

Education Inequality

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The United States education system is implicitly unequal, especially for low income families who live in urban cities across the country. This is manifested in multiple ways such as, school choice policies, charter's federal funding, and policies that reinforce bias. The public education systems have not adequately serviced low income children, and this has cultivated the school to prison pipeline trends that plagues the Black and Brown community. This problem is an example of the systemic racism that is woven into the fabric of American culture which continues to oppress people of color. Examples of this discrimination is viable if you review the differences in public schools within a major city like New York. In the South Bronx, a public elementary school that serves 73% Hispanic and 23% black kids, struggles to find the money to purchase new tables and seats for their students, compared to a public school in Scarsdale, NY serving 70% white and 25% Asian, and no students who qualify for free lunch, going on annual camping trips (Koch, Tom, Denike, 2003). Things like this create a narrative for poor students that school is not important because no one cares enough to ensure their basic needs are being met.

We also see this when people of color account for 37% of the American population but they represent 67% of the prison population (openinvest 2018). Although the high school dropout rate for Black and Hispanic youth has dropped; in 2011 the graduation rate for Black students nationwide was 69%, Hispanics at 73% and Whites were at 86% (openinvest 2018), currently African American and Hispanic Americans only make up about 22% of the general population in four-year universities (governing.com). American students are constantly told that education is the key to success. So many families of color send their children to school every day and watch them graduate high school, only to return to the same cycle of poverty caused by the lack of amendment or accountability for the very policies that start the cycle in the first place. As

a society, we have to look at the system that these poor children are being sent to and wonder why the results aren't identical across the board.

The achievement gap has been named a major reasoning behind the inequality that we are currently facing and that comes with its own set of challenges. The term achievement gap refers to any significant and persistent disparity in academic performance or educational attainment between different groups of students; an example would be white students and minority students (Parvis 2016). This issue focuses on the consistent and observable trends that allows children of color to remain in an inferior position in the realm of education. This trend can be seen in the debate over public versus charter schools, more so in charter schools' outright supporter in the Trump Administration today, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. Long before she stepped into her current position, DeVos has overseen countless situations where inequality in education is blatantly evident and is the indisputable cause of declines in enrollment, graduation, and overall success of publicly funded schools as a whole.

Joanne Barkan, in her paper *The Miseducation of Betsy DeVos*, chronicles a history of behavior furthering "choice", a thinly veiled version of Milton Friedman's free-market education model, where taxpayer funding is funneled towards private control. Barkan emphasizes that 'Choice' is the ed-reform movement's euphemism for privatization. All the tools used to create choice—vouchers, charter schools, tax credits for private school tuition, tax credits for individuals and businesses that create private school scholarships, "education savings accounts" (usually government-funded debit cards used for various private-school expenses, not just tuition)—siphon tax dollars out of the public school system and into private hands" (Barkan, 2017).

Even before being appointed Secretary of Education, DeVos has long been a proponent of privatizing public education. “Under the banner of choice, she founded, funded, and/or led a mind-numbing list of organizations: the American Federation for Children, Alliance for School Choice, Foundation for Excellence in Education (Jeb Bush’s operation), All Children Matter, American Education Reform Council, Children First America, Education Freedom Fund, and Great Lakes Education Project” (Barkan, 2017). As a private citizen, DeVos was part of a successful attempt to cripple what would have been the Detroit Education Commission (DEC), which was a nonpartisan oversight body meant to build up Detroit’s under-regulated, poorly performing charter schools, and to address the shortage of schools in the city’s neediest neighborhoods. “With Republican Governor Rick Snyder’s endorsement, the Republican-controlled state senate approved the DEC in March 2016 as part of a Detroit emergency funding bill. When the Republican-controlled House took up the bill in May, the charter school lobby (generously funded by the DeVos family) launched a massive offensive to quash the DEC,” Barkan reported. “While the senate was still considering the bill, DeVos money began pouring in. In the fifty-six days between June 2 and July 28, nine DeVos family members contributed a total of \$1.45 million to Michigan Republican Party organizations and candidates.” Under threats from major donors, the Republicans killed the bill” (Barkan, 2017).

