

“With All Deliberate Speed”

Achievement, Citizenship and Diversity in American Education

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Transmittal Statement

In May, 2004, the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education at New York University held a conference to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1954 U. S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. The response, both from those who participated and those who attended, was exhilarating.

After reviewing the various comments and statements made at the conference, it was concluded that there is a continuing frustration with the issue of racial segregation in our country and its impact on education. As the Honorable Judge Robert L. Carter proclaimed at NYU's 2004 *Brown* conference, "school segregation was but a symptom of the disease of racism that continues to plague our society."

The first clear evidence that racial segregation in education was a symptom and not the cause of racial inequality in the United States came immediately after the *Brown* decision. The Supreme Court issued a second ruling in 1955 – commonly known as *Brown II* – that created the phrase, "with all deliberate speed." Thus, while the first *Brown* decision opened the Constitutional door to equal educational opportunity, *Brown II* effectively swung that door back in the other direction.

For many in our society, "with all deliberate speed" has come to symbolize frustration with the progress of equal opportunities generally and in education, in particular.

Therefore, the Metro Center at New York University – with funding from The Rockefeller Foundation and other support from The McGraw-Hill Companies, Time Warner Inc. and KnowledgeWorks Foundation – convened a group of prominent education, community and policy leaders to discuss ways to address the continuing inequality and inadequacy in many of our nation's schools. The charge was to develop a document for change away from "all deliberate speed" to be disseminated to the American people and its current leadership having the power to make such change.

Our call for action – deliberate, and with all speed – is submitted herewith.

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A Call to Action

Just a few weeks ago, our nation bestowed an extraordinary honor upon the great civil-rights advocate, Rosa Parks, by allowing her to lie in state in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol.

This rare distinction was appropriate and well-deserved because Rosa Parks, along with millions of other brave Americans, black and white, challenged the deeply-flawed assumption that our democracy could be sustained by living in a separate but equal society. The death of Rosa Parks also has moved many Americans to reflect on the progress we have made in becoming a more integrated society, where we have fallen short, and what we must do in the future to fulfill the great promise that is America.

This paper is written for the express purpose of beginning a new conversation about quality and diversity in our nation's public schools. The fact that so many public schools in the United States are segregated by race, ethnicity and income stands in sharp contrast to the integration of the American workplace, our armed forces and the many civic and religious communities that make up our society. This is a vexing problem that we cannot ignore.

In 1954, our nation's effort to integrate our schools focused on *de jure* segregation. The U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* was about our failure to live up to our democratic principles and the ideals of good citizenship.

In 2005, our frame of reference is fundamentally different. Today we need to recognize that diversity in our schools is about preserving the strength of our democracy, sustaining America's prosperity in a global economy and protecting our vital security and other national interests.

The question is this – how should our nation's public schools respond to this challenge?

This paper suggests that America in 2005 is not the America of 1954 and that many of the appropriate actions taken to integrate our schools at that time may not be useful now. In 1954, our schools alone were asked to carry the full burden of integration. In 2005, any effort to reach across racial boundaries in school and out of school must be based on a new school-and-community compact.

We also believe that achieving diversity in our public schools must not be pursued at the expense of providing high-quality teaching and learning opportunities for all of our children, including and especially those who are of low income and racially isolated, whether they are white, black, Latino or any other race or ethnic background. Diversity is a parallel concern to raising academic achievement – giving our young people the skills they need to get ahead in a global economy and teaching them the basic values that are at the foundation of American citizenship.

Ultimately, we believe that the United States can only become stronger and better able to meet the challenges of the 21st Century if we continue to invest in quality public schools and recognize that our diversity is a great national strength. Giving our children the opportunity to learn together, regardless of racial, ethnic or social background, helps us to become a more unified and democratic society.

E Pluribus Unum – Out of Many, One.

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Executive Summary

The United States is now undergoing one of the most profound demographic transitions in our history. We are becoming a new people. The increasing racial diversity of the American people has profound consequences to our sense of national unity, the growth of our democracy and our future economic prosperity. Our ability as a nation to make this transition depends to a large extent on the strength of our public education system.

Unfortunately, the United States continues to have an unequal and two-tiered system of public education. Even as the United States becomes increasingly diverse, our nation's K-12 education system remains unequal and increasingly segregated by race and income. Despite decades of effort since the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, we have yet to address fully the many structural inequities and inadequate resources that maintain this unequal system. Despite a 40-year effort by the federal government to mitigate this inequality through a series of education initiatives, the racial achievement gap remains deep and wide.



These inequities, social and educational, recently were laid bare by the floodwaters of Hurricane Katrina. The shocking visuals that emerged after the storm have forced the country as a whole to confront the situation directly and think about what it means for our nation. The paradox, of course, is that this social inequality continues to exist at a time when the American people are becoming more tolerant and accepting of our nation's growing diversity.

We are a nation ambivalent. We are both for integration and against it. We are for equality, but we are unwilling to create and sustain policies that ensure equal opportunity. We are for academic success for all children, but we allow millions of them to remain isolated in inferior schools.

There is an inherent disconnection between our belief in equal opportunity and what we actually do to create those opportunities. At the state level, our courts have been full for more than two decades with school funding equity and adequacy cases. The fact that state legislatures from New York to Texas continue to drag their feet in responding to these court orders is a sharp and painful reminder that America does not change easily.

Nevertheless, we believe that now is the time to start a new conversation about how we can help our children academically and cross over the existing racial and ethnic boundaries at this time when our nation is becoming increasingly diverse. We believe that our public schools have a role to play in this conversation.

Some may ask why even raise this issue when so many people, of all racial backgrounds, seem willing to abide by the status quo. Our answer is straightforward. If we expect all of our children to go on to college and have diverse learning experiences and then go on to work with people from diverse ethnic, racial, social and economic backgrounds, surely it makes sense to prepare our children for these new experiences as early as possible.

Now is the right time to reflect on the lessons we have learned since *Brown* and move in a new direction to address the lack of diversity in our nation's elementary and secondary education system.

We begin with this assertion. Any new national conversation regarding quality, adequacy and equity in our K-12 education system must create the link between achievement, citizenship and diversity with our long-term national interests. While this link has been made in higher education – most recently in the University of Michigan affirmative action case, *Grutter v. Bollinger* – this conversation has yet to take place with regard to K-12 education.

In these highly-charged political times, the traditional framework of integration and desegregation may prove counterproductive and conjure up images of past racial and class tensions that deeply divided this nation. Furthermore, the integration/desegregation framework that has defined much of our thinking in the last 50 years does not take into account the rapidly-growing Latino and Asian student populations in the United States.

We recognize with searing clarity that many minority children in our poorest urban and rural communities are so geographically isolated that they have little chance ever of going to a diverse school. In that instance, the primary goal is not diversity but, rather, the best education possible as a stepping stone to more diverse learning and work experiences as these children grow up.

Despite our frustrations regarding the lack of progress in many communities since *Brown*, we recognize that America is fundamentally a changed nation as a result of this landmark decision. Generations of young people have grown up with a richer and deeper commitment to equality. This report, then, is a direct appeal to the young people of America to take up the challenge that so many of us have carried for so many years.

We believe there are five powerful dynamics that may move the American people to overcome their ambivalence toward improving education, promoting diversity and acting decisively in the national interest.

1) The United States will continue to become even more racially, ethnically and culturally diverse in the decades ahead and we must respond to that increasing change.

2) We are losing ground and jobs to other countries -- for example, China and India. Our nation's ability to sustain our long-term economic success increasingly depends on the very children we are not educating now.

3) Our public schools have a powerful role in sustaining democracy and encouraging good citizenship and must, therefore, address the issue of our increasing diversity.

4) There is broad public support for giving our children much better and more diverse learning experiences at all levels of education.

5) Our nation's diversity is one of the great, untapped strengths of our democracy and remains vital to our national security and our standing as a world leader.

In proposing to reframe our national debate about diversity in our K-12 public education system, we also suggest a realistic timeline.

1) Immediately, we must focus relentlessly on supporting quality schools in high-poverty and racially-isolated schools and school districts, while making a stronger case to the American public about the value of diversity.

2) We must provide continued support for school districts that recognize the academic benefits of racial diversity, in addition to providing children of all races and ethnic backgrounds the opportunity to learn together in school and out of school.

3) In the long term, we must develop a new social compact between schools and communities to address this issue, in addition to addressing ways to overcome barriers to a more integrated American, with a particular focus on the intersection between education and housing patterns.

Recommendation One: Diversity must be considered a key element in the definition of a “high-quality education” in legislation and fiscal equity judicial cases.

- We encourage state legislatures to push for providing essential and quality educational opportunities, no matter where a child goes to public school, and include diverse learning environments and opportunities as a key component of a high-quality education.

- The upcoming reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) provides Congress with a perfect opportunity to consider the academic benefits of diversity, along with

other better learning opportunities, when reviewing public school choices, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Title I and other federally-funded programs to be renewed.

- Congress also should give priority consideration to expanding the definition of a highly-qualified teacher under NCLB to ensure that teachers get additional training to avoid racial and/or ethnic stereotypes that can lead to low expectations. This training should be available as part of professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals under NCLB's Title I and Title II requirements.

- We must support student fiscal equity cases across the nation. These cases are defining the key components of an adequate or high-quality education and must be fully funded. Diversity should be incorporated as one of those components.

Recommendation Two: We must ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education and, at the same time, have the opportunity for diverse learning experiences wherever possible.

