gentrifying neighborhoods.

Nearly all schools were majority-minority schools in gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas in 2000, 2007, and 2014 (Tables 10 and 11). The share of intensely segregated schools was also quite similar and high, with over three-fourths of schools being intensely segregated for both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas at all three time points. Interestingly, despite enrolling a slightly larger share of nonwhite students, non-gentrifying areas had a slightly larger share of hypersegregated schools than gentrifying areas.

In both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas, black students are exposed to similar and very small (although slightly increasing) shares of white students (Tables 12 and 13). In both areas, the typical black student attends school with 5% or less white schoolmates. In both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas, the typical Hispanic student attends school with a slightly larger share (10% or less) of white schoolmates. Compared to schools in gentrifying areas, Asian and white students in non-gentrifying areas are exposed to larger shares of white students.

Enrollment and Segregation Trends by Type (Charter vs. TPS) in Gentrifying vs. Non-Gentrifying Areas

When comparing enrollment trends by school type, the share of white enrollment is larger in traditional public schools (TPS) than in charters in both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas in 2014 (Tables 3 and 4). In gentrifying areas, TPS enrolled 9% white students while charters enrolled 6% white students; in non-gentrifying areas, the disparity is larger with TPS enrolling 14% white students while charters enrolled 5% white students. The disparity between school type is also larger in black enrollment in non-gentrifying areas. There charters enrolled 78% black students and TPS enrolled 60% black students, compared to gentrifying areas where charters enrolled 82% black students and TPS enrolled 78% black students. For Hispanic students in gentrifying areas, 9% of charter and TPS enrollment was comprised of Hispanic students, but in non-gentrifying areas TPS enrolled a larger share of Hispanic students (21%) than charters (14%). These enrollment trends indicate there are larger differences between charters and TPS in enrollment by race in non-gentrifying areas than in gentrifying areas. However, in both cases, charters have a larger nonwhite enrollment than TPS.

Table 3. Enrollment by School Type in Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	FRL
2007							
Charter (percentage of total)	13	4,027	175 (4%)	3,457 (86%)	359 (9%)	34 (1%)	2,156 (54%)
TPS	27	11,615	378 (3%)	10,287 (89%)	760 (7%)	182 (2%)	6,905 (59%)
2014							
Charter	33	10,335	643 (6%)	8,494 (82%)	894 (9%)	83 (1%)	8,748* (85%)
TPS	34	13,695	1,273 (9%)	10,714 (78%)	1,255 (9%)	179 (1%)	13,665* (100%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

*See note about 2014 FRL data under Table 1.

Table 4. Enrollment by School Type in Non-Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

	Number of Schools	Total Enrollment	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	FRL
2007							
Charter (percentage of total)	55	16,204	398 (2%)	14,521 (90%)	1,183 (7%)	86 (1%)	5,556 (34%)
TPS	133	46,262	3,256 (7%)	36,637 (79%)	5,468 (12%)	867 (2%)	23,692 (51%)
2014							
Charter	72	23,312	1,231 (5%)	18,207 (78%)	3,163 (14%)	179 (1%)	18,932* (81%)
TPS	70	32,162	4,585 (14%)	19,387 (60%)	6,777 (21%)	707 (2%)	32,102* (100%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

*See note about 2014 FRL data under Table 1.

In both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas, a larger share of charters than TPS are majority minority, intensely segregated, and hypersegregated (Tables 5 and 6). In 2014, there was a substantial disparity in the share of hypersegregated charters versus hypersegregated TPS in both gentrifying and non-gentrifying areas, although it was slightly more extreme in gentrifying areas where an even smaller share of TPS was hypersegregated. In 2014, nearly three-fourths of charters were hypersegregated—71% of charters in non-gentrifying areas and 70% of charters in gentrifying areas. In non-gentrifying areas, 54% of TPS were hypersegregated; in gentrifying areas, less than half (41%) of TPS were hypersegregated. This was a shift from 2007 in non-gentrifying areas, where there had been a larger share of hypersegregated TPS than charters. While segregation persists at high levels in both charters and TPS, segregation levels have declined substantially more in TPS than in charters in gentrifying neighborhoods. Between 2007 and 2014, the share of hypersegregated TPS in gentrifying areas fell from 67% to 41% (Table 5) compared to the share of hypersegregated charters, which declined slightly from 77% to 70%.