According to Barkan, what proponents of the free-market model fail to address is that, inevitably, given the systemic inequality that already exists within the societal hierarchies in America, the choice model will always lead to a K-12 system even more unequal than the one we have today. “Middle-class parents will add as much money as they can to their vouchers in order to get their kids into the best possible schools. The wealthy will spend whatever it takes to create an elite stratum of schools that ensure their kids’ advantages. Lower-middle-class families will

scour the system for decent schools they can afford; they'll find that the more decent the school, the higher the demand for it, and the higher the price. And the poor? They will go to "government schools"—a term that market ed-reformers have long used to describe what everyone else calls public schools" (Barkan, 2017).

Mike Wilkerson from Bridge magazine writes about the inequality that is derived by DeVos school choice policies in the school districts of Holland, Michigan; where a change in enrollment policy has shifted demographics to negative results. Michigan has a generous school choice policy which has created a disparity in the student population that has been perceived as segregation, keeping in mind that Holland Districts schools are 7% African American (Wilkerson 2017). Steve Grose, President of Holland School Boards, has stated "I'd say they're getting a better education because of the rich diversity," when speaking of his own children who attend in the district. Grose said this in defense of his district, Holland, where his children attend, and said he appreciated the diversity there as opposed to the schools that were growing predominantly white due to the choice policy.

All of this is in reference to controversy stemming from the policy's fallout, the major school population shift, and eventual segregation. The segregation and shift in student population made it so Holland was left with a dwindling number of students throughout the district which led to a loss in buildings as they resorted to charter schools to more reasonably house students, the district was left with 8 of their previous 15 school buildings. This resulted in statistics showing that one in three students living within the district, are now being educated in other districts or charter schools (Wilkerson 2017). This shift caused by the ability to choose schools outside one's district has effectively, whether unintentionally or otherwise, pushed a trend not just of Holland losing students and closing schools but also creating a frightening issue of

segregation as white students leave for schools in less diverse districts. Holland's low white student population, combined with its African-American and Latin-American population, constitutes the diversity Grose advocates for, and continues to defend.

These statistics initially seem hyperbolic, especially when the concerning issue of racial segregation becomes involved, but a closer look at these existing figures show that these are incredibly valid concerns and statements. This is largely due to the fact that financial support for state education follows the students into their new districts; as such, it further contributes to the financial inequality within Holland schools themselves (Wilkerson 2017). In this situation, these students are transferring into the school districts, but their families are not, so when it comes time for tax dollars to be allocated, more money is given to those school districts. In these neighborhoods, the residents are paying higher property taxes because of the amount of property they own; huge houses and acres of land. This policy is one that has been in play for two decades, and in that time, white student enrollment in the district has declined by a harsh 60%, with 2,100 fewer students today (Wilkerson 2017). The population of white students in Holland comprise nearly half the district's population, but less than half of that; 49% living in the district- - and only 38% attending, to be exact -- actually attend schools within the district (Wilkerson 2017).

These figures would not be disturbing on their own, but a considerable amount of fear comes from the aforementioned effect of segregation which parents have stated is not a part of their goal when pulling their children from the district. Many parents state that they are simply making better choices for their children, but this flies in the face of how disparate the districts are when considering the quality and success of their education models. Black River, a public school outside Holland boasts high test scores even when adjusted for various degrees of income

inequality, which is shown to affect scores negatively, across the district (Wilkerson 2017). This single example could support moving parents' claims, but Holland High boasts high scores as well, and while it cannot compare to outside district schools Zeeland West and East, it trumps them both when those same scores are adjusted for poverty levels (Wilkerson 2017).

This type of comparison might be seen as merely circumstantial or having little merit, but once you factor in the performance of white students in Holland to those outside the district, you find out that scores were of comparable value and not at all wildly different. This data shows that an argument for "better education" is off the table, because students' scores are not changing based on the choice dynamic. What is currently changing is the burden this has placed on schools outside the Holland district as migrating students now flood better perceived districts and segregation grows. Wilkerson's article provides stats that show in the 2009-10 school year, roughly 64% of choice students across the state moved to a less diverse district, a rate that now approaches 70%. The number of school districts statewide where fewer than half of the students are white rose from 38 a decade ago to 55 last year.