Support for children in high-poverty and racially-isolated schools

- Children in high-poverty schools have the greatest need for well-qualified teachers and a rigorous academic program. In the last decade, research has provided us with a growing body of evidence that these children need access to pre-kindergarten and full-day kindergarten, smaller classes and reading help, especially for adolescents. In our view, literacy is a basic civil right. We strongly support increased funding for literacy coaches in Title I schools and increased funding for the Striving Readers program.

- We remain concerned about the over-representation of minorities, particularly African-American boys, in special education classes. African-American youth, ages 6 through 21, account for 14.8 percent of the general population. Yet, they account for 20.2 percent of the special education population. Too often, mislabeling results in low expectations for achievement and the potential for students to give up and drop out.

- In the coming decade, many more minority students will enter our nation's public school system. We support innovations that prepare teachers to be culturally competent to increase learning in core academic subjects in racially and ethnically diverse and isolated classrooms. Given the fact that many new teachers get their first classroom experience in a high-poverty school, particular attention should be paid to helping them overcome negative racial and ethnic stereotyping, in addition to supporting these teachers with mentors and ongoing professional development programs.

- There are two significant ways that we can get more minority students on the path to college: increase the number of minority students who take Advanced Placement courses and create a stronger link to our higher education system through the newly-emerging "Early College High Schools" initiative. State and federal policies and funding should encourage the rapid expansion of these critical linkages.

Learning together in school and out of school

- Ensuring that our young people are well-rounded and engaged citizens has always been at the very foundation of American education. In recent years, many schools have moved beyond established civic education classes to embrace character education, after-school opportunities and service learning to spark the idealism of our young people.
- After-school learning programs, including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers supported with federal funds, offer a rich opportunity for keeping young people safe and healthy, while giving them additional learning time to improve academic skills. When the school day ends in this country, 14 million children go home alone to an empty house. After-school programs also offer community service opportunities that can help children reach across racial and ethnic boundaries.
- Service learning demonstrates academic effectiveness and provides young people with one way to interact with other racial and ethnic groups in a positive educational context while serving their community. About 1.2 million school students are participating in the Learn and Serve program sponsored by the National Corporation for National Service. We support the Corporation's goal to foster and support service learning in at least 50 percent of all public schools by the year 2010.
- We support the continued expansion of the federal Americorps program. This is an established federal program that brings together young people ages 17 to 24 from many different racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds for 10-12 months of voluntary service in their communities. Since 1994, more than 400,000 men and women have served our nation in their communities. This program is a wonderful example of creating diverse learning experiences for idealistic young Americans.

Making the most of public school choice

- At the state level, we urge communities to see the advantages of diversity as an educational benefit and to do everything possible to avoid the re-segregation of our schools.
- We encourage communities to consider the Lynn, Massachusetts, voluntary integration plan that recently was approved by the U. S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.
- We encourage state legislatures to develop policies to establish equity provisions to help public charter schools maintain a diverse student body.
- Magnet school programs, which were established to promote diversity, must proactively work to achieve this goal by ensuring that all parents are aware of the opportunities they offer and by providing adequate support for disadvantaged students to participate and succeed.

- While a significant body of literature has developed on the benefits of racial and ethnic diversity in higher education, there is a need for greater research on the benefits of diversity in our K-12 system – via charter schools, magnet schools, worksite schools, theme schools, etc. – as well as for information on best practices to attain diversity.

Recommendation Three: In order to create new opportunities for diverse learning experiences, a new social compact and working relationship must be established between our schools and the community.

- Desegregation failed in some communities because almost the entire burden of integrating our society was placed on our public schools. That was a mistake we cannot afford to repeat. At the same time, our public schools no longer can carry the full burden of improving academic achievement and also be asked to solve all of the social problems that arrive at their doorsteps.

- We, therefore, recommend a fundamental change in the relationship between schools and the community, where both are seen as having a shared responsibility in the education of all children. In short, the success of every child must shift from being just a school responsibility to a shared responsibility with the community.

- In changing that relationship, the community must take over the primary responsibility of providing support services in order to free up and expand the ability of teachers to focus on their core academic mission and meet the new accountability standards of NCLB. In addition, since much learning takes place outside of the classroom, the community has an equal, if not larger, role in helping our young people understand the changing dynamics of our society.

- We support the many grassroots initiatives in communities that expand children’s learning environments, including the growing effort to design “Schools as Centers of Community.” Designing school facilities (currently a \$30 billion annual investment nationwide) to include space for community services is an effective, practical way for the community and the school to share responsibility for the education of the children. At the same time, many more educators are blurring the boundaries between the school and the community and recognizing the community as a learning asset. This enables the expansion of school-day, after-school and summer learning opportunities through school-community partnerships.

- In the past few years, there has been a growing call for greater regional equity in terms of taxes, housing, health and educational opportunities. This effort to build more safe and prosperous mixed-income, livable communities – an effort that links smart-growth advocates with residential community developers – is a source of ideas and policies that can help foster diversity in our public schools.

- This call for greater regional equity comes at a time when many inner-city neighborhoods and inner-ring suburbs are being revived by the re-migration of young families. This re-migration is an opportunity to create high-achieving schools in an integrated setting.

- State and local governments should support and stabilize integrated communities, as well as establish policies that provide affordable housing for low-income and working-class families, especially in areas that are being gentrified.

- Efforts should be made to persuade developers, builders and the real estate community that there is a ready-made audience of home buyers who are eager to move into new developments that are safe, committed to high-quality schools, adhere to the principles of smart growth and are racially diverse. A new and growing community development in Stapleton, Colorado, is an excellent example.

“With All Deliberate Speed”

Achievement, Citizenship, and Diversity in American Education

Introduction

In the fall of 2005, as 53 million children are in the midst of a new school year full of hope and promise, we confront a troubling and complex American conundrum – even as the United States becomes increasingly diverse, our nation’s K-12 public education system remains unequal and increasingly segregated by race and income.

Fifty-plus years after *Brown v Board of Education*, the United States continues to have an unequal and two-tiered system of public education. The fact is that we have moved from a *de jure* two-tiered education system to a *de facto* unequal education system in too many communities. Despite decades of effort, we have yet to address fully the many structural inequities and inadequate resources that continue this inequality in our K-12 public education system today.

Millions of children remain isolated in high-poverty schools in our urban and rural areas, and many of these schools have, for all intents and purposes, become education dropout factories, according to some education scholars. The chance of a minority student actually graduating from one of these impoverished schools is only about 50 percent. There is a direct and growing correlation between high concentrations of poverty, racial isolation and low student achievement.

Paradoxically, this persistent, deeply-rooted and structural inequality continues to exist at a time when the American people are becoming more tolerant and accepting of our nation’s growing diversity. As a people, we are more than willing to support the principle that every child should have an equal education. Yet, at the very same time, we remain unwilling to make the serious investments or implement policies that would provide all children a high-quality education and put many more minority students on the pathway to college and success in the workforce.

A Nation Ambivalent

Our dilemma, of course, is that we are a nation ambivalent. We are both for integration and against it. We are for equality but unwilling to create and sustain policies that ensure equal opportunity. We are for academic success for all, but we allow millions of children to remain isolated in inferior schools. Many of us are eager to give our children and grandchildren more diverse experiences but, as a society, we make little effort to increase those opportunities.

Even as we become more accepting of our diversity as a people, we live apart and learn apart in communities that largely are segregated by race and income. We are torn between our belief that

every individual deserves and needs an equal chance to succeed and the stark reality that too many minority children are isolated in high-poverty schools, with the odds profoundly stacked against them.

There is an inherent disconnection between our belief in equal opportunity and what we actually do to create those opportunities. We believe that this disconnection must yield ultimately to a growing national imperative – the reality that our nation’s future economic success, as well as our national security, will depend increasingly on the very minority children whom we are not educating now.

On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of *Brown*, there was a great deal of soul searching about racial progress in America. But soul searching is not a forward agenda or a plan of action for our changing times. We no longer can afford to remain ambivalent to our growing diversity and our need to give all of our children an excellent education.

In 1900, W.E.B. Du Bois asserted that the “problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.” One hundred years later, the issue still is the “problem of the color line” and our seeming unwillingness to recognize that our increasing diversity can and should be one of this nation’s great strengths in the growing international community.

The United States has a long and tragic history of racial bigotry and tension. We should not assume, just because America’s attention is now focused on the war on terror and Iraq, that this persistent American condition simply will go away if we ignore it. The great unfolding tragedy of Hurricane Katrina has put into stark relief the issues of race and class that continue to split American society .

A democracy full of diverse people cannot easily sustain itself over time if we make absolutely no effort to recognize the profound demographic changes that are now redefining our society and what they mean for the future of our great country. The face of America is changing. Our increasing diversity is both a challenge and an opportunity for this nation.

- The challenge is to recognize that such a massive transformation of who we are as a people surely will test America, given our uneven history of racial equality.
- The opportunity is to recognize that our increasing diversity is one of our great untapped strengths in protecting our nation’s economy and security in this rapidly-changing world.

Decades of Frustration

Many of us who signed this report have spent decades working to achieve and sustain the great American ideal of equal opportunity and a quality education for all children. Yet, after more than 50 years of effort, we remain dissatisfied and frustrated with the lack of progress that has been made. Even today, too many of our schools still are being used as sorting machines – sorting children into those who are college bound, those who will learn basic skills and those who will be left behind.

