

Racial Segregation has been a long standing issue in New Jersey public schools, and is still prevalent today. Despite the various efforts to desegregate schools many public schools continue to be segregated. This segregation is detrimental to the academic and social development of students, it also reinforces the systemic racism being caused. There are various leading factors for the cause of segregation in New Jersey public schools.

New Jersey school systems require students to attend schools closest to them, the issue that arises from this is specific community dominated regions will be attending the school. This community dominated region was caused by racial segregation where many colored students were forced to attend schools farther away compared to their white counterparts which were allowed to attend the closest schools. "In 1871, the Legislature passed an act making all of the public schools in New Jersey entirely free for attending students. New Jersey became the last state in the nation to abolish rate bills and tuition payments. That foreshadowed the constitutional amendment a few years later, requiring a "thorough and efficient" system of public education." (Thorough and Efficient: The Evolution of Public Education, n.d.). New Jersey became the last state in the U.S. to abolish tuition payments which were majority done by white families for white based schools, improving their schools while colored specific schools were left unchanged. "Legislation enabling charter schools was passed in 1997. Today there are nearly 90 charters in New Jersey; they are publicly funded, but are governed by a board of trustees, rather than by the local school board. The Interdistrict School Choice program, enacted in 2010, allows public schools to admit students whose district of residence is elsewhere." ("Thorough and Efficient: The Evolution of Public Education"). Charter schools in America are for very small segments of students in which are more proven to have a lot more colored students. The issue arising from

this although education standards are being met the issue with segregation still resides causing this divide which is only being emphasized continuously instead of being broken.

The issue resulting from schools being segregated come marginally from the past actions taken in society. For instance during the period with mass segregation of white and colored people it was very prominent for colored folk to be treated worse, while white folk were treated with the utmost respect and given higher status/ authority in society. “Although not enforced with Southern-style heavy-handedness, de facto segregation also existed in the North. There were no "whites only" signs in public places, or lynchings in the North. But, blacks sat in the balconies of movie theaters while whites got the best seats. Blacks could swim at public pools from noon to 2 p.m. while whites got to swim the rest of the day”. (“School Desegregation and School Funding in New Jersey”). Colored children were not allowed to attend nearby schools around them as it was typically seen as being a white only school. This would cause issues as many families were forced to move and or have to send their children far away in order to just go to school. “When the Supreme Court made its ruling on January 31, 1944, the justices held unanimously for Mrs. Hedgepeth and Mrs. Williams. Chief Justice Newton Porter, writing for the court, stated: “The sole question presented is the legal right of the respondent (Trenton Board of Education) to refuse these children admission in the school nearest their residences.” (“School Desegregation and School Funding in New Jersey”). This issue would be a main reason why schools today are being de facto segregated. Many families were forced to attend schools in only specific regions and as many generations got accustomed it got to the point where these families stayed there even after laws were passed to prevent this.

In conclusion the overall issue of New Jersey schools being segregated comes from not only current actions not being taken and with previous actions of the past affecting the future.

This segregation causes a divide in students in which it affects the development of social and academic lives. Even with the many laws placed to attempt the prevention of this segregation, it is very clear on the fact the issue relies more on the fact on how exactly the New Jersey schooling system is being enforced. This issue is a multifactorial issue as it was not only just one mishap that caused this segregation but the countless years and generations of prejudice.

Works Cited

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