

# Confronting School and Housing Segregation in the Richmond Region

*can we learn and live together?*



# foreword

## Reflection on Segregation in Metro-Richmond Area: Where We Have Been, Where We are Heading

By John Moeser

It is common for people to think that Richmond was more segregated during the first half of the 19th Century when slave codes dictated the routine life of African Americans including the prohibition against congregating in public. Yet when one compares 19th century maps of Richmond with 21st century maps, black and white populations are much more separated today than before.

After Reconstruction, though slavery had been abolished, Jim Crow laws emerged that had the same effect as slavery. Douglas Blackman's book, *Slavery by Another Name*, discusses the newly adopted vagrancy laws that led to the jailing of enormous numbers of black males who couldn't pay the fines for walking in public places without documents establishing their employment and who employed them.

Still, throughout this period Richmond never forced blacks and whites to live in separate areas, at least not until 1911 when Richmond became only the second city in the U.S.—after Baltimore—to designate neighborhoods by race. Neighborhoods were zoned for whites or blacks. Six years later, however, in 1917, the US Supreme Court ruled Richmond's zoning law unconstitutional.

In the 1920s, Richmond tried again to zone neighborhoods by race using the zoning code referred to as Virginia's Racial Integrity Law that forbade interracial marriage. People could not live in neighborhoods whose residents they could not marry. Because Virginia forbade interracial marriage, blacks couldn't live in white neighborhoods or vice versa.

By the 1930s, Richmond neighborhoods were thoroughly segregated, though the preservation of segregation now fell largely to local bankers and realtors. Restrictive covenants were embedded in property deeds of privately

owned homes that prohibited white homeowners from selling their houses to blacks and, in many instances, to Jews. In 1948, the Supreme Court acted again and nullified the use of these racist covenants.

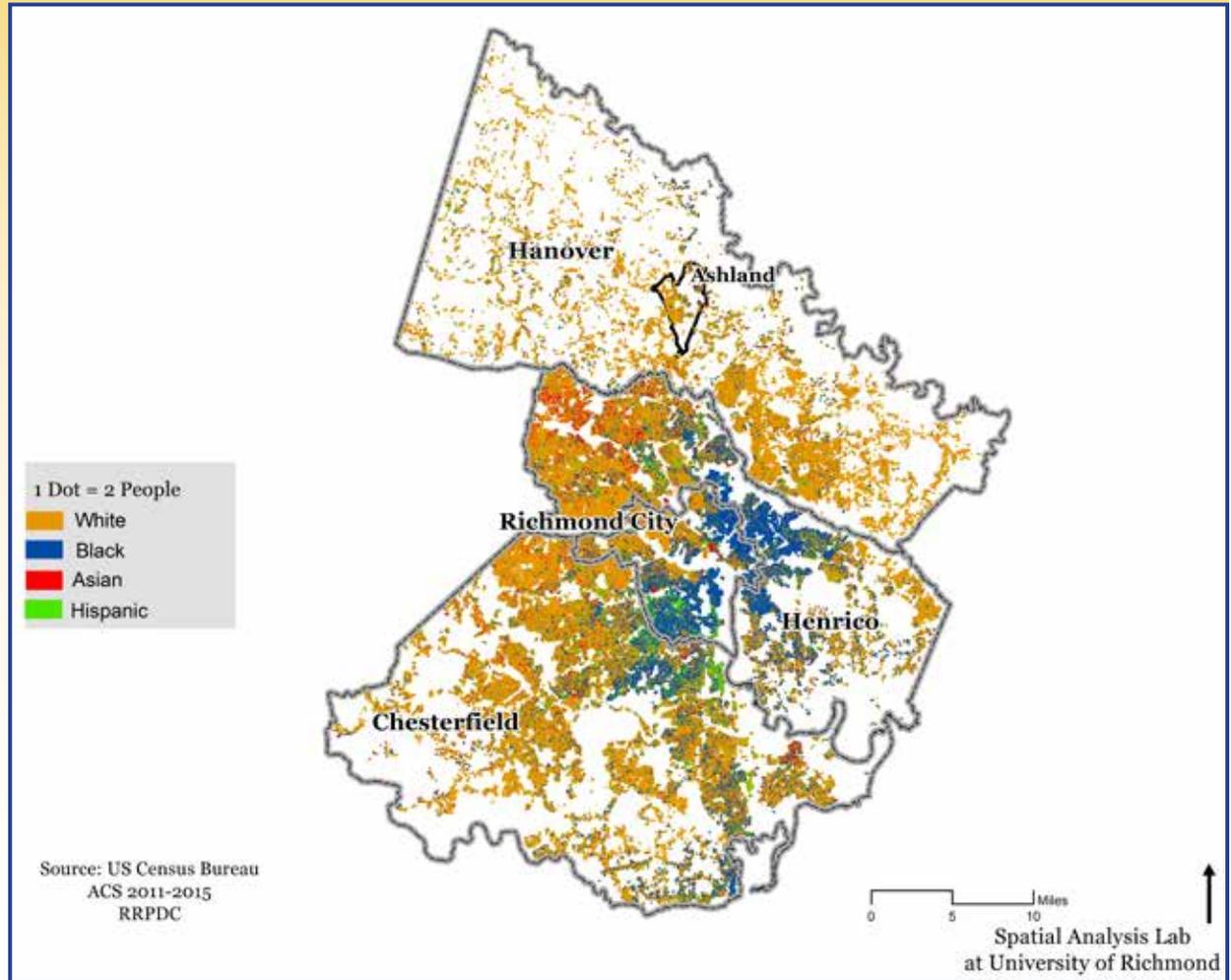
Realtors reinforced segregation by steering white home buyers to white neighborhoods and black homebuyers to black neighborhoods. Bankers, meanwhile, denied mortgages to blacks or whites seeking to purchase housing in the "wrong" neighborhood. My wife and I can attest to that practice as it was employed when we sought to purchase our first house in an integrated neighborhood.