Brown may have transformed this nation and allowed us to tear down the *de jure* walls of segregation that separated us as a people. But *Brown* did not root out the structural inequities that still color our public education system and we have yet to overcome the “tyranny of low expectations” and negative racial and ethnic stereotypes that still define much of our public school system today.

Indeed, the Supreme Court’s *Brown II* decision in 1955, that called for schools to desegregate “*with all deliberate speed*” in many ways slowed down the process of integration. Thus, while the first *Brown* decision opened the constitutional door to equal educational opportunity, *Brown II* effectively swung that door back in the other direction, without closing it completely. As a result, the phrase, “*with all deliberate speed*,” has come to symbolize the frustration of many people with the lack of progress toward equal opportunities across racial lines, in general, and in education, in particular.

The re-segregation of our nation’s school in the 1990s and the fact that so many poor and minority children still attend inferior school facilities, just as they did 50 years ago, surely tells us that this nation achieved limited success in reaching the high goals first set out in *Brown*.

Judge Robert L. Carter, a close associate of Thurgood Marshall and one of the signers of this report, has suggested that the only true lasting legacy of *Brown* may have been to “transform Blacks’ perceptions of themselves and their role in this country’s institutions.... away from a tacit acceptance of the White majority’s definition of Blacks’ role in society to the more expansive concept of true equality embodied in our Constitution.”

Judge Carter is not alone in this belief. Many Americans are ambivalent about the racial progress that has been made in the last 50 years. For many African Americans, the twin goals first set out by *Brown* – of racial integration and a better education for all – are little more than a diminished dream. Some have given up entirely on this high ideal and seek only to make sure that their children get the quality education they deserve, regardless of who sits next to them in the classroom.

While we recognize the realism and even the pessimism of these sentiments, we believe that it is time to start a new conversation about the value of diversity in our public education system.

An Appeal to the Young People of America

Change is never easy. As a nation, we lurch forward in our quest for equality and opportunity for all and then slip backward and accept the status quo. We become passive and resigned to institutional practices and policies that divide us as a people. We accept the pernicious assumption that inequality is just a fact of life.

But change is also the birthright of every American and change does happen. Despite our frustrations regarding the lack of progress since *Brown*, we recognize that America is

fundamentally a changed nation as a result of *Brown*. Generations of young people have grown up with a richer and deeper commitment to equality.

We believe that the vast majority of these young people have moved beyond the bigotry and racial intolerance that has haunted our history for the last four centuries. This report, then, is a direct appeal to the young people of America to take up the challenge of equality, achievement and diversity in education. Indeed, many of our young people rejoice in the diversity that is America.

We are a changed people because of *Brown*, even if we have not changed fast enough to provide a better education for all of our children. The great work of achieving racial and social justice in this nation is still incomplete. We need to educate and prepare a new generation of voters and leaders who are willing to address the challenges of leading our increasingly diverse democracy. Surely this is an important role both for public elementary and secondary education and higher education in this great land.

The Changing Demographics of the 21st Century: Five Powerful Dynamics

The vast majority of educators these days are intensely focused on the policy implications of No Child Left Behind, particularly the requirements regarding ongoing assessment and well-qualified teachers. We believe that NCLB is an important education reform that puts the spotlight squarely on continuing racial disparities in our national effort to close the achievement gap.

We suggest, however, that the push for high standards is only one part of a larger and broader education agenda. If we really want to prepare our young people for a changing America and a new international environment, we must redefine what we mean by an “adequate” education in the 21st Century. Our children also must grow up to be well-rounded citizens and have a greater opportunity to gain the academic and social benefits that come from integrated school settings. We believe that five powerful dynamics will require this nation to change fundamentally its frame of reference and come to see our growing diversity as vital to our long-term interests, including our national security.

Dynamic I: The United States will continue to become even more diverse in the decades ahead and our schools and communities must respond together to developing trends.

The world has gotten smaller, flatter and more diverse. Our global society is becoming increasingly interconnected. Ideas, images and people easily flow across established barriers and borders. There is a new world emerging that is much more multicultural and diverse and the United State is in the forefront of this change. Yes, all American students should learn English well. But they also need to learn other languages, cultures and to be competitive in the international marketplace of commerce and ideas.

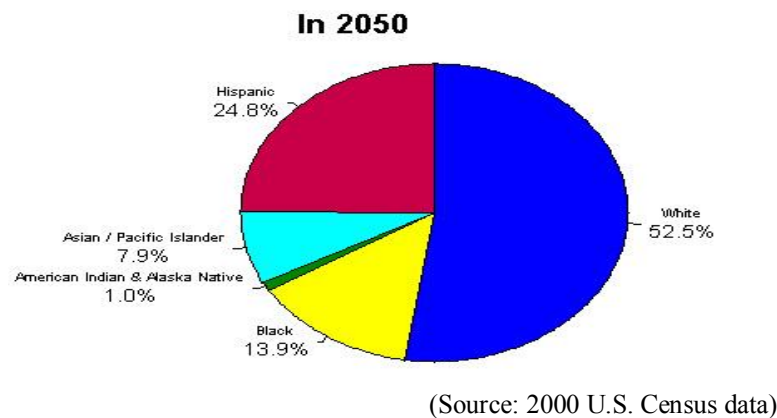
The facts speak for themselves.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the nation's Hispanic and Asian populations have grown at much faster rates than the population as a whole. Between 1980 and 2000, Hispanics have grown from 6 percent of the total population to almost 13 percent.

And in the last three years, one-half of the 9.4 million new residents in the U.S. were Hispanic, making the Hispanic population growth rate almost four times that of the total population. Meanwhile, the Asian population, while far smaller at only 4 percent of the total population, has also grown rapidly – 12.5 percent in the last three years.

In comparison, the African-American population has remained stable, comprising nearly 12 percent of the total U.S. population in 1980 and 12 percent in 2000. The white population, on the other hand, has shrunk from almost 80 percent of the total in 1980 to about 69 percent in 2000.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, our nation's Hispanic and Asian populations will triple over the next half-century and non-Hispanic whites will represent only about one-half of the total population by 2050, compared with 69.4 percent in 2000. By 2050, Hispanics will represent 24.4 percent of our population, Asians will make up 8 percent and blacks will represent 14.6 percent of our overall population.



The state of California offers a clear example of these trends. More than half the residents are minorities, one-quarter are foreign born, and nearly 40 percent speak a language other than English. California is, in many ways, America's future. This growing diversity is reflected in our nation's classrooms. According to the National Center for Education Statistics:

“Forty-two percent of public school students were considered to be part of a racial or ethnic minority group in 2003, an increase from 22 percent in 1972. In comparison, the percentage of public school students who were white decreased from 78 to 58 percent. The minority increase was largely due to the growth in the proportion of students who

were Hispanic. In 2003, Hispanic students represented 19 percent of public school enrollment, up from 6 percent in 1972.

Unfortunately, the vast majority of our nation's minority children are educated in schools that are low achieving, with high levels of teacher attrition, and all too often housed in crowded, inferior and outdated facilities. Gary Orfield, Director of the Harvard Civil Right Project, has written extensively on this subject.

“In the decade between 1988 and 1998, most of the progress made toward increasing integrated schools during the previous two decades was lost. More than 70% of the nation's black students now attend predominantly minority schools. According to the data, white students remain the most segregated from all other races in their schools. In 2002-03, the average white student attended a school that was almost 80 percent white, while the average black and Latino students attended schools that were 30 percent or less white.”

This re-segregation of schools is also tied to lower student achievement. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, black and Hispanic students not only are more likely to come from low-income families, they also are more likely to be concentrated in high-poverty schools. As the proportion of black and Hispanic students increases, so does the proportional enrollment of economically-disadvantaged students.

Putting numbers to this, Orfield and Lee report that 88 percent of high-minority schools (more than 90 percent minority) also are high-poverty schools (more than 50 percent of the students are on free and reduced lunch). The corresponding share of low-minority schools (less than 10 percent) that are also high-poverty schools is 15 percent.

As this nation becomes more racially, ethnically and culturally diverse and racial minorities become a larger part of our overall population, we have every reason to believe that the demand for quality schools will only increase. Minority school children and their parents have gotten the message that access to a quality education puts them on the path to college and the American Dream.

However, this increasing diversity also can lead to another alternative that is not so appealing. Unless working and middle-class Americans see the advantages of being part of a diverse society and send their children to high-quality, integrated schools, some of these parents may decide to withdraw their children from public education. There is a need, then, to make the case now that our increasing diversity is a national asset and helpful to the education of all of our children.

Dynamic II: Our nation's ability to sustain our long-term economic success increasingly depends on the very children we are not educating now.

As Tom Friedman has suggested in his newest book, The World is Flat, a unique set of economic and technological advances are fundamentally changing the dynamics of our global economy. Our nation's inability to respond fast enough to these changes has alarmed America's business

community. Lezlee Westine, President and CEO of TechNet, recently stated in releasing a major report by the Business Roundtable, “The United States has been the world’s technology leader because of our past investments in education, research and development, and technology talent. But today, other nations are taking bold steps to catch up to – and even surpass – the United States in science, technology, engineering and math achievement.”

While other nations are graduating hundreds of thousands of newly-minted, college-trained scientists and engineers each year who are eager to participate in this new “flat world” economy, the United States continues to struggle at getting all of our children to graduate from high school. According to research by the Urban Institute, students from historically-disadvantaged minority groups have only a 50 percent chance of finishing high school with a diploma. Each year, about 1.2 million children in this country do not graduate from high school. Nationwide, the majority of non-graduates are minority students, including 348,427 African Americans and 296,555 Hispanics.