Table 5. Segregation Concentration by School Type in Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

School Type	Majority Minority (50-100% nonwhite)	Intensely Segregated (90-100% nonwhite)	Hypersegregated (99-100% nonwhite)
2007			
Charter (percentage of total)	<i>N</i> =13 (100%)	<i>N</i> =11 (85%)	<i>N</i> =10 (77%)
TPS	<i>N</i> =27 (100%)	<i>N</i> =23 (85%)	<i>N</i> =18 (67%)
2014			
Charter	<i>N</i> =33 (100%)	<i>N</i> =27 (82%)	<i>N</i> =23 (70%)
TPS	<i>N</i> =30 (88%)	<i>N</i> =26 (76%)	<i>N</i> =14 (41%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data
N=number of schools

Table 6. Segregation Concentration Percentage by School Type in Non-Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

	Majority Minority (50-100% nonwhite)	Intensely Segregated (90-100% nonwhite)	Hypersegregated (99-100% nonwhite)
2007			
Charter (percentage of total)	<i>N</i> =55 (100%)	<i>N</i> =49 (89%)	<i>N</i> =39 (71%)
TPS	<i>N</i> =126 (95%)	<i>N</i> =117 (88%)	<i>N</i> =101 (76%)
2014			
Charter	<i>N</i> =70 (97%)	<i>N</i> =58 (81%)	<i>N</i> =51 (71%)
TPS	<i>N</i> =64 (91%)	<i>N</i> =52 (74%)	<i>N</i> =38 (54%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data
N=number of schools

The possibilities for creating diverse learning environments as gentrification unfolds are beginning to occur in Washington, DC. However, substantial progress is still needed. In the city's most rapidly gentrifying census tracts, where the white population has increased from approximately 5% to just under 50% over the last decade and a half, local school enrollment patterns have seen an increase in white students from 1% to 8% during the same time period. The demographic mismatch between the toddler and school-aged population is further evidence of the progress needed to create truly diverse learning environments.

Making Gentrification Work: Policy Considerations

Over the past two decades, gentrification has become increasingly apparent in the “return to the cities,” with redevelopment and investment in many central cities across the nation (HUD, 2016; Hwang & Sampson 2014). Managing this process such that it supports school integration will require coordinated and targeted policies that underscore the deep and fundamental relationships among housing, communities, and schools. In fact, under the Obama Administration the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Education, and Transportation issued a joint letter in 2016 encouraging local education, transportation, and housing and community development agencies to work together to create socioeconomic and racial diversity in schools and communities (HUD, 2016). In the context of urban gentrification, policy responses should be constructed in the context of racial and economic integration. In other words, is the process of gentrification currently producing a kind of development that is inequitable in terms of racial diversity? And how can the strategies to manage demographic changes increase the likelihood of diversity in the future as high rents threaten to push many low-income renters and renters of color out of gentrifying neighborhoods?

Affordable Housing

Housing costs have skyrocketed across the nation's “hot” coastal markets, with gentrifying neighborhoods putting enormous pressure on highly desirable housing markets, and contributing to the persistence of racial and ethnic exclusion in many urban neighborhoods. Therefore, at the core of managing gentrification is the preservation and production of affordable housing. While hundreds of thousands of affordable housing units are lost from disrepair each year (Schwartz et al., 2016), the federal government should prioritize the preservation and production of affordable properties that are in “opportunity-rich neighborhoods.” Affordable housing units in gentrifying neighborhoods offer the possibility of better access to job opportunities, social networks, and schools. One recent study of New York Housing Authority (NYHA) compared housing developments located in gentrified or rapidly changing neighborhoods and those in low-income and racially segregated neighborhoods. The researchers found that those in gentrifying neighborhoods on average enjoyed higher incomes, lower crime rates, and higher test scores in local schools (Dastrup et al., 2015). While the extent of “social mixing” among different racial and social class groups has been hotly debated (Lee, 2008; Davidson, 2010), one possibility is to

replace existing high-density housing “projects” with new lower-density mixed-income communities. There is evidence that residents across the income spectrum in well-designed mixed-income developments report satisfaction with housing and neighborhood (Buron & Khadduri 2005; Chaskin & Webber 2008; Levy, McDade, & Dumlao, 2010). In fact, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE VI) Program has been used to socially mix across race and income lines, albeit the evidence of interaction across income or racial groups in these developments has been mixed (Silver, 2013).