From the late 1930s through the early 1960s, one of the major drivers of segregated neighborhoods was none other than the federal government itself. Urban planners became their accomplices.

Mortgage discrimination, placement of public housing, Federal Housing Authority (FHA) policies, highway construction, urban renewal projects, and local economic development led to the decimation of Richmond's black neighborhoods. Red-lining, a pervasive form of government mortgage discrimination, starved African Americans of investment, which in turn caused their neighborhoods to fall into disrepair. When that happened, private investors then cited deterioration as a reason for denying loans for new housing or for the repair of older housing. It was too risky, they said, though never admitting that the red-lining led to the decay.

Public funds were tapped and channeled to low-income neighborhoods, but these funds were used to build public housing, nearly all of which was concentrated in the East End of Richmond. The one housing project for whites, Hillside Court, was built south of the river. The presence of public housing itself was another

**Map 1. Race and Place in the Metro-Richmond Region, 2011 - 2015**



reason for private banks and investment firms to steer clear of those neighborhoods. Collapse became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Middle income blacks who lost their property due to highway construction and urban redevelopment couldn't take advantage of FHA loans to purchase new housing in the suburbs because new subdivisions were white and, according to FHA, anytime blacks moved into white neighborhoods, home values declined. The consequence was that not only were city neighborhoods segregated, but the whole metropolitan area was as well.

With the passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, middle income African American families could finally begin to take advantage of FHA loans and move to new housing in the suburbs. Many of their old neighborhoods, however, struggled with the loss of black leadership that sustained the schools, churches, businesses, professional networks, and political institutions.

It is a similar history with our schools. Over time, Richmond's schools reflected the loss of the white and black middle class while county schools became more racially diverse. Along some measures, our schools are more

segregated now than before. Racially-defined poverty has skyrocketed, first in the city and now in the suburbs.

The stark divisions in our society remain regional in scope. Public policy created many of these problems, but public policy can also address these problems. To do so, we must construct the multi-racial, income diverse, city-suburban coalitions that are fundamental to bringing about change.

Our regional history of deeply intentional racial discrimination in housing and schools informs access to equal educational opportunity today.

Is there a lesson for all of us as we call attention to the plight of our children in the public schools they attend and the neighborhoods in which they live?

# executive summary

The U.S. is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse.