The number of charter schools where students of color are in majority rose from 119 to 182 over the course of 8 years, an indicator of the large population shift and accommodation made for it. In Atherton schools just outside Flint, nearly 90% of school-age children living within the district are white, but just 60% of the district's students are. The top destination of the students who are leaving: Grand Blanc schools (73% white enrollment) and Goodrich schools (93% white enrollment). This series of changes are being overseen by DeVos, as she has focused on them since her appointment to Education secretary. The lack of change in this policy has spurred educational inequality. Students remaining in Holland district have felt the loss of funds while students leaving for "better" educational institutions are getting the advantage of

having their districts improved upon at the cost of inner Hollanders' districts being neglected. Students who use the choice policy simply do not perform better on average, academically or otherwise. The lack of attention to change for the better in Michigan is in line with inequality and can only worsen as our secretary of education continues to allow it.

While these issues in Michigan embody DeVos' problematic and iniquitous stance, it is important to realize that we have the same growing issue in many of our country's urban societies. New Orleans, post Hurricane Katrina is a hotbed of issues stemming not only from the storm but from the displacement and inequality in its educational systems. In "Locking the Door Before We Got the Keys" both Henry Jr and Dixson went over the lesser explored policies behind charter school in the city. To preface this you must understand that public schools in the United States are constantly in flux and reform. Oftentimes, schools with a large POC (people of color) population are suffering under reform that hardly ever benefits its students of color. A lot of this reform has been centered around the idea that charter schools will resolve issues in schools across the board. Henry Jr & Dixson look to explore "ways in which white dominance informs and shapes supposed color-blind and color neutral education policy." (Henry/Dixson, 2016)

When taking race into consideration, one must examine just how much policy makers tend to disregard the districts they overhaul in search of reform. Charter schools' application processes are largely unbalanced, despite the fact that they are often touted as being high achieving institutions and beacons of change for students. After Hurricane Katrina, there was a host of legislative changes that aimed to ignore, if not entirely silence, African American voices in terms of reforms that would create charters (Dixon/Henry 2016). These legal maneuvers ended up all but eliminating community choice in what reforms would be made, much to their dismay.

Executive Orders 58 and 79 were put into effect, stripping the communities of their power to implement effective educational reform. These orders eliminated prior established rules which allowed the communities, faculties, and staff to vote on the fate of schools chosen to be reformed into charters (Dixson, Henry 2016). This blatant muting of the African American population caused a major displacement in African American communities within New Orleans as school populations were hit by a major shift.

The above-mentioned mass firing of African American staff education in New Orleans post-Katrina was indicative of what Henry and Dixson refer to as “White parasitic desires for power accumulation”, and one would be hard-pressed to find reasons to disagree with that sentiment. The reasoning for this could only be summarized as something like “the best laid plans of mice and men”, it is always framed as an unintentional consequence of reform meant to make positive change, “Despite the good intentions of White policymakers to address inequality, policymakers create policies that often reproduce White dominance. (Dixson, Henry page 2016). These educators had been ousted for their color and in broad daylight while in their most vulnerable state. The changes in laws had left them with literally no recourse to fight policies now in play; policies which treated them as disposable, unimportant, and shameful. This move, however, just as in Michigan, saw an uptick in white power accumulation as well as shifts that only benefit white communities. The executive orders not only displaced these African American educators, it took away the union rights that had protected them. Removing those rights ushered in waves of hiring changes that saw a disproportionate number of white teachers replacing previous educators.

To get a stronger idea of what it was like before this took place, Frazier-Anderson speaks to the prior state of education in New Orleans before Hurricane Katrina. In this article, Frazier-

Anderson explains “prior to Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005, charter schools within New Orleans Parish school district in New Orleans were significantly outnumbered by traditional public schools.” This was the case up until a district was formed to help with the recovery of educational institutions after Hurricane Katrina. The Recovery School District (RSD) saw to the increased reformation of schools within the district. Prior to Hurricane Katrina and (RSD), the district saw its fair share of issues, such as “years of systemic abuse and mismanagement,” which “produced a scenario frequently observed in impoverished urban school buildings” (Frazier-Anderson 2008). One such issue referring to State Superintendent Cecil J. Picard misappropriating \$71 million in school funds (Frazier-Anderson 2008). An audit, Pre-Katrina, highlighting this led to the hiring of New York-based law firms to investigate, and they found that nearly \$12 million a year had been overpaid to staff who never reported such discrepancy, and that individuals who no longer worked for the school district were likewise provided with undue compensation (Frazier-Anderson 2008).