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2016) recently released a report laying out a broad-based approach to housing affordability in gentrifying areas. These recommendations include preserving existing affordable housing through rental assistance demonstrations, housing choice vouchers, and preservation-friendly incentives. In addition to preserving existing affordable units, greater development of rental units at all levels can reduce pressure on the rental market, lowering housing costs and expand housing choice for residents, particularly in gentrifying areas with significant rent growth. The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development’s plan for development in the eastern part of NYC can serve as a model for how to counteract both destructive redevelopment practices and the negative effects of gentrification caused by skyrocketing rents, as it is attempting to keep affordable housing at the forefront of the city’s development and redevelopment decisions. One of the nation’s most expensive cities with widespread gentrification, New York City is using a combination of zoning changes and public works projects to incentivize developers to come to East Harlem. By opening up new areas to residential construction and relaxing zoning regulations, the city hopes to expedite the development of affordable and mixed-income housing. Many of the projects will be required to set aside between 20 and 30 percent of their units for low- or moderate-income households. In addition to promoting the development of and increasing access to affordable housing, “The East Harlem Plan” also plans to promote economic opportunity by leveraging its investments in affordable housing to create local jobs and strengthen small businesses. With such strategies in place, gentrification can provide a path to economic opportunity for more minority and inner-city residents. But absent policy intervention, this outcome is unlikely.

In San Francisco, one of the nation’s least affordable housing markets, more than half of all existing housing stock is price limited. This includes at least 26,000 permanently affordable housing units for very low-income families and 170,000 rental units with limits on yearly rent increases (Rosen & Sullivan, 2014). In addition to these policies, the San Francisco Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD) recently developed a pilot program for the development and construction of affordable teacher housing. While these policies are not nearly enough to solve the city’s housing crisis and have not stopped soaring housing prices in an area located in the heart of the technology boom, they do create incentives that make living as a

teacher more affordable (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Such initiatives should be expanded through the Department of Housing and Urban Development to create more broad-based initiatives to support housing for teachers in areas in the process of urban revitalization.

Schools: Choice and Diversity

Neighborhoods matter to the well-being of children and families (Ellen & Turner 1997; Chetty, 2016). They are the baseline for essential public and private services, with schools being one of the most significant. Neighborhood revitalization efforts that achieve mixed-income communities alone often do not result in integrated schools, as higher-income families who move into gentrifying neighborhoods often opt out of the neighborhood schools (Keels, Burdick-Will, & Keene 2013). Therefore, policy efforts that actively promote race and class diversity on the school level should be encouraged.

One possibility is to create more urban magnet programs with strategies and guidelines for racial and income diversity. Studies have suggested that magnet programs with unique educational offerings can provide not only improved academic outcomes for students, but also, with appropriate civil rights protections, they can play a role in fostering integration (Siegel-Hawley & Frankenberg, 2012). Magnet schools have greater flexibility than traditional public schools in their curricula, admissions standards, and the freedom to draw students from different geographical areas and can specialize in math and science, or the performing arts. Gentrifying areas with high numbers of English language learners might consider establishing regional dual language magnet programs that recruit half Spanish speakers and half native English speakers with a goal of producing bilingual students. Such schools have been shown to produce exceptional academic outcomes for all students (Gándara & Mordechay, 2017; Umansky & Reardon, 2014). Models for these kinds of magnet programs can be found in metropolitan areas across the country—many of which are popular among students and families (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). Other magnets could offer innovative programs that focus on a particular theme that might appeal to gentrifying parents and their children, such as experiential learning, STEM, or fine arts.

The federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program offers grants to school districts seeking to create magnet schools that strive to create racial desegregation in previously segregated schools. A recent study of 24 school districts receiving such grants across the nation identified numerous strategies that are important for enrolling a racially diverse student body (Ayscue, Levy, Siegel-Hawley, & Woodward, 2017). These mechanisms include selecting an attractive and relevant theme such as those suggested above, conducting outreach, providing free and accessible transportation, encouraging inter-district choice, intentionally selecting a diverse site, and employing lottery-based admissions.

Placing similar requirements for racial and economic diversity on charter schools in gentrifying areas also presents an opportunity for desegregation and educational equity. Regional charter schools with appropriate civil rights protections could also play a role in fostering integration.

Significance

Gentrification is a growing phenomenon that has great potential to influence neighborhoods and cities and the schools within them. Therefore, the findings from this case study have broad implications for other places that have experienced massive urban-core revitalization and metropolitan growth. Given barriers to school desegregation efforts (Le, 2010), the forces of gentrification offer a unique opportunity to create racially and economically diverse schools. Thus, expanding our understanding of the gentrification process is critical to honing our education and urban policy tools and fostering school integration efforts in local schools.