**W**hite children now account for less than half of all births. At the same time, we are seeing stagnation in the earnings of the middle class and a widening gap between the poor and the rich. These changes matter, and they are impacting K-12 schools in our region.

This report examines the changing nature of segregation in the metro-Richmond area, which is now far more multiracial than it was in the past. It seeks to:

- Pay central attention to segregation in housing and K-12 education,
- Understand the mechanisms of educational inequality by examining data on the segregation of schools and housing by race, ethnicity, and poverty,
- Offer a range of possible public policy solutions to promote equitable access to high opportunity schools and neighborhoods.

Data from this report are primarily computed from the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Census, which house large-scale federal population and education datasets. Other sources include court cases, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and DiversityDataKids.org. We share several findings of note below.

## **Dynamic Residential Changes in Our Region**

- The close-in suburbs are rapidly diversifying.
  - In Henrico, 27.3% of new residents were Asian.
  - In Chesterfield, 27.2% of new residents were Hispanic/Latino.
  - Both counties had a gain of 8,000 black residents, accounting for 43% of all new residents.
- Richmond City has seen a 2.1% increase in the percent of white residents.
- White poverty in Richmond City fell by 1.2%, making it the only locality reporting such a decline. This suggests a reverse white flight, as affluent whites move into the city either from the suburbs or from other cities.
- Richmond also was the only locality to see a decrease in the percentage of the black population, down by 2.5%.

### **Growing Diversity and Deepening Double Segregation by Race and Poverty in Schools**

- At 48.2%, white students now make up a minority share of the region's enrollment.
- The growth in the nonwhite population has been driven by Latino and Asian enrollment as the overall share of black students in the region has declined.
- Richmond area students experience starkly different exposure to school poverty depending on their racial or income group. The typical black student, for instance, heads to a school in which roughly two out of three of their peers are low income, compared to about one in four for the typical white, Asian or non-poor student. These differences matter because racially unequal exposure to poverty helps drive achievement gaps.
- Compared to their suburban peers, students in Richmond City schools are far less likely to enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) courses or take AP exams. Just 5% of Richmond students are enrolled in at least one AP course, versus about 40% in Chesterfield and Hanover.
- Across the region, similar gaps persist for students taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the ACT, the most commonly required college entrance exams.

### **Close Relationships between School and Housing Segregation**

- Low opportunity neighborhoods are strongly linked to minority segregated, high poverty schools. The reverse is also true.
- Most affordable housing opportunities are not in proximity to high opportunity schools.

# introduction

The U.S. is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse.

White children now account for less than half of all births. At the same time, we are seeing stagnation in the earnings of the middle class and a widening gap between the poor and the rich. These changes matter, and they are impacting K-12 schools.

The quad-county area (Richmond City, Henrico, Chesterfield, and Hanover counties) illustrates these trends. American Community Survey (ACS) data from 2010-2015 shows the region is becoming more diverse, with a 1.6% increase in the percent of non-white residents.<sup>1</sup> In Henrico, 27.3% of new residents were Asian. In Chesterfield, 27.2% of new residents were Hispanic/Latino. Even more significantly, both counties had a gain of 8,000 black residents, accounting for 43% of all new residents. These close-in suburbs are rapidly diversifying.

Meanwhile, Richmond City has seen a 2.1% increase in the percent of white residents. Richmond added over 9,000 white residents from 2010 to 2015, an 11.3% increase in the total white population. Chesterfield had the next largest gain of only 4,700 (2.2%) white residents. White poverty in Richmond City fell by 1.2%, making it the only locality reporting such a decline. This suggests a reverse white flight, as affluent whites move into the city either from the suburbs or from other cities. Richmond also was the only locality to see a decrease in the percentage of the black population, down by 2.5%.

Residential segregation is reflected, and in many cases, magnified in the schools children attend. In Virginia, the public education system remains very segregated and like much of the country, racial isolation in schools is intensifying. Our state's divisions between independent cities and their suburban counties, school districts, and attendance zones all draw color lines that separate students.