This kind of abuse we see all too often in the public-school system, made it clear that without reform the district would plummet further than it already had. The Orleans Parish School Board and the team New York-based law firm Alvarez & Marsal, hired prior, had begun to make major reforms. These changes would not come into effect however, due to Hurricane Katrina and the reform that came in its destructive wake. The storm wiped out a district that was already failing in outstanding ways. New Orleans Parish was once declared one of largest districts in the state, with a 93.5% African American population, and it held the title of one of the state’s major employers, with an approximate 7,500 hundred employees (Frazier-Anderson 2008). Hurricane Katrina defeated the reputation of a once striving district that was overhauling its biggest disparities in an effort to thrive again, only to have its efforts rendered pointless by reform that

displaced original workers, changed law to silence union workers voting rights, and disproportionately split school populations in favor of the RSD.

Robbed of the opportunity and stripped of its former power to make change we see here an entire district gutted quite literally by greed and the elements. This is often argued against through statements saying that children of color are merely underachievers in every way when it comes to education. As such, the quality value of education diminishes the more POCs are involved, and they are instead exposed to a system that would transform entire states to ones that are focused on securing profit, power, and retaining superiority within a select few. Yong Zhao, a student of the University of Kansas speaks to this perception in great length in his article entitled “From Deficiency to Strength”, which talks about the achievement gap and the damage it has done. The radical standards that see students measured by how they perform academically based on uneven standards. Zhao writes “children of color and those from low-income families have, on average, performed worse on virtually all indicators of academic success”. This of course refers to the well-known standardized tests, graduation rates, and renowned college matriculation rates.

All of those factors play into how the “achievement gap” is a major face of educational inequality. We look back at Michigan and New Orleans and see the gap there, when funds, staff, and support are pulled from major districts and schools, you end up with lacking educational institutions that can barely function. Compared to their suburban counterparts, schools in urban areas, low-income areas, strive to “catch up” as they are experimented on to close the gap. Policies like “No Child Left Behind” and the reinforcement of common core and standardized testing have forced schools to measure students in the same way despite the circumstances surrounding their education.

NCLB was passed as a part of the Elementary and Secondary Education act and became law in 2002 under the Bush administration. This policy promised to “improve education for all, especially for those students who have been historically disadvantaged, and to close the achievement gap between white students and students of color” (Hursh 2007). NCLB requires that 95% of students in grades 3-8 and ones in high school be assessed through standardized test with standards in math, reading and science, and each year the schools are required to submit a plan for student assessment to the federal government and will decide if the school is making adequate yearly progress (Hursh 2007). Under this law, all students, no matter their disability or recent immigration statuses, must take the standardized test and are expected to be proficient in all the previously mentioned subjects.

For the schools who do not show adequate yearly progress, there are severe consequences, from be labeled “in need of improvement” and giving parents the option to transfer their children to other schools, all the way to having to reopen the school as a charter or completely removing the staff, and turning the school over to the state (Hursh 2007). The major issue with this as Hursh discusses is the fact that the “adequate yearly progress” indicators provides little information on whether schools are making progress but, instead, unfairly punishes urban schools that serve poor students of color. This happens because of two reasons; the narrow curriculum makes it difficult for teachers to connect classroom activities to the students own lives and culture and because test scores strongly correlates with the student’s family income rather than the teaching or curriculum. Consequently, the largest percentage of failing schools in New York State are found in poor urban school districts (Hursh 2007).

These factors add up to a gap we struggle to close and changes in policy that try to or are often seen as “too little too late” due largely in part to how far the system has fallen. You cannot

have education exist to benefit all students when the systems in place have, intentionally or otherwise, built a merit-based educational hierarchy that has not been abolished (Yong 2016). Standardized testing, SAT scores, and IQ tests have asked that students achieve greatness by beating these rudimentary exams. A meritocracy, defined as “government or the holding of power by people selected on the basis of their ability” is what we have seen established by forcing students to effectively learn to “win” at education instead of being empowered by it (Yong 2016).