The economic consequences of not educating these children are enormous. At a recent conference hosted by the Campaign for Educational Equity, economists suggest that the United States is losing almost \$200 billion a year because we are not doing enough to improve the quality of our education system.

The inability to move more young Americans through the academic pipeline is not limited to our nation’s high schools. According to Michael Kirst, author of Betraying the College Dream, “the statistics regarding student attrition in college are startling....almost a quarter of first-year students at four-year colleges do not stay for their second year.” Minority students are at a particular disadvantage in getting through the academic pipeline, according to Kirst, with only 31% of Latinos and 48% of African Americans completing at least some college, in comparison to 62% of all whites and 80% of all Asian Americans.

Even as we continue to address the long-standing concerns of equal opportunity and fiscal equity that were first defined by *Brown* decades ago, the very definition of what is an “adequate” education is changing dramatically and requires a new fundamental understanding of what it means to give every child a quality education in the 21st Century – an education that extends through postsecondary options and is characterized by a more diverse student body.

According to the National Center on Education and the Economy, by the year 2020, the U.S. will need 14 million more college-trained workers than it will produce. Nowhere is college participation lower than among African-American and Hispanic youth; nowhere is the potential to meet our nation’s need for college graduates greater. Simply put, if we wish to keep America economically competitive, we need to seize every opportunity in the next two decades to expand our future intellectual capital by developing a diverse and well-educated workforce that is both multi-cultural and multi-lingual.

Many of our nation's most prestigious institutions and organizations – from our armed forces to our most competitive corporations – already have made a clear and deliberate decision to make diversity a factor in their effort to achieve long-term economic success. A brief filed by 32 Fortune 500 companies – including Coca-Cola, Bank One, Microsoft, and Texaco, among others – in the recent University of Michigan affirmative action case, made this argument forcefully.

“The students of today are this country's corporate and community leaders of the next half century. For these students to realize their potential as leaders, it is essential that they be educated in an environment where they are exposed to diverse ideas, perspectives, and interactions. In the experience of the *amici* corporations, today's global marketplace and the increasing diversity in the American population demand the cross-cultural experience and understanding gained from such an education.”

Similarly, the *amicus* brief filed in the same case by 30 of our nation's most senior retired military and civilian defense leaders also made the link between our future economic and military security and the need for diversity.

“It requires only a small step from this analysis to conclude that one of our countries most select institutions must remain both diverse and selective. Like our military security, our economic security and international competitiveness depend on it. An alternative that does not preserve both diversity and selectivity is no alternative at all.”

Diversity Leadership Academies

Like our nation's armed forces, America's business community understands the importance of supporting diversity and working in the community to establish a shared sense of what must be done to insure our nation's future prosperity and keep our communities moving forward together. In many communities across America, business leaders are working with community leaders to develop new alliances. One such approach is the development of community-based Diversity Leadership Academies (www.aimd.org) that bring together a wide variety of business and community leaders. Started in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2001, these academies now have been established in four states.

One of the newest academies is the DLA of the Upstate in Greenville, South Carolina, that has brought together leaders from business, religion, government, education, and community-based organizations throughout that region. Groups of participants meet in monthly sessions, during which they develop and carry out community projects. One group examined the impact of the NCLB Act on the Greenville school district, particularly Title I schools. During the implementation of projects, participants acquire diversity management skills that will be invaluable in addressing issues of difference in the workplace, as well as in continued community-building efforts.

Dynamic III: In order to sustain our democracy, we must encourage good citizenship.

One of the most powerful challenges our nation will face in the coming decades is how we Americans will reconcile our racial and cultural differences as we grow more diverse and, at the same time, remain a united people. How do we sustain our civic life and give all Americans the sense that they belong to a national community?

Our nation's public schools have always had a two-fold purpose: to give all of our children the skills they need to succeed in life and to pass down to each new generation the basic ideals and values of our democracy – equality, opportunity and respect for the rights of all individuals, regardless of our differences.

One of the best ways for our children to learn about equality and respect the rights of other individuals is to go to an integrated school. Our public schools remain one of the few public institutions that provide our children with the opportunity to interact and bond with those from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds. We know from established research that students who interact in classrooms with other students who are racially, ethnically or culturally different from themselves will be more motivated and better able to participate in a heterogeneous and complex society.

Young Heroes: Developing Citizenship

The Young Heroes Program was created in Boston in 1995 in response to an eighth-grader's desire to join City Year, an AmeriCorps program that unites young adults ages 17 to 24, from diverse racial, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds for a year of full-time community service, leadership development and civic engagement.

Sensing the need to link this younger age group with community service, Corps members gathered middle school students from Boston to perform community service for eight Saturdays. Together they painted community centers, beautified green space and served in shelters. Since then, the Young Heroes Program has expanded alongside City Year to reach nine communities. Beginning on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday in January 1998, the program grew to be year-round with more than 1,000 participants.

Young Heroes challenges middle school students to act as leaders and role models in their schools and communities. They educate their peers on HIV/AIDS prevention and tutor in after-school programs. Each chapter of Young Heroes represents a mix of urban and suburban youth, many races and economic levels, diverse family structures and a variety of religions and beliefs. Prior to joining Young Heroes, many students said they had never worked or made friends with people from backgrounds other than their own and their involvement with the program helped them become more comfortable with people from diverse backgrounds.

Patricia Gurnin, who testified on behalf of the University of Michigan in *Grutter v Bollinger*, noted in a major study on the link between diversity and citizenship, that university students (1) showed significantly greater motivation to take the perspective of others; (2) showed greater mutuality in their involvements with their own groups and other groups; (3) expressed a greater sense of commonality in values about work and family with groups other than their own; (4) normalized the role of conflict in social life; (5) showed significantly more positive views of conflict, as well as significantly fewer negative views.

Students who attend integrated schools see the benefits that come from interacting with children from other racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Consider the conclusion of the soon-to-be published, *In Search of Brown*, which discusses “How Desegregation Changed Us: The Effects of Racially Mixed Schools on Students and Society.”

The central finding from that study is that school desegregation fundamentally changed the people who lived through it, yet had a more limited impact on the larger society. Public schools faced enormous challenges during the late 1970s, as educators tried to facilitate racial integration amid a society that remained segregated in terms of housing, social institutions and often employment. Nonetheless, desegregation made the vast majority of the students who attended these schools less racially prejudiced and more comfortable around people of different backgrounds.

We also believe that one of the most important ways we can sustain public trust in our democracy is to have a diverse and well-prepared group of citizens in leadership roles. Equally important, our ability to give our children the citizenship skills they need to work, live and thrive in a diverse and changing world can strengthen our sense of national unity. Sheryll Cashin has written, “Our greatest loss in a separated society is a sense of shared community.” America had that sense of shared community in the immediate aftermath of September 11, and Americans are united as a national community in their response to Hurricane Katrina. Americans may not be very good at articulating their desire for a sense of national community, but the desire is deeply felt.

Dynamic IV: There is broad public support for giving our children learning environments that include students who are racially, ethnically and culturally diverse.

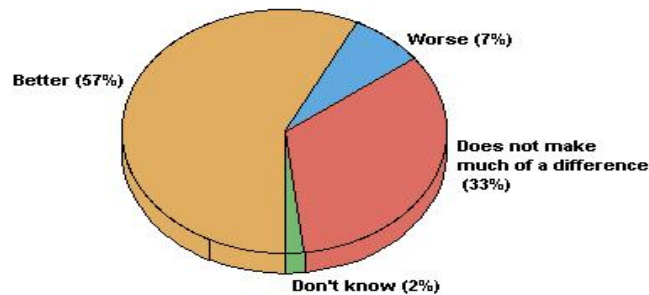
There is a growing body of literature on attitudes toward racially-mixed schools. In a 1995 review of literature on public opinion and school desegregation, Gary Orfield noted that public attitudes have changed fairly dramatically in the 40 years following the *Brown* decision.

According to Orfield, the number of Americans of all races who believe that the Supreme Court was right in its *Brown* decision increased from 63 percent in the early 1960s to 87 percent in the mid-1990s. And in the South, where only 19 percent of the people agreed with the *Brown* ruling in 1954, only 15 percent said they did not agree with the ruling, when asked in the 1990s. This marks a dramatic shift in attitudes in the region of the country that experienced the most turbulence when schools were being desegregated.

In a 2003 telephone survey conducted by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, more than 3,421 adults were asked their opinion about integrated schools. A strong majority – 57% – believed that going to an integrated school was better for their children and 33% believed that it made “no difference.”

More than half of Americans say racially integrated schools are better for kids, but one-third says it doesn't make a difference

Do you think racially integrated schools are better for kids, worse for kids or doesn't it make a difference?