Despite the substantive research that points toward integration as the best way to improve the life chances of poor and minority children (Clotfelter, 2004), policy makers have, for the most part, abandoned this aspect of schooling (Mordechay & Orfield, 2017). Attracting families in a gentrifying area to the local schools can potentially create oases of integration. These families can increase support for the schools, foster more stable neighborhoods, and create peer groups that will accelerate educational gains for poor children and provide numerous positive outcomes for all children. However, successful management of the gentrification process is essential to ensuring that it creates inclusive communities rather than displacing low-income residents and residents of color.

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Appendix

Table 7. Demographic Change, Washington, DC, 2000-2014

	2000	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
White	27.8%	33.4%	34.0%	34.5%	35.1%	35.4%
Black	59.4%	52.3%	51.3%	50.4%	49.4%	48.7%
Asian	2.7%	3.5%	3.5%	3.6%	3.5%	3.6%
Latino	7.9%	8.8%	9.0%	9.3%	9.6%	9.9%

Source: Author's calculations using 2000 and 2010 decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010) and 2011-2015 annual American Community Survey data.

Table 8. Change in Share of White Population Across All Census Tracts between 2000 and 2015, Washington, DC

Share of White Population	Census Tracts 2000	Census Tracts 2015
Equal to or greater than 70%	41 of 188	35 of 179
Equal to or greater than 50%	51 of 188	62 of 179
Equal to or greater than 30%	64 of 188	85 of 179

Source: Author's calculations using 2000 decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000) and 2015 (5-year average) American Community Survey microdata.

Table 9. Socio-Demographic Profile of 11 Gentrifying Tracts, Washington, DC

	Total Population	White Population	% White	Median Income
2000	20,713	1,201	5.8%	\$47,324
2015	34,274	16,768	49%	\$94,233

Source: Author's calculations using 2000 decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000) and 2015 (5-year average) American Community Survey microdata.

Note: Median income is adjusted to 2015 dollars.

Table 10. Segregation Concentration, All Schools in Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

	Majority Minority (50-100% nonwhite)	Intensely Segregated (90-100% nonwhite)	Hypersegregated (99-100% nonwhite)
2000	26 (100%)	23 (88%)	20 (77%)
2007	40 (100%)	34 (85%)	28 (70%)
2014	63 (94%)	53 (79%)	37 (55%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

Table 11. Segregation Concentration, All Schools in Non-Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

	Majority Minority (50-100% nonwhite)	Intensely Segregated (90-100% nonwhite)	Hypersegregated (99-100% nonwhite)
2000	117 (94%)	109 (88%)	100 (81%)
2007	181 (96%)	166 (88%)	140 (74%)
2014	134 (94%)	110 (77%)	89 (63%)

Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

Table 12. Exposure to White Students, All Schools in Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

	Typical Black Student Exposure to White Students	Typical Hispanic Student Exposure to White Students	Typical Asian Student Exposure to White Students	Typical White Student Isolation with White Students
2000	1%	1%	1%	10%
2007	3%	3%	7%	24%
2014	5%	7%	15%	39%

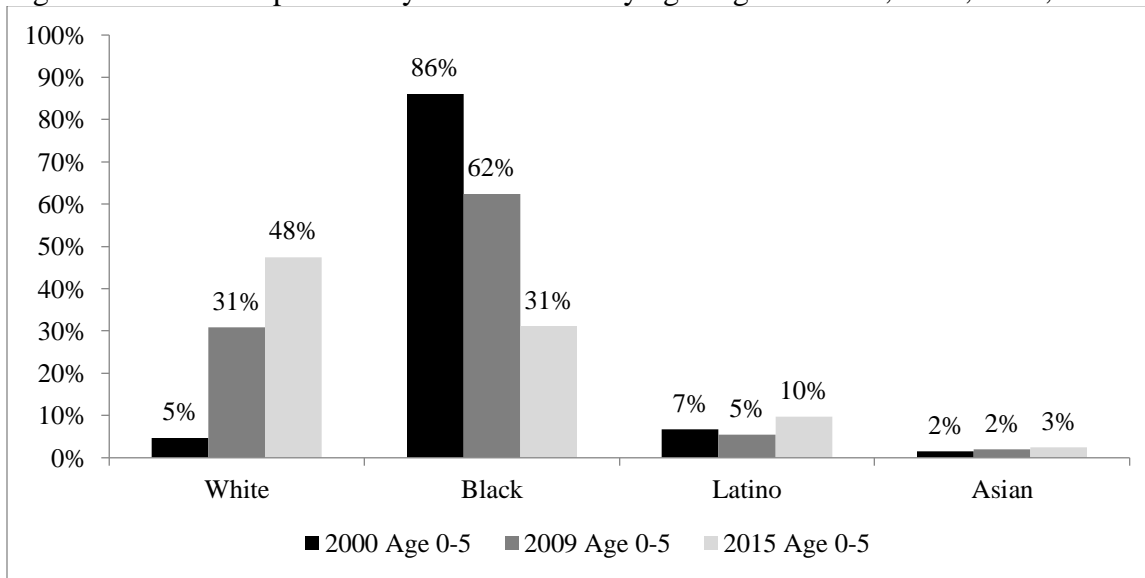
Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