All of this has led to a school-to-prison pipeline, lower income in graduates and non-graduates, and a cycle that resounds through the country and several generations of students. We briefly spoke about parents’ beliefs in better education being a factor in them backing school choice policy in Michigan. Norman Eng’s article “Education Inequality: Broadening Public Attitudes” touches on the misconception that harms schools the most. Parents often perceive the responsibilities of teachers to be developing the skills and tools students need to succeed. This would be ideal but does not take into account the factors we have touched on thus far. Financial support and resources namely are not in the hands of the teachers and so the tools they have are severely underpowered, not to mention dwindling. Eng writes on what a potential solution to this issue can be, if nothing else we must reframe the roles of teachers in the public eye. Framing, in this case, meaning balancing perception and the reality of policies and roles in educational institutions (Eng 2016). The idea that we have to look to selling people on is the idea and reality of education is a testament to how far the systems have fallen, propaganda should never enter the realm of education.

We find ourselves looking back at an individual with the power to affect change -- either for the better, or for worse. It is important to note how much resistance there was to DeVos’

appointment as Secretary of Education. There was a great deal of resistance: hundreds of thousands of phone calls, email messages, even visits to other members of congress in order to protest her appointment. She received the strongest opposition out of all Trump's nominees. This collective defiance against a person with a track record of putting profit over the provision of quality education for all is a signal of hope that people are well-placed to challenge her authority (Barkan 2017). But it cannot end there: As Barkan posits, true advocates of education must be vigilant in calling for true education reform. We must be incessant in our opposition, and diligent in dismantling the layers of systemic racism that exists in nearly every level of our current educational model in America today.

We can achieve this by redirecting the conversation around advocacy for education as an integral part of our democracy. Reframing the perspective, of all the values we share as a country we need to prioritize our shared understanding of the importance of education in our youth. In grades K through 12, we are experiencing a drought of societies caring for how it is formative to our youth. Speaking directly to the inequality plaguing the system and causing such blatant disparities in how we educate Black and Brown students in comparison to their contemporaries. In such a diverse nation and especially in this day and age, we have to steer clear of the disregard for formative education and equality. Prior to the Trump administration, "The Clinton and Obama administrations reduced K-12 education to little more than the required stepping-stone to the college degree that leads to successful competition in the global economy. That's a meager sales pitch, making it all too easy for K-12 schooling to be chopped up into products sold on the market." (Barkan 2017) but students are not products to shift on shelves and the inherent and unacknowledged racial bias empowered by the choice and free market models is unfortunately

not just a bad advertising pitch, it is patently wrong in that it continues to perpetuate a system that does not grant equal access to quality education for all.

We must first acknowledge that the educational system is broken, and poor children of color are being under served and this is having long-term effect of them. Lance D. Fusarelli wrote an article about a study conducted by UNICEF that compared a levels of children's well-ness in 28 different countries. The UNICEF report measured and compared child well-being on six dimensions: material well-being, health and safety, education, peer and family relationships, behaviors and risks, and young people's own subjective sense of well-being. It drew upon 40 separate indicators of child well-being (Fusarelli 2015). The rankings that were reported about United States were a bit surprising, as it is considered one of the richest nations but with a disproportionate percentage of its children living in poverty. Nearly one in four children (23%) in the United States lives in poverty (Fusarelli 2015). There are so many American children and families who struggle for basic necessities like clothing, food, shelter and education but this article shows us that this is not the case world-wide. It seems the cards are constantly stacked against families of color, not only does the United States have "the highest proportion of workers in poorly paid jobs, it also has the highest number of annual hours worked by poor families with children which leads to less supervision and social bonding of children most at risk" (Fusarelli 2015).

Giving American parents a "choice" cannot and will not address the flaws that exist within it, because the access to the entire spectrum of choices only exists for those who can afford it. DeVos' insistence on the choice model or other variations of it will always inevitably lead to the same inequality that we are trying to remedy. Her vision of public education is providing the bare minimum to all students, allowing students to learn reading, writing and

complete basic math. From there, only those with money would be able to buy additional education services to enhance their children. To drag education under the umbrella of capitalism would continue to drive a larger wedge between the working class and the one percent, making so kids living in poverty will never had a chance to get out of it. There is a belief from the rich that those who live in poverty are supposed to “pull themselves up by the boot straps”, but to eliminate the equal distribution of education to the poor, is removing the metaphorical boots completely.