Source: Pew / Kaiser 10/03

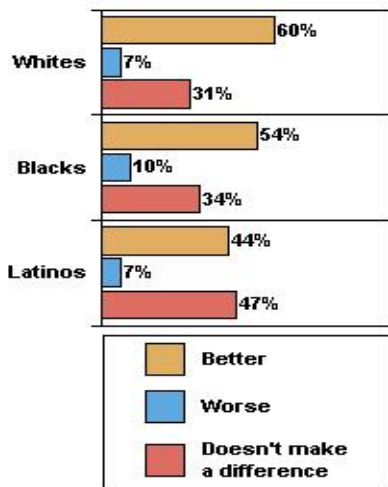
Teachers and students have equally positive attitudes toward racial integration. A 2004 poll conducted by Education Week noted that an overwhelming majority of teachers and students believe that racially-integrated schooling is important. Fine. Conducted by Harris Interactive in February and March of 2004, the poll sampled 2,591 public school teachers and 1,102 students. The poll also found that teachers of different races had different ideas of the racial progress that has been made since *Brown* and whether diversity had an impact on student learning. For example, 67% of all black teachers and 54% of all Hispanic teachers believed that diverse classes improve student learning, compared to just 44% of all white teachers.

Americans fully support the idea of their children having a diverse educational experience in college. According to a first-ever national poll on diversity in higher education conducted in 2004, “two out of three Americans say that it is very important that colleges and universities prepare people to function in a diverse society.” The poll, which was conducted by DYG, Inc, for the Ford Foundation, found that 58 percent of those polled felt that our “nation was growing apart” and 71 percent believed that getting a diverse education on college and university campuses helps bring society together. In comparison, only 19 percent of all those polled believed that diversity in higher education would drive “society apart.”

Americans of all races, however, support voluntary, rather than government, initiatives to encourage diversity in the education of their children.

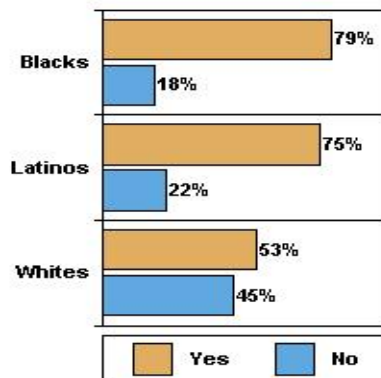
While whites are somewhat more likely than blacks and Latinos to say integrated schools are better for kids, they are less likely to say the government should ensure integration

Do you think racially integrated schools are better for kids, worse for kids or doesn't it make a difference?



Source: Pew / Kaiser 10/03

Do you think the government should make sure that schools are racially integrated, or not? [Asked of those who said racially integrated schools are better for kids.]



Source: Pew / Kaiser 10/03

Dynamic V: Our nation’s growing diversity is one of the great, untapped strengths of our democracy and remains vital to our national security.

As the leading democratic country in a crusade to fight terrorism and bring democracy to the rest of the world, the United States must continue to grapple with its own history of inequality, even as we embrace our increasing racial and ethnic diversity as the asset that makes this society vibrant and dynamic.

Put simply, if we wish to expand freedom and democracy abroad, we must be able to show the rest of the world that we are committed to equality and racial harmony here at home. Whether we like it or not, the rest of the world is casting a critical, cold eye on our democracy.

In the long campaign to combat terrorism and nihilism, we cannot allow enemies of democracy to use our own failings against us. One of our most powerful weapons in this battle of ideas is our ability to show the world that we are a diverse but united people who believe strongly in the power of our democracy.

The example of the American military, one of the most powerful and most respected institutions in our nation, is highly instructive. The racial fragmentation of the American military in the Vietnam era had a profound impact on our nation's military leaders. As a result, our military leaders have made a deliberate commitment in the past 30 years to create a diverse officer corps that is of the highest standards.

The retired military leaders in their amicus brief in Grutter v. Bollinger also went on to make this forceful statement.

“The current leadership views complete racial integration as a military necessity – that is, as a pre-requisite to a cohesive and therefore effective fighting force. In short, success with the challenge of diversity is critical to national security.”

There is also another national security interest to consider, as well. If this nation is to defend its long-term vital interests, we will continue to need a large pool of well-educated people who wish to volunteer to serve their country. Yet, each year 1.2 million of our students do not graduate from high school, the majority of whom are minority. If this dropout rate continues unabated over the next ten years, a total of 12 million young people in America will not be eligible to serve in our armed forces.

There is a lesson to be learned here by those of us who live in freedom because we are protected by the best military force in the world. If the challenge of diversity is considered absolutely critical to our national security, then surely the challenge of diversity should be absolutely critical to sustaining our nation’s democratic way of life and our global reputation as a world leader.

If we expect our children to go on to college or other postsecondary education where they will have diverse learning experiences and then go on to work with people from diverse ethnic, racial, social and economic backgrounds, surely it makes sense to prepare our children for these experiences and new opportunities as early as possible.

We believe that these five powerful dynamics when taken together suggest a new framework for thinking about our nation’s education system and what we can do, together, to help all of our children grow up to be fully-engaged citizens in a diverse world.

Lessons Learned Since *Brown*

This nation went through a turbulent period in the 1960s and 1970s as we attempted to break the back of *de jure* segregation. Court-ordered desegregation plans led to white resistance and white flight in many communities. Fifty years later, this nation has yet to address fully the issue of *de facto* segregation in our public schools. Experts like Gary Orfield and Jonathan Kozol have amply documented the abysmal and tragic conditions in these high-poverty schools and their long-term consequences to individual students, as well as to this nation.

We recognize with searing clarity that many minority children in our poorest urban and rural communities are so geographically isolated that they have little chance ever of going to a diverse school and that they continue to be short-changed when it comes to getting a quality education. We also recognize that some minority parents have made the decision that their children are actually better off in schools where they are in the racial majority and learn their own rich cultural history.

Nevertheless, each and every day millions of our children of all races and ethnic backgrounds will walk the hallways of their schools together, sit in classrooms together and, in the process, come to a new understanding about the meaning of diversity in their lives. Surely we can help them and our nation in this important work.

There are lessons to be learned as we look back on *Brown* and six of them seem pertinent if we want to move forward to develop a new social paradigm for this nation that improves education and encourages diversity. However, diversity is not a goal in and of itself. We make the case for greater diversity because of the academic and social benefits that it provides for students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The first lesson is that the *Brown* decision and the nation's history of school desegregation provide both a challenge and an opportunity going forward. In these highly-charged political times, the language of integration and desegregation may prove counterproductive and conjure up images of past racial and class tensions that deeply divided this nation. Furthermore, it does not take into account the rapidly-growing Latino and Asian student populations in the United States.

Nevertheless, this nation's history with school desegregation provides a framework for moving forward. Significantly, the United States Supreme Court in the recent *Grutter v. Bollinger* case relied on *Brown* and recognized the significance of inclusion of every race in American life. Indeed, the Supreme Court noted that access to education "must be inclusive of talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity, so that all members of our heterogeneous society may participate in the educational institutions that provide the training necessary to succeed in America."

The challenge is to figure out how to use the Supreme Court's decision in *Grutter* to frame the education issues of today. We can lament the retreat from the progress that was made in desegregating our schools in the 1970s and 1980s, and we can lament the fact that decades of research documenting this growing inequality has not moved the American people to act. But we cannot go forward in 2005 if we only suggest solutions using the traditional framework of desegregation and integration.

The way we talk to the American people about this vexing problem must change.

Second, we need to take the time to think through a new paradigm and develop new language that captures the attention of a majority of *voting* Americans. This paper suggests one alternative that links the need for diversity in our public schools to greater academic success, citizenship and our long-term national interests

Third, we need to recognize that the basic black/white paradigm that has defined race relations and the way we think about inequality in this nation is also being transformed. Robert Suro, Director of the Pew Hispanic Center, has put this historic transition in perspective. "If you consider that the black-white divide has been the basic social construct in American history for 300 years, this is the official reminder that we are moving into new territory."

One fact alone should capture our attention. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, immigration will account for about 63 percent of the U.S. population growth over the next 50 years, as an estimated 76 million new immigrants arrive to stake their claim to the American Dream. These immigrants largely will be non-white and come from Asia and Latin America, if current immigration trends continue.

Fourth, we need new approaches and incentives to encourage people to overcome racial differences in order to help our children grow up with a strong sense of citizenship – to see our growing diversity as a national asset, especially in this rapidly-growing international market of commerce and ideas.

America in 2005 is different than the America of the 1960s. America is still struggling with its racial differences but is more willing, we believe, to make the struggle. We do not suggest a return to the days of mandatory student assignment or busing. We believe the American people support positive initiatives that, when properly framed, foster greater diversity and equality in our neighborhoods and public schools.

Fifth, our nation's public schools cannot address this issue alone. Desegregation failed, in part, because almost the entire burden of integrating our society was placed on our public schools. Schools can and must do their part, especially when they are designed as centers of the community. But to move forward, there has to be a new fundamental relationship between the school and the community, with the community assuming a much larger role in the education of its children.

We suggest that school-community partnerships and new citizen alliances that address issues of regional equity and adequate educational opportunities may be creative ways to develop the political will necessary to bring about reform. Schools and community-based partnerships, such as the Public Education Network's Local Education Funds, have a positive record of achievement in giving our children the opportunity to learn from and with each other.

Civic and interfaith organizations and established churches, as well, have a powerful role in shaping our future society and have a growing history of working on community issues, such as better education and housing. Our young people have their own creative ways to cross racial boundaries through music, culture and the Internet. We should not assume that policy reforms and legislation are the only ways to address our racial disconnections.

Government at all levels, however, still has an obligation to protect the rights of all Americans in terms of equal opportunity and can do much more to recognize the value of diversity. The federal government certainly has a role to play in recognizing that our increasing diversity must be taken into account in developing education policies and programs, including the NCLB Act, which has put the spotlight on the continuing racial achievement gap.