The fact is, schools today are still separate and continue to be unequal. Studies tie high levels of racial isolation and socioeconomic disadvantage to schools with larger class sizes, less qualified teachers, high levels of teacher turnover, and inadequate facilities and learning materials. In addition to school inequality, the resources brought to the school by the students themselves are uneven. As part of our legacy of discrimination, students and their families from minority segregated communities face higher levels of poverty, higher unemployment rates, lower levels of educational attainment, and worse health measures. Compounded, these differences have lasting influences on students' educational attainment and future success.<sup>2</sup>

This report examines the changing nature of segregation in the metro-Richmond area, which is now far more multiracial than it was in the past. It seeks to:

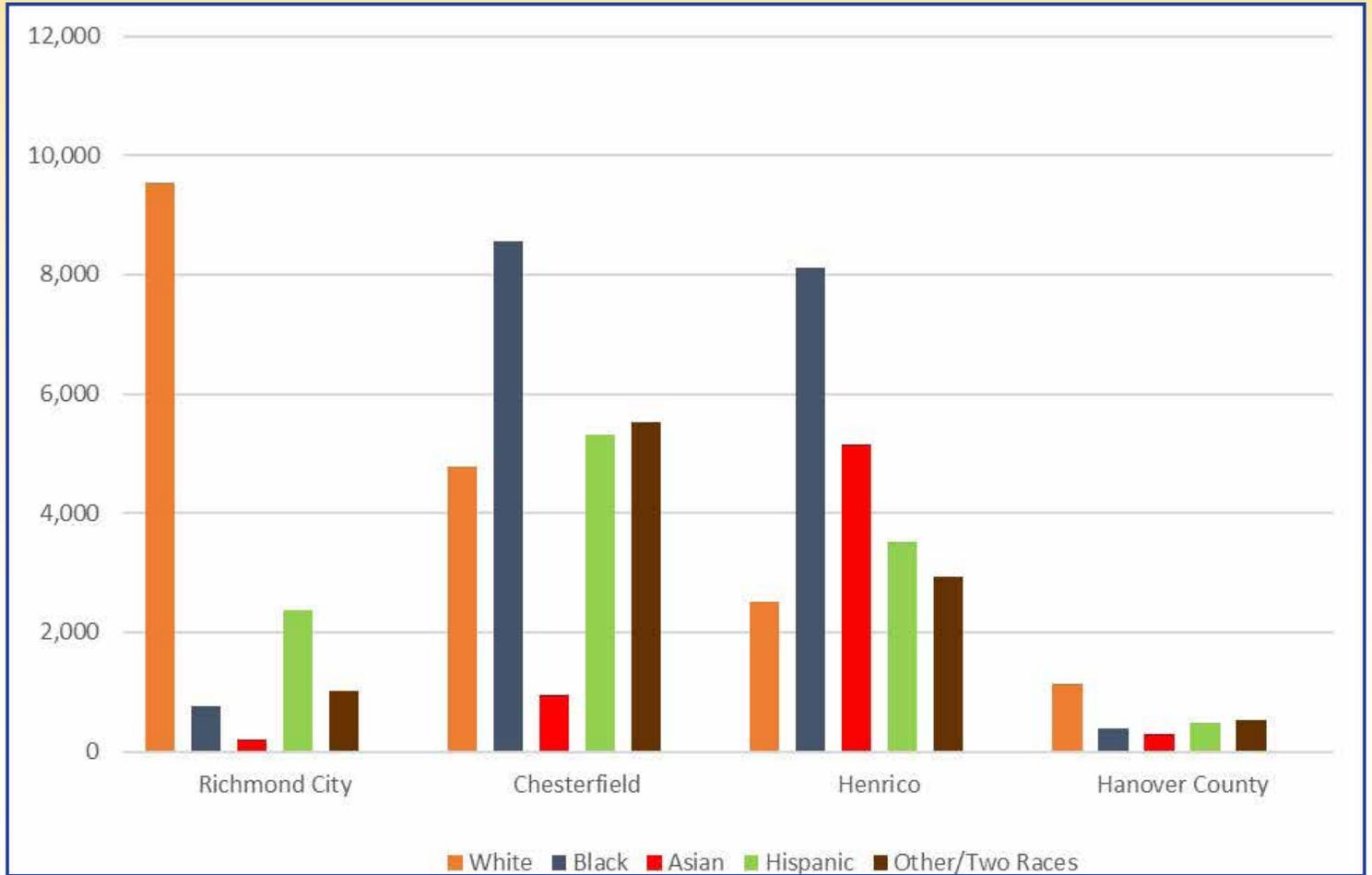
- Pay central attention to segregation in housing and K-12 education,
- Understand the mechanisms of educational inequality by examining data on the segregation of schools and housing by race, ethnicity, and poverty,
- Highlight the educational and societal benefits of diversity,
- Offer a range of possible public policy solutions to promote equitable access to high opportunity schools and neighborhoods.