Table 13. Exposure to White Students, All Schools in Non-Gentrifying Areas, Washington, DC

	Typical Black Student Exposure to White Students	Typical Hispanic Student Exposure to White Students	Typical Asian Student Exposure to White Students	Typical White Student Isolation with White Students
2000	2%	6%	20%	48%
2007	3%	7%	28%	43%
2014	4%	10%	32%	45%

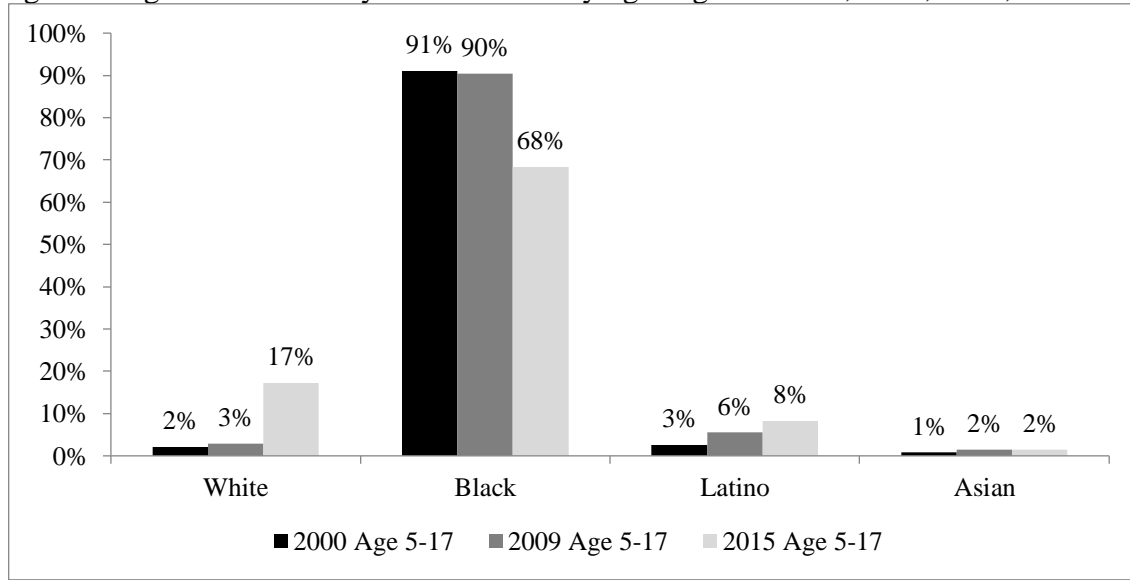
Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

Figure 5. Toddler Population by Race in Gentrifying Neighborhoods, 2000, 2009, 2015