Litigation continues to be a necessity to achieve equity in school funding. The fact that state legislatures continue to drag their feet "with all deliberate speed" in responding to court orders regarding school funding, however, suggests that the long-term solution is political, as well as legal.

Sixth, while this paper does not address the issue of housing directly, we recognize that America's housing patterns have a powerful impact on the diversity of our schools. Unfortunately, our society continues to be highly segregated by race and income when it comes to where we live. Even though about 40 percent of African Americans now live in the suburbs, according to the 2000 Census, the movement of minorities over the urban-suburban boundaries has not resulted in a large growth in housing integration.

A report on housing segregation based on the 2000 Census data shows that "Residential segregation among blacks and whites remains high in cities and in suburbs around the country." The report states that the average white person in the U.S. continues to live in a neighborhood that is 80 percent white and only 7 percent black. Meanwhile, a typical African American lives in a neighborhood that is only 33 percent white and as much as 51 percent black.

There is a certain degree of passivity and acceptance of this status quo regarding housing. In her book, The Failures of Integration, Sheryll Cashin aptly captured this when she wrote, "In the early 2000s, if the races and classes agree on anything, it is the proposition that it is acceptable to retreat to havens of one's own kind."

Nevertheless, many Americans want to live in diverse communities when given the chance and want their children exposed to different cultures and people. Some inner-city neighborhoods are being revived, in part, because a younger generation of singles and families who are at ease living in multi-racial communities are putting down roots in these communities.

The emerging links between community developers, smart-growth proponents and other community organizations committed to greater equity suggest the possibility that the re-migration of families to inner-city neighborhoods and inner-ring suburbs can be an opportunity to create schools that are both diverse and high achieving.

There is a growing recognition, for example, that regional cooperation may be another way to address economic and geographic inequity that impacts education. In the Twin Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota, political, business, and community leaders from seven counties and 188 municipalities have come together to address fair-share affordable housing and regional tax-base sharing. Smart-growth advocates are building alliances with organizations that focus on traditional economic and equity issues.

New suburban developments may be another opportunity to fill this demand for diverse housing. The majority of immigrants who entered the United States between 1990 and 2000 actually moved to the suburbs. According to 2003 report, entitled America's Newcomers, "immigration growth in the suburbs (4.8 million) far surpasses growth in central cities (3.5 million)." While these immigrants "typically live in neighborhoods where about 30% of the residents are immigrants" – essentially ethnic enclaves – it also is true that they are not living in hyper-segregated, inner-city neighborhoods. Assimilation takes time and a second generation of immigrants, who have grown up in the suburbs, may have a much better chance of living in more integrated suburban communities if they get the education they need to become part of the American middle class.

Suburban developers, regional planners and school officials are starting to take advantage of this desire of Americans to live in diverse communities. In Stapleton, Colorado, a new development just on the outskirts of Denver will be the home of 30,000 new residents. The Denver public school system has worked closely with the developer and the Stapleton Foundation to actively promote diversity as one of the reasons to move to the community, which is in the process of building eight new public schools. Two new magnet schools – Denver School of Science and Technology and Denver School of the Arts— are located in Stapleton. The Foundation has worked to recruit minority students from the inner-city neighborhoods near Stapleton.

As more Americans and new immigrants move to the suburbs, the decisions made by local officials regarding inclusion of low- and moderate-income housing and the location of new schools can have a profound impact on increasing the opportunities for diversity. Montgomery County, Maryland, for example, one of the most affluent counties in the nation, has a policy dating back to 1973 requiring that 15 percent of new homes must be set aside for low- and moderate-income families.

Montgomery County also has been able to maintain its strong record of academic achievement, even as many more immigrant and minority children have moved in, by adding all-day kindergarten and smaller classes in high-poverty schools.

Reforming Federal housing policies could offer a significant opportunity to develop new links between school and communities and overcome regional inequities. According to a paper by The Civil Rights Project of Harvard University, entitled Barriers to Housing – Race, Place and Home: A Civil Rights and Metropolitan Opportunity, “Federal housing policy has the potential to help transform the geography of race and opportunity in America.”

An interesting aspect of this paper is its call for the creation of a network of non-profit regional housing corporations to develop and preserve affordable housing in suburban areas by building on the experience of community development corporations that have successfully rebuilt inner-city neighborhoods in the last several decades.

All of these innovative efforts are valuable and necessary. But, while we recognize the clear intersection of housing and education, we believe there are steps that can be taken to diversify learning environments independent of where students live.

Recommendations for Action

In the coming decade, we must expand our definition of a “quality” education and move beyond a singular focus on accountability to define education success. We must redefine what constitutes an “adequate” education in light of new 21st Century demands, and we must place an equal emphasis on preparing our children to be active citizens in a racially, ethnically and culturally diverse and growing democracy.

Recommendation One: Increasing racial, ethnic and cultural diversity and the educational benefits that flow from diversity must be considered a key element in the definition of a “high-quality education” in legislation and fiscal equity cases.

The current national discussion around education focuses on providing a “high-quality education” for all students. This discussion is being driven in large part by the federal NCLB Act and the host of state-level school funding lawsuits (currently ongoing in 25 states) that are seeking to redefine “adequate” educational opportunities. Through NCLB and these cases, we can change how diversity is considered by discussing it in the context of academic achievement and higher standards.

No Child Left Behind As stated earlier, we support the core goals of NCLB, even as we recognize that many schools and communities have concerns about implementation of the law. We support the use of disaggregated data to understand the racial and ethnic disparities in education and recognize that NCLB puts the spotlight on this nation’s continuing achievement gap. But the high-quality educational opportunities promoted in the law need to become a reality in every school and community – not just those communities with a tax base large enough to pay for them.

The coming reauthorization of NCLB provides Congress an opportunity to consider diversity as one factor in promoting academic achievement and good citizenship for all of our students. Given the changing public opinion about the value of a diverse education for children, Congress should look at ways to maximize the various public school choice programs – charter schools and magnet schools – to increase diversity options. In addition, Federal officials should consider how other current programs – civic education, character education, the 21st Century Community Learning Centers and equity assistance centers, to name just a few – can have a greater impact on this issue.

Congress also can find value in expanding the definition of a highly-qualified teacher under NCLB, particularly in view of the fact that many new teachers have their first classroom experiences in high-poverty schools where minority or immigrant students are in the majority. New teachers need to be culturally aware and may need additional training to avoid racial and/or ethnic stereotypes that can lead to low expectations. This type of training should be available as part of professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals and incorporated into NCLB’s Title I and Title II requirements.

Education Fiscal Equity Cases Perhaps even more relevant to creating a new definition of a “high-quality education” are the challenges to state constitutional education clauses that define the equitable distribution of resources for an adequate education. Ever since the U.S. Supreme Court made a series of rulings that sharply limited desegregation efforts, advocates for equity have placed a far greater focus on making their case at the state level.

Unlike the U.S. Constitution, all state constitutions explicitly require the provision of free public education for all children. Significant cases currently being considered include *DeRolph v. State of Ohio*, *Campaign for Fiscal Equity v. State of New York* and the 12-year-old case, *Abbeville School District v. The State of South Carolina*.

These cases are focused uniformly on requiring states to meet their constitutional obligations with a particular emphasis on providing redress for students with the greatest needs. By promoting a new definition of an “adequate” education, these cases simultaneously are raising the bar to ensure that “adequate” equates to “high quality.” In a comprehensive review of these state-level cases, the Campaign for Fiscal Equity has identified eight essential opportunities that define a “high-quality education.”

- Qualified teachers, principals, and other personnel
- Small class sizes, where most appropriate
- Universal pre-kindergarten services
- Adequate school facilities built to be community learning centers
- After-school and summer learning supplemental programs and services for students from high-poverty backgrounds
- Appropriate services for students with disabilities and English-language learners
- Basic learning resources – such as technology, texts, and laboratories – available to each student
- Safe and orderly learning environments

Missing is any definition of good citizenship and how children should become aware of the changing dynamics of our own democracy. Accordingly, we encourage advocacy and legal groups working on these cases to consider diversity as another essential opportunity in the definition of a “high-quality education” in all school finance cases and in the implementation of any court orders.

Recommendation Two: We must ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education and, at the same time, have the opportunity for diverse learning experiences wherever possible.

There are numerous innovative best practices and concepts that currently are being implemented in select locations across the nation that can help to provide students with challenging coursework, while creating diverse learning environments inside and outside the classroom. Some focus on helping children in high-poverty school districts and others provide all young people with the opportunity to interact and learn together. We believe that several programs deserve special attention and merit greater public investment.

Early Childhood We know from established research that children ages 0-5 have an enormous capacity to learn. Unfortunately, many minority and immigrant children miss this opportunity, which is one reason the achievement gap already exists for many children when they enter kindergarten. According to the latest child-trend data, only 19 percent of all low-income children are ready for school when they enter, compared to 45 percent of all other children. Hence, we strongly advocate universal pre-kindergarten and all-day kindergarten for children in high-poverty schools and/or districts.

Adolescent Literacy Our country has an established national goal that all children should be able to read by the end of the third grade, if not earlier. This has been the primary focus of national policy implementation by both the Clinton and Bush Administrations. In the last few years, however, there has been an increasing awareness that not enough is being done to deal with the crisis of adolescent literacy. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, “In a typical high-poverty urban school, approximately half of incoming ninth graders read at the sixth and seventh grade level.”