Data from this report are primarily computed from the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Census, which house large-scale federal population and education datasets. Other sources include court cases, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Diversity-DataKids.org.

<sup>1</sup> American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Robert Linn and Kevin Welner, eds., *Race-Conscious Policies for Assigning Students to Schools: Social Science Research and the Supreme Court Cases* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Education, 2007); Richard Rothstein, *Class and Schools: Using Social, Economic, and Educational Reform to Close the Black-White Achievement Gap* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2004).

**Figure 1. Increase in Population by Race in Metro-Richmond Area, 2010 – 2015**



Data sources are: American Community Survey (ACS) 2010 and 2015 5-Year Estimates

# legacy of school segregation

The Richmond area has been shaped by a strong history of policies at all levels of government that overtly created segregated schooling.

In the aftermath of the landmark school desegregation decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the white establishment fought to stop black political mobilization and the integration of schools, uniting under the mantra of Massive Resistance to keep blacks from desegregating schools in Richmond and throughout Virginia.<sup>3</sup> Several jurisdictions across the state, such as the cities of Norfolk and Charlottesville, as well as Warren and Prince Edward Counties, closed schools rather than integrate. In 1959, the Virginia Supreme Court declared Massive Resistance dead by stating that school closings and funding cut-offs were unconstitutional.<sup>4</sup>

After the demise of Massive Resistance, Richmond and other jurisdictions adopted more covert school policies and techniques to prevent the integration of schools. Freedom-of-choice plans became an important and widespread means for delaying the implementation of *Brown* by holding out the promise to black students of attending well-resourced white settings, but not taking systematic steps to ensure that black students could actually do so.

After the Supreme Court outlawed freedom of choice plans, civil rights advocates continued to push for meaningful desegregation. In Richmond, district court judge Robert Merhige heard a case dealing with the thorny issue of metropolitan segregation. Map 2 illustrates the fundamental question facing Judge Merhige: could meaningful and lasting desegregation be accomplished in the Richmond area without eliminating or overcoming the boundary lines dividing city and suburban schools? The

map is based on 1970 data submitted to the court during the Bradley case and shows that elementary schools in Henrico and Chesterfield were overwhelmingly white at the time, while Richmond schools were predominately black. A handful of city elementary schools on the south side were virtually all white, but these settings were the legacy of the previous year's annexation of Chesterfield. That racialized boundary shift helped preserve white political power in the city for several more years.

In 1973, the district court judge, Robert Merhige, recognizing the earlier trends and discriminatory housing policies that had rendered Richmond's central city black and poor and her surrounding suburbs overwhelmingly white and wealthy, ordered a city-suburban merger for the purpose of school desegregation. In the decision, he wrote, "The proof here overwhelmingly establishes that the school division lines between Richmond and the counties coincide with no natural obstacles to speak of." His ruling was overturned on appeal, however, a reversal that a tied Supreme Court eventually let stand. As a result, school desegregation was limited to the already segregated school system in the City of Richmond.

White movement to the suburbs, long subsidized and encouraged via deeply discriminatory loan practices and the construction of the highway system, temporarily accelerated.<sup>7</sup> Many white families took advantage of the easy exit to suburban schools exempted from the city's enforcement of black students' right to equal protection under the law.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Pratt, *The Color of Their Skin: Education and Race in Richmond, Virginia, 1954–89* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1991); James Ryan, *Five Miles Away, a World Apart: One City, Two Schools and the Story of Modern Educational Inequality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). Ryan, 2010).