We must work to level the playing field, and this begins with advocating for excellent public schools everywhere -- to give everyone the same access to free quality education in order to build on our youth’s potential, regardless of race, class, or environment. This work needs to be done by every educational system stakeholder, from those at the top, all the way down to the bottom. We must empower administrators, educators, and parents of color by giving them a bigger role on the creation and development of educational systems within their communities. Until we reinforce our conviction against this inefficient and abundantly racist system, we cannot possibly hope to bring change to children that need it. We can no longer emphasize the importance of education by feeding Black and Brown boys and girls the same anecdotes about how vital education should be to them, if we do not treat it as such. It is no longer a question of “is this system racist”, it is a matter of accepting and identifying how these systems are racist and what we must do going forward to change them.

Annotated Bibliography

Barkan, Joanne. "The Miseducation of Betsy DeVos." *Dissent*, vol. 64, no. 2, 2017, pp.141–146., doi:10.1353/dss.2017.0031.

This article discusses the political and educational policy history of the United States Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. DeVos believes in the free-market education reform which focuses on privatizing education, mainly K-12. DeVos is described as a "disciple" of Milton Friedman. The belief is that taxpayers should be funding private education with the government providing vouchers to fund the minimum adequate education the making parents pay for any additional educational services. DeVos is married into a multi-millionaire, religious and conservative family that regularly donates millions of dollars to organizations that operate in the movement to privatize public education. DeVos is following in the footsteps of the already created "Race to the Top" program, all she needs to do to be successful convincing state legislators. DeVos and Trump are both in on the privatization, he redirected \$20 billion in federal funds to state-run block grants for subsidizing school choice for low income kids.

Eng, Norman. "Education Inequality: Broadening Public Attitudes through Framing." *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 72, no. 4, 2016, pp. 676–695., doi:10.1111/josi.12189.

The researcher examines the concept of framing and attempt to use it in fields outside of education and in the political field, science and marketing communication in order to support the public in finding a solution to education inequality. Frames and framing are commonly used in three ways, to decrease bias and build support for an issue, to reduce the complexity or accessibility of an issue; and to establish a narrative or shape discourse. Combined, they can compel people toward change. For education, frames and framing may help overcome the

“magic bullet” bias, as well as the public’s individualist and consumerist values. The article explains how common core was introduced and provided requirements of where students should academically by a certain grade, but many parents have no real understanding of the policy even after 4 years of it be initiated. Eng discusses a way common core and education inequality could be simplified for the average parent in hopes to regain support by framing it with simpler words and phrases. Framing these issues to remove the individualistic thinking of society and move toward creating a system that will make it easier to change the how others think about education inequality.

Fusarelli, lance D. “Peabody Journal of Education.” *Taylor and Francis Online*, 4 Nov. 2015, www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/0161956X.2015.1087779.

The article discussed the use of international data on child well-being and educational attainment. Children from all around the world were compared based on six dimensions; material well-being, health and safety, education, peer and family relationships, behaviors and risks, and the young person’s own sense of well-being. This study was put in a UNICEF report in 2007 and a follow-up study ranked the USA 26th of 28 countries in child well-being. The study explained that the United States is a wealthy nation with a disproportionate percentage of its children living in poverty, nearly one in four. This comes as a surprise because the US has the highest number of annual hours worked by poor families with children, which leads to less supervision and social bonding with their children. When it comes educational well-being US ranked 27th of 29 countries, and because of this there has been a lot of focus on education reform. The reading continued to compare the United States to other countries like the Netherlands and Greece to paint a better picture of what child well-being looks like around the world.

Henry Jr, K. L., and A. D. Dixon. *"Locking the Door Before We Got the key": Racial Realities of the Charter School Authorization Process in Post- Katrina New Orleans*. 30th ed., SAGE.