The Alliance goes on to report that, “On average, African American and Hispanic 12th grade students read at the same level as white eighth graders.” Eight million children in middle schools and high school are struggling readers, one reason why almost one-third of all high school students do not graduate. The inability of these children to read well also puts many schools in danger of failing under NCLB.

The dilemma is that middle and high schools receive little in the way of Title I funds – only five percent – even though 33 percent of all Title I students are in middle and high school. There is an enormous need to increase the number of literacy coaches by targeting Title I funds to middle and high schools and to fully fund the Bush Administration’s new Striving Readers program

Advanced Placement Increasing the participation of minority students in the Advanced Placement program is a significant way to prepare them for college and its diverse learning experience. This is particularly true for students in majority-minority school districts like Gwinnett County, a suburb of Atlanta, Georgia. In the last five years, the Gwinnett County school district has seen a 120 percent increase in the number of students taking AP exams. We recommend that every effort be made to expand the AP program, with a particular focus on ensuring greater minority student participation.

Early Colleges One of the most significant ways we can expose young people to a diverse world is by creating a stronger link from elementary and secondary school to our two- and four-year colleges, which are typically more diverse. Promoting such opportunities has the added benefit of getting more students through the education pipeline. American higher education has established a record of excellence over the last 50 years, but there is a growing concern about the disconnection between K-12 and higher education.

The lack of education progress is such that several years ago experts at the Educational Testing Service estimated that 250,000 African-American and 550,000 Hispanic students, who are "college material," would in all probability be missing from our college campuses by 2015 because they lack the opportunity and necessary financial aid to prepare and pay for a college education.

Traditionally, the more established federal programs, such as TRIO and GEAR UP, have been the primary avenue for promoting college opportunity for diverse populations. The innovative Early College High School concept combines high school and college. In so doing, it unifies and redefines the traditional academic framework from ninth grade through the second year of college, challenging the current structure of the secondary and postsecondary systems.

Dayton Early College Academy

The Dayton Early College Academy (DECA) opened its doors in August 2003 as one of the first of 19 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation early college high schools in the country. DECA is located on the University of Dayton campus, which has developed a strong partnership with Sinclair Community College.

Features that make DECA a flagship school are personal learning plans for each student; project-based learning; strong advisory model; promotion through academic gateways rather than seat time; required parent involvement; strong university and community involvement and support; and early college placement.

DECA focuses on students who potentially are first-generation college students and typically would not be expected to enter higher education. Demographics include 82% black, 12% white and 6% other, with 73% of the students on free or reduced meals. Average daily attendance at DECA is 97% and, as of January 2005, 50 students had enrolled in college classes.

DECA has been featured in local, state, and national publications. You can learn more about the school at <http://soeap.udayton.edu/echswweb/>.

The end goal is to develop high schools that will engage and increase attainment for populations under-represented in postsecondary education – low income, first generation, English-language learners, and students of color. Students are expected to graduate in four to five years with a high school diploma and two years of college credit. All of the necessary supports are in place to ensure that students have every opportunity to succeed in the rigorous academic environments of higher education.

Policy Needs for Implementing Early Colleges

Federal

The U.S. Department of Education and Department of Labor must collaborate to promote advancement of all students into some form of postsecondary education in order to develop a highly-skilled workforce. Incentive grants to partnerships between higher education and K-12 systems that commit to developing Early College models or similar approaches could help promote these unique learning environments, while increasing degree completion. Every high-poverty school in American should have a viable higher education partnership that is building a pathway to college and careers for their students.

State

The K-12 and higher education systems operate completely separately in most states. As a result, there is a great deal of disconnection between the two systems. High school seat-time requirements clash with the credit system at postsecondary institutions. High schools graduation requirements are not aligned to college admissions standards, which is one reason why almost a third of all incoming college freshmen take remedial courses. The senior year of high school is now considered a lost and wasted opportunity by a growing number of educators. A significant effort must be made to remedy this lack of alignment and to see the Early College program as a way to redefine the senior year.

Local

As with the states, school districts, in collaboration with higher education partners, need to develop policies that support funding for students who are in Early Colleges.

Teacher Education We call on university leaders to recognize that improving colleges of education must be considered a university-wide priority. Given the increasing number of minority students entering our K-12 system in the coming decade, a particular emphasis should be placed on developing a level of cultural awareness and competency in new teachers to avoid racial and ethnic stereotypes that lead to low expectations about what students can learn. This is particularly important in addressing the needs of children in special education. New teachers, in particular, also need a strong support system of master teachers to mentor them and ongoing professional development to help them through the hurdles of their first few years as teachers.

Special Education The over-representation of minorities, particularly African-American boys, remains a continuing concern. The Schott Foundation has pointed out that black males, in particular, have been found to spend more time in special education and less time in Advanced Placement or college prep courses than any other subgroup in U.S. schools today. African-American youth, ages 6 through 21, account for 14.8 percent of the general population. Yet, they account for 20.2 percent of the special education population. Too often, mislabeling results in low expectations for achievement and the potential for students to give up and drop out.

Learning together in school and out of school

After School Providing safe after-school learning opportunities for children is another effective way that young people can interact with children from other racial and ethnic backgrounds, while gaining more learning time and academic support. Thirty-one states recently have formed after-school networks, funded by the Mott Foundation. In a report, What We Know Works, the Pew Partnership for Civic Change compiled current research on the most effective strategies to promote safe and thriving communities. After-school programs rank Number Three on the Partnership's Top Ten List For Community Success.

An After-School Program Brings a Community Together in Greensboro, NC.

The Eastside Park Community Center in Greensboro, North Carolina, grew out of an after-school tutoring program. That tutoring program grew from a partnership between the predominantly black Eastside Park community in eastern Greensboro and the predominantly white Westminster Presbyterian Church in western Greensboro. The need for more space for the after-school program prompted the idea for the community center, and residents are optimistic about the effects the Center, the partnership and the program will have on the community. Vernon Bailey, president of the Community Center's board, said the partnership with the church has brought the Eastside Park community closer together. As children learn and play together, he said, their parents get to know each other, and neighbors no longer are just politely waving at strangers.

Service Learning Many public schools are turning to the service-learning model as a way of integrating community service with classroom instruction in order to help students understand their communities and become active citizens. In 1999, almost one-third of all public schools incorporated service learning into their curriculum and 64 percent of all public schools encouraged community-service activities.

The Corporation for National and Community Service has an active Learn and Serve program that supports the community-service activities of 1.2 million K-12 students. We support the goal of the Corporation to foster service learning in at least 50 percent of all public schools by the year 2010. Service learning is a way that young people can interact with other racial and ethnic groups in an educational context, learn from their experience and, at the same time, provide service to their community.

Americorps We support the continued expansion of the federal government's Americorps program. This is an established federal program that brings together young people ages 17 to 24 from many different racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds for 10 to 12 months of voluntary service in their communities. Since 1994, more than 400,000 men and women have served their nation in their communities. This program is a wonderful example of creating diverse learning experiences for idealistic young Americans.

Recommendation Three: In order to create new opportunities for diverse learning experiences, a new social compact and working relationship must be established between our schools and the community.

We raise the issue that the growing geographic and racial isolation of students in high-poverty schools is a significant barrier to creating a policy that offers these children both an excellent education and one that also is diverse. These communities have more immediate priorities – employment and social supports that lift people out of grinding poverty. Their paramount concern is not diversity but inequality of opportunity, both in school and out of school. How should we respond?

Richard Rothstein, in Class and Schools, makes the case that the achievement gap will not be eliminated if we focus only on educational inputs, such as better teachers, more accountability and more testing. Rothstein suggests that socioeconomic differences between lower-class students and middle-class students are a powerful factor in defining the current achievement gap for minority students.

Indeed, Rothstein makes the case that “socioeconomic differences *must* produce an achievement gap between students from different social classes” and that “children from lower social classes and from many racial and ethnic minorities, even in the best schools, will achieve less, on average, than middle-class children.” His solution is the development of a series of social support mechanisms – stable housing, early-childhood programs, health clinics, and after-school programs – that offer these students the support they need to increase their non-cognitive skills. There are an increasing number of school districts embracing this vision of learning – Providence, Rhode Island; Chicago, Illinois; Lincoln, Nebraska; and Portland, Oregon, to name a few.

**Schools as Centers of Community:
John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School**

The John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary School in Saint Paul, Minnesota is a state-of-the-art community school serving 320 children from kindergarten to 6th grade, in addition to 100 children who are part of the school's early childhood program. The school is located on the East Side of Saint Paul, a section of the city that has seen economic hardships with the loss of 2,500 manufacturing jobs, leading to a rapid increase in the rate of child poverty over the last decade. More than 90 percent of the students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

For many members of the community, including Saint Paul Mayor Randy Kelly (a native of the community), the renovation of an old and unused high school was seen as a critical piece in the revival of the East Side. The renovated 75,000-square-foot school reopened in 2000 and is co-located next to a new 63,000-square-foot YMCA that serves 3000 students and community members. The entire complex is a creative partnership between the city, the school district, Ramsey County, the YMCA, the East Side Family Center and the Wilder Foundation. The total cost to build the complex was \$29.5 million, including \$6.8 million for the YMCA.