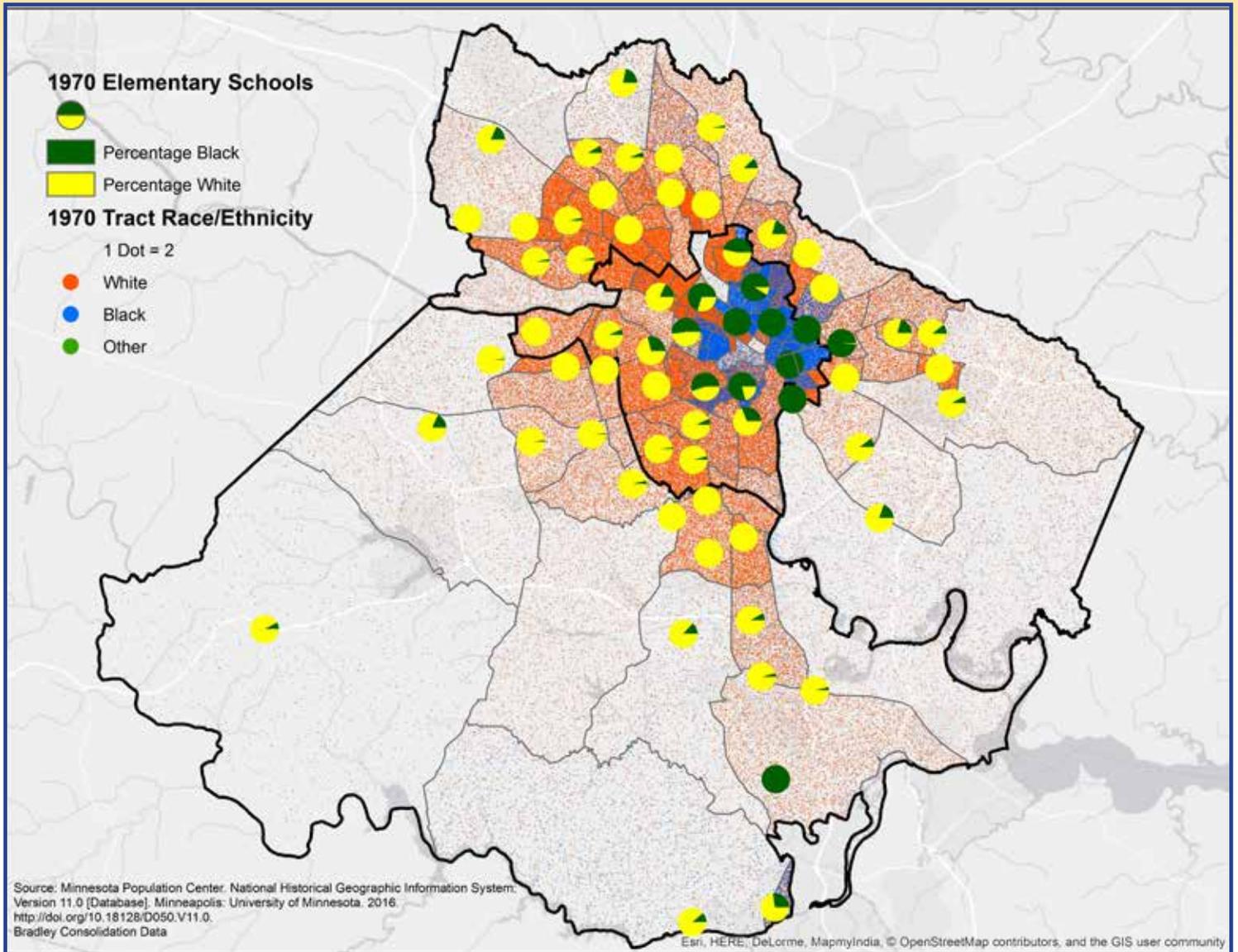
<sup>4</sup> Ryan, *Five Miles Away*.

<sup>5</sup> Portions of the above were excerpted from pp. 10-11 of Siegel-Hawley, G., Bridges, K. & Shields, T. (2016). Solidifying segregation or promoting diversity? *Educational Administration Quarterly*, DOI: 10.1177/0013161X16659346.

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Silver and John Moeser, *The Separate City: Black Communities in the Urban South, 1940–1968* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995).