Lawrence and Dixon discussed the process of opening a new Charter school in different states and how that process is racialized and reproduced white dominance. The article provides data that painted a fuller picture of why charter schools are a part of the problem, this country there are over six thousand charter schools compared to the ninety-two thousand public schools. Nationally about 60% of the Charter schools are in urban communities, compared to 25% of traditional public schools being in those same neighborhoods. The researchers believe that these schools have been called "laboratories" and the students used for "experiments" in reproducing white dominance. Many African American parents were more attracted to Charter schools because there is supposed to be a avenue created allowing non-education community leaders access to administration to ensure students are being taught about their culture and where they come from. The parish of New Orleans deciding to convert all the schools to Charter eliminated "school choice" for the parents of those students, and Executive orders were made that eliminated the already existing laws that requires members of the community, parents and educators to vote on if they wanted the school in their community. Black educators were treated as disposable, they lost their union protections and were replaced by "alternatively licensed white teachers which solidified white dominance. There were black educators, social workers, business owners and community members from the city, who came together in post-Katrina New Orleans and applied to open a charter of their own but were never taken seriously.

"High School Graduation Rates by State" *Governing* 14 May 2019

<https://www.governing.com/gov-data/high-school-graduation-rates-by-state.html>

This article gave the break down of high school graduation and drop out rates by state and race. The writers of the article collected data for the school years of 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 and comparing the data state by state in order to track common trends. The data shows there has been significant improvements in dropout rates for African American and Hispanic American students. The data was collected by the Department of Education, so it doesn't include any data from privately funded schools.

Hursh, David. "Exacerbating Inequality: The Failed Promise of the No Child Left Behind Act." *Race Ethnicity and Education*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2007, pp. 295–308., doi:10.1080/13613320701503264.

Hursh writes about the reality of the 2002 law "No Child left behind" that has been called the largest intervention by the federal government into education in the history of the United States. The goal of NCLB aimed to improve education for all, especially for those students who have been historically disadvantaged. This new policy focused primarily on elementary and secondary education, and demanded mandatory standardized testing used to evaluate students, teachers and schools. NCLB required each state to develop their own assessments and if schools did not make adequate yearly progress for 2 consecutive years, they must be identified as "in need of improvements". Students in these schools must be given the option to transfer to another public school and schools failing for 5 consecutive years must either reopen as a charter school, replace all their staff or turn operations over to the state. The three examples of how NCLB failed are the fact that yearly progress indicators provided little information on whether schools were making progress, standardized testing are unreliable and invalid means to access student learning and

there was a narrowed curriculum which made it hard for teacher to connect lesson to the students real life.

Koch, Tom, and Ken Denike. "A Geographical Perspective on Inequality: The New York City School Funding Controversy." *Journal of Geogrg2aaphy*, vol. 102, no. 5, 2003, pp. 193–201., doi:10.1080/00221340308978547.

The article examines the ongoing battle for school-funding mechanism that fails to give all students equal opportunity for "sound basic education". There was a supreme court case in NYC that ruled the funding inequalities adversely effecting poorer, non-white school districts violated equal protection clauses in the state and federal constitutions. There is a range of income disparity existing between districts in boroughs are a clear example of how money is being distributed to schools. The median income in Nassau County whose population is 86% Caucasian \$71,001 compared to those living in the "circle of poverty"; through northern Manhattan, south Bronx and north Brooklyn, the family annual income is \$10,000 or less. The problem is a school system in which the poorest city schools received half the amount of money per student as those in richer, suburban school districts. New York States provides to schools a base stipend for all state high school students irrespective of their geographic location, most of the money comes from local property tax. If the property value id high in a school district the resulting revenues will be high.

Pamela Frazier-Anderson, "Public Schooling in Post Hurricane Katrina New Orleans: Are Charter Schools the Solution or Part of the Problem?" *The Journal of African American History*. Summer, 2008, Vol. 93 Issue 3, p410, 20 p.

Frazier-Anderson's peer reviewed article discussing the history of New Orleans education and how it was impacted by hurricane Katrina. The article discussed the multiple steps that public officials took in an attempt to correct the issues that were previously dug up during an investigation in government corruption. The research discussed the perspective of the community and how the choice to turn all of the schools over to a government ran program has not only isolated students but teachers as well. There are incentive programs that have been created to bring younger, newer and whiter teachers to the parish of New Orleans which then eliminates the community feel in the schools. These charter systems are set up to meet students where they are an attempt to elevate and evaluate using test score and teacher incentives. The issues that comes with this is they have completely eliminated any remanence of cultural competence in the classroom setting which eliminates the chance for education through the lens of the black experience. All of these factors and others are present in the articles the pros and cons a weighted and a predicted long-term effect is discussed as well.