In designing the renovation, the architects responded to community concerns regarding mental health, early-childhood learning, extended learning, and family support. As a result, the architects made an extensive effort to integrate space for support services. The school has 17 functioning partnerships providing on-site services to students and families. These services are also available to the larger East Side community. This thriving school and community partnership is producing results. The proportion of Johnson students scoring “satisfactory” or higher on standardized tests increased by 20 percentage points from 2003 to 2004. For details, see the following website: <http://www.nationalschoolsearch.org/recipient/>

In short, the success of every child shifts from being just a school responsibility to a shared responsibility with the community. In changing the relationship between the school and the community, we can support and expand the ability of teachers to focus on the core academic mission of the school. Community partners and service agencies can, in turn, provide a rich mix of support for children in need, helping to solve the social problems that prevent children from learning.

As a result, student achievement can increase. A recent report by the Coalition for Community Schools, entitled Making the Difference: Research and Practice in Community Schools, provides detailed evidence that community schools raise student achievement. In an extensive evaluation of 20 community school initiatives, researchers found that, “Fifteen of the 20 initiatives in this study reported improvement in student academic achievement, as measured by improved grades in school courses and scores in proficiency testing.”

The fact that children are willing to learn in school and after school and during the summer months puts a premium on designing new schools as community learning centers – open after school and during the summer to help students keep up, catch up and get ahead, in addition to expanding learning opportunities for families and adults. Schools designed in this way become the anchors for community renewal by housing the exact set of social-support mechanisms the community needs.

Community-school partnerships provide a framework for increased family involvement and link schools to a diverse network of organizations and cultural institutions – museums, the arts, community-based organizations, youth development groups, etc. – that have a capacity to sustain and support public education. The blurring of traditional boundaries creates new and diverse learning opportunities for students in terms of service learning and mentoring programs, and it enhances the ability of other civic institutions – museums, hospitals, zoos, etc. – to become an integral part of the learning process and even to provide new locations for public schools.

Each party has a role to play in developing this new social compact. School boards can use diversity as one factor in selecting a site for new facilities and in designing and reviewing attendance zones. Schools can create diverse learning opportunities through a wide range of established educational programs – service learning, the arts, character education, civic education and after-school opportunities, to name just a few. The broad range of service organizations, community groups and religious denominations that sustain community life can promote diverse learning experiences outside the school – summer camps, sports, arts activities, etc.

Policy Needs for Implementing Schools as Centers of Community

Federal

The 21st Century Learning Communities grants from the U.S. Department of Education currently are helping to establish 8,000 Schools as Centers of Community nationwide. The program should be expanded to fund 40,000-50,000 schools and institutionalized in order to avoid major cuts during budget reauthorization. Also, incentive grants could be offered to districts that commit to engaging the public in the design and development of innovative schools that meet the needs of the broader community.

State

The co-location of other public services, such as libraries, recreation centers and senior centers, with schools often means rethinking state and local funding streams to entities that typically operate independently. New policies should be adopted to help encourage partnerships that implement public-private, intergovernmental and/or interagency management and use of school facilities and grounds. In California, for example, bond money is targeted specifically to encourage joint use of school facilities. Both Maryland and Massachusetts have enacted state funding formulas that support and encourage schools that serve as neighborhood anchors, in addition to establishing criteria for locating these schools in areas that are easily accessible to a large portion of the community.

Local

The creation of Schools as Centers of Community that offer services desired by the local community demands intensive community involvement in the planning of the school. The state could establish community engagement leadership training for all district and school leaders as part of certification requirements. Such training would help to institutionalize community involvement in decisionmaking. In addition, funding for an After-school and Community-School Coordinator in each school could help ensure alignment between the needs of families and students in the schools and available services. Such positions often can be paid for by non-profit organizations.

Promoting Diversity through Public School Choice Public school choice has become a core school improvement strategy through multiple avenues, including the NCLB provision that expands public choice options for students in low-performing schools, charter schools and magnet schools. By making diversity a key factor in decisions regarding transfers and/or acceptance into schools, learning environments can become more representative of American society as a whole.

Voluntary School Choice – The Lynn, Massachusetts Plan Despite the fact that many school districts have re-segregated, there are school districts that continue to make a determined effort to support diversity. One of the most striking examples is the ongoing effort of the Lynn, Massachusetts school board to sustain a voluntary choice plan that recognizes the benefits of racial diversity in education.

According to the Lynn Plan, any student in the district who wishes to transfer to another school must not negatively impact defined parameters in the racial makeup of either the school they are transferring from or the school to which they are transferring. In response to a legal challenge to this policy, the U. S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit earlier this year granted review *en banc* and, in so doing, supported the Lynn Plan.

The Appeals Court review of the Lynn Plan was, in part, based, on the recent Supreme Court rulings in the University of Michigan affirmative action cases, *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*. The Appeals Court concluded that Lynn has a compelling interest in securing the educational benefits of racial diversity and held that the Lynn Plan is narrowly tailored to meet this compelling interest.

The broader implication of the Lynn Plan is that the educational benefit of racially-balanced schools has been upheld and supported in the judicial system. Diversity, thus, has been viewed as a very important factor in creating high-quality learning environments – a decision that supports the very heart of the issues raised in this paper.

A recently published tool kit, entitled Looking to the Future: Voluntary K-12 Integration, offers practical advice on voluntary school integration and can be found at www.law.virginia.edu/home2002/pdf/racelaw/Voluntary_School_Integration_Manual.pdf.

Diversity and Charter Schools Public charter schools have expanded greatly the choice options for students and their families. The federal government provides about \$200 million annually to support the development of charter schools and a growing number of foundations and philanthropy organizations are making a determined effort to sustain the charter school movement. The New Schools Venture Fund, for example, is now in the process of raising \$50 million to improve education and support charter schools.

While charter schools generally have a racial/ethnic composition similar to all public schools, there is a concern that they may foster *de facto* segregation, in part because of their location. However, many philanthropic organizations are committed strongly to supporting charter schools precisely because they are being established in highly-segregated and isolated neighborhoods.

In many states, charter schools are required to give admission preference to at-risk students. Several states, including California, require that charter school enrollment must reflect the demographics of the neighborhood or district. States should review their charter school policies to ensure that adequate equity provisions have been established. In addition, states should be open to the development of high-quality charter schools that deliberately seek to have a diverse student body.

Maintaining Diversity in Magnet School Programs Since 1985, the U.S. Department of Education has provided 379 grants to 171 school districts in 35 states and the District of Columbia for magnet schools. Funding for this program has been relatively stable at round \$107 million a year. The average grant is about \$300,000 per school.

According to a three-year evaluation of the federal magnet program completed in 2002, the overall results were “modest” in terms of desegregation and the results were “mixed” in terms of academic success. While the magnet schools had some success in developing innovative themes and a positive school climate, “only 57 percent of the schools succeeded in preventing, reducing or eliminating minority group isolation and 43 percent of the schools did not succeed.” The evaluation also suggests that the program was hampered by too many competing goals and that success might be achieved by establishing a more narrow focus.

Magnet schools are certainly an attempt to promote more diverse learning environments but, as the evaluation of the schools concludes, they do not always succeed. Concentrated efforts should be made to address the reasons magnet schools often have failed to meet their diversity goals. Some have suggested that school districts do not do an adequate job of making parents aware that magnet schools are an option for their children. Others have recommended eliminating testing requirements for students interested in attending and replacing them with comprehensive academic support services that could meet the unique needs of many disadvantaged students.

Researching K-12 Diversity While there is a significant body of literature about the value of diversity in higher education, we need more and better research regarding diversity in our K-12 system, which is already on the front line of this nation’s demographic changes. The U.S. Department of Education currently funds ten regional equity assistance centers, as well as regional education laboratories, that have an ongoing role to provide school districts with the best research possible. These entities must be supported and expanded and greater attention should be paid to providing school districts with new models and best practices in promoting diversity and academic achievement in America’s classrooms.

Conclusion

Our nation’s ongoing effort to raise academic standards, now well over 20 years old, is noteworthy for the strong and bipartisan support that it has received from the American people. We believe that this push for higher standards is absolutely essential, but it is only one aspect of the high-quality education that all of our children deserve. The American people also are committed fully to the belief that our public schools should teach basic American values and educate all of our children to be well-rounded and active citizens. We believe that one aspect of good citizenship is an awareness that we live in an increasingly diverse society and that this diversity is a great, albeit untapped, national strength.

Our ability as a nation to thrive and prosper in the 21st Century is, in our opinion, directly related to the ability of our public education system to link achievement, citizenship and diversity to our broader national interests. *Brown v. Board of Education* started this effort more than 50 years ago. But much more can be done to weave us together as a people and as a nation. The two-tiered education system that we currently abide in this great land of ours is, quite frankly, unacceptable to us.

If we do not educate our racial minorities and the many students in our impoverished schools, we will lose the human talent that can both enrich our democracy and help us compete against the

best in the world. If we do not make a conscious effort to overcome our racial differences and knock down the stereotypes that still divide us to this day, we will continue to be deprived of that great sense of national community that makes us a stronger nation and more united as a people.

An ambivalent nation is not a strong nation. A nation that educates its children in ethnic or racial enclaves is not a nation that is purposeful in becoming more united as one people. The face of America is changing and, as we change, we need to reflect on what we will become and how we will adapt to the changing dynamics of the 21st Century.

The America we believe in is a rich stew of many cultures and races united in our quest for liberty and justice for all. For all of the talk about our differences – red state or blue state, black or white, religious or secular – we believe that there is much more that binds us together than keeps us apart.

Our diversity is our strength. E Pluribus Unum – Out of Many, One.

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