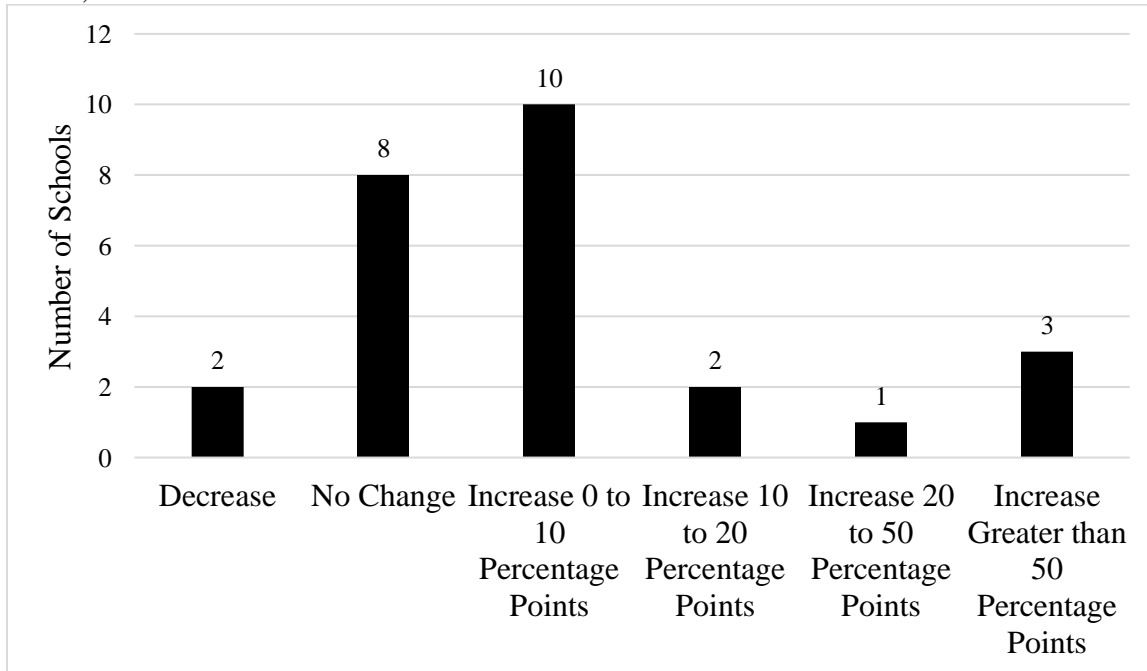
Source: Author's calculations using 2000 decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000) and 2009 and 2015 (5-year average) American Community Survey microdata.

Figure 6. Age Distribution by Race in Gentrifying Neighborhoods, 2000, 2009, 2015



Source: Author's calculations using 2000 decennial census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000) and 2009 and 2015 (5-year average) American Community Survey microdata.

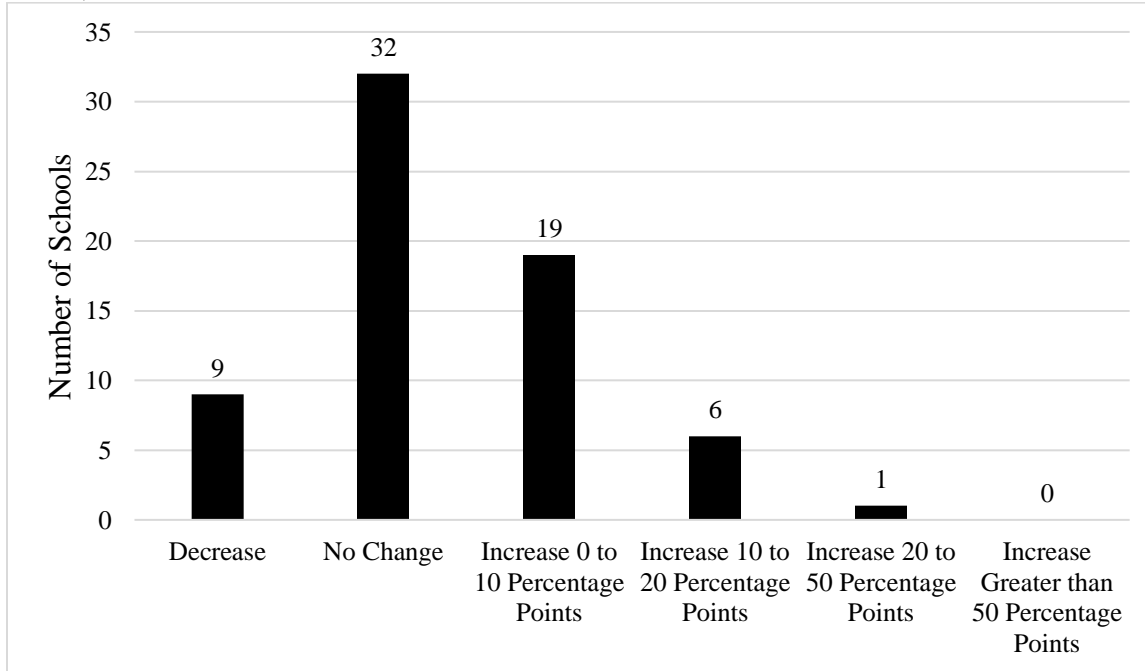
Figure 7. Percentage Point Change in White Share of Enrollment for Schools in Gentrifying Areas, 2000-2014



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

Note. This figure includes only schools that were open at all three time points.

Figure 8. Percentage Point Change in White Share of Enrollment for Schools in Non-Gentrifying Areas, 2000-2014



Source: National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data

Note. This figure includes only schools that were open at all three time points.