Parvis, Elizabeth A. "WHEN CHOICE IS THE ONLY OPTION: THE NEW ORLEANS ALL-CHARTER SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE INEQUALITY IT BREED." *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*, vol. 47, no. 1, Sept. 2015, pp. 281–311., doi:0090-7944.

This article started with acknowledging that the United States Public School system has been riddled with issues for many years now. With charter and private schools constantly popping up and growing in popularity, the researcher wondered how long the classic version of public-school would last. This is no longer a question in the parish of New Orleans, because as of August 2014, all of the schools have been converted to charter schools. the New Orleans all-charter school system shows exactly what happens in a privatized system that takes no care to avoid racially disparate academic achievement issues. The article focused on two main issues,

the racial issues that come with the all charter system and explain why New Orleans school choice-based system acts as a barrier between white and black students. Schools in New Orleans were failing for a while prior to this new ordered changed but after Katrina, the Louisiana government saw a perfect opportunity to introduce this new system. Greg Richmond, president of the National Association of Charter School Authorizers, articulated that people described the New Orleans school district as “corrupt. Inefficient.” The researchers discuss the notion that the all New Orleans parents have option of school choice but that is untrue, it is only granted to a select few. The majority of students in the parish of New Orleans are mostly labeled as “high risk” and they are put in a school system that fosters segregation and inequality.

Wilkerson, Mike. “Betsy DeVos and the Segregation of School Choice.” *Education Digest*, vol. 82, no. 8, Apr. 2017, pp. 19–24.

The article focuses on the Michigan school choice policy because this was the focus of Betsy DeVos , the current secretary of education, as she is a school choice advocate. The city of Holland has struggled with student retention in their district because many of their more affluent families were sending their kids to schools in other districts. Holland Hispanic population has been growing causes white flight and the district’s finances to struggle because state education dollars follows the students to their new districts. Thousands of white parents were moving their students out of their residential district and more into segregated ones. These same parents say they made choices because the schools outside of the district have better resources, less racial friction, higher test score and safer environment. The schools that these students are moving to are Charters that create policies that blocker certain students from entering which increased the segregation.

“Who's in Prison In America? Fast Facts About Incarcerated Americans.” *OpenInvest*, 11 June 2018, www.openinvest.co/blog/statistics-prison-america/.

This article gives a break -down of what the population of jails and prisons look like in the United States. There had been a 500% increase in incarcerations in the US in the past four decades and race has a lot to do with it. There has also been a shift to privatizing prisons, which incentives states to increase arrests to keep as many people imprisoned as possible.

Zhano, Yong. “From Deficiency to Strength:” *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 72, no. 4, 2016, pp. 720–739., doi:10.1111/josi.12191

Yong writes about education inequality in the United States, breaking down the many pieces that contributed to an imbalanced system. The article began with acknowledging the fact that children of color and from low-income families, on average, perform worse on all indicators of academic success. We are reminded that the “achievement gap” has become synonymous with educational inequality and has serious social and economic consequences. The article tells us that the public-school education system is a deficit driven meritocracy, focusing mostly on what students cannot do instead of what they can. A meritocracy breeds inequality based on merit, which in American is presumed to be a combination of ability & effort, and in education that is measured in test scores. For many students, their merit has much to do with their parents economic standing; the time and money parents have to invest in their children. Low income families, which on average are black families, do not have the time or money that their richer counterpart can provide.

“High School Graduation Rates by State” *Governing* 14 May 2019

<https://www.governing.com/gov-data/high-school-graduation-rates-by-state.html>

This article gave the break down of high school graduation and drop out rates by state and race. The writers of the article collected data for the school years of 2010-2011 and 2014-2015 and comparing the data state by state in order to track common trends. The data shows there has been significant improvements in dropout rates for African American and Hispanic American students. The data was collected by the Department of Education, so it doesn't include any data from privately funded schools.