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Pettigrew and Robert Green, "School Desegregation in Large Cities: A Critique of Coleman's 'White Flight' Thesis," *Harvard Educational Review* 4 (1976): 1–53.

**Map 2. Racial Makeup of Elementary Schools during the Bradley Case, 1970**

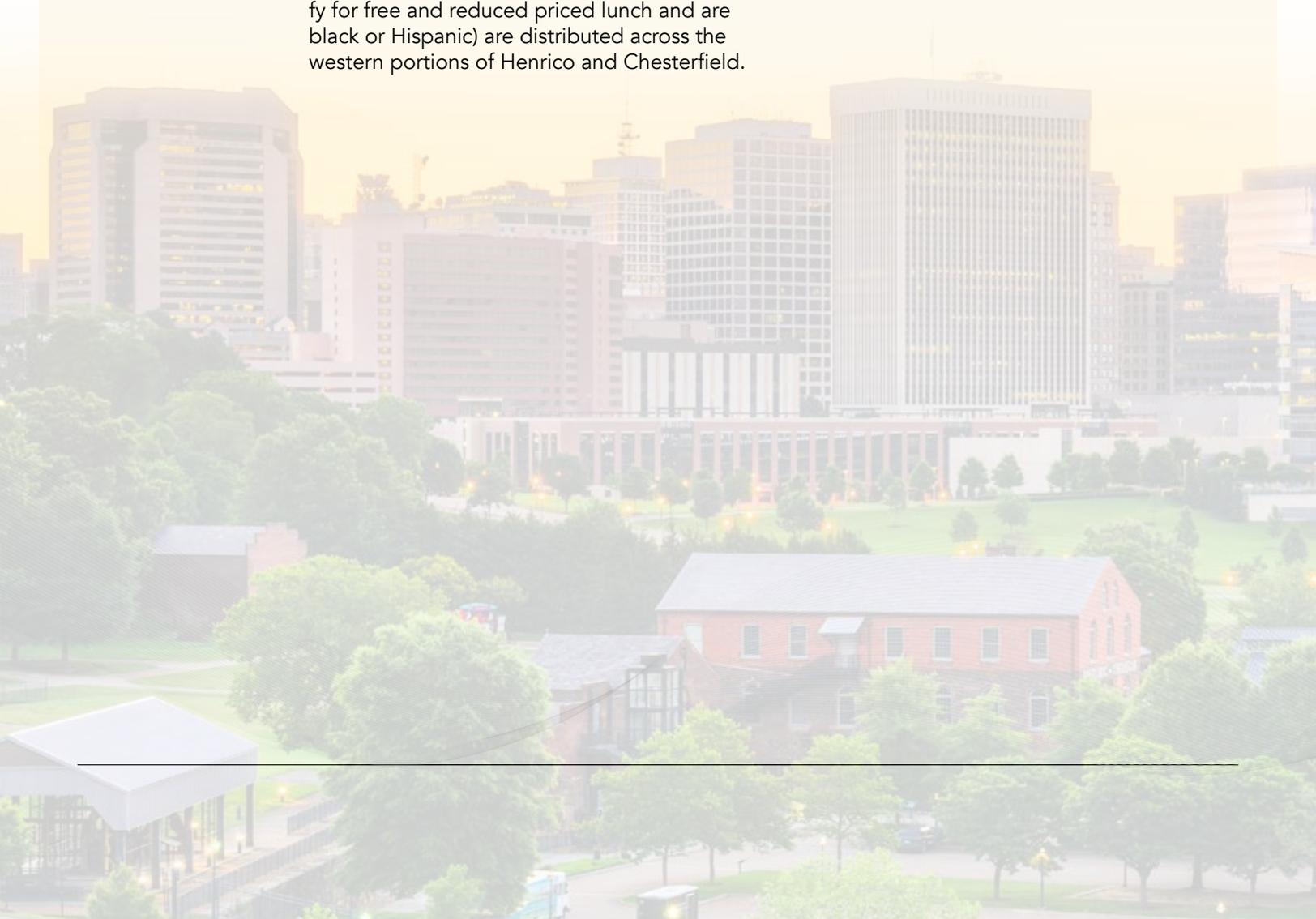


# contemporary segregation in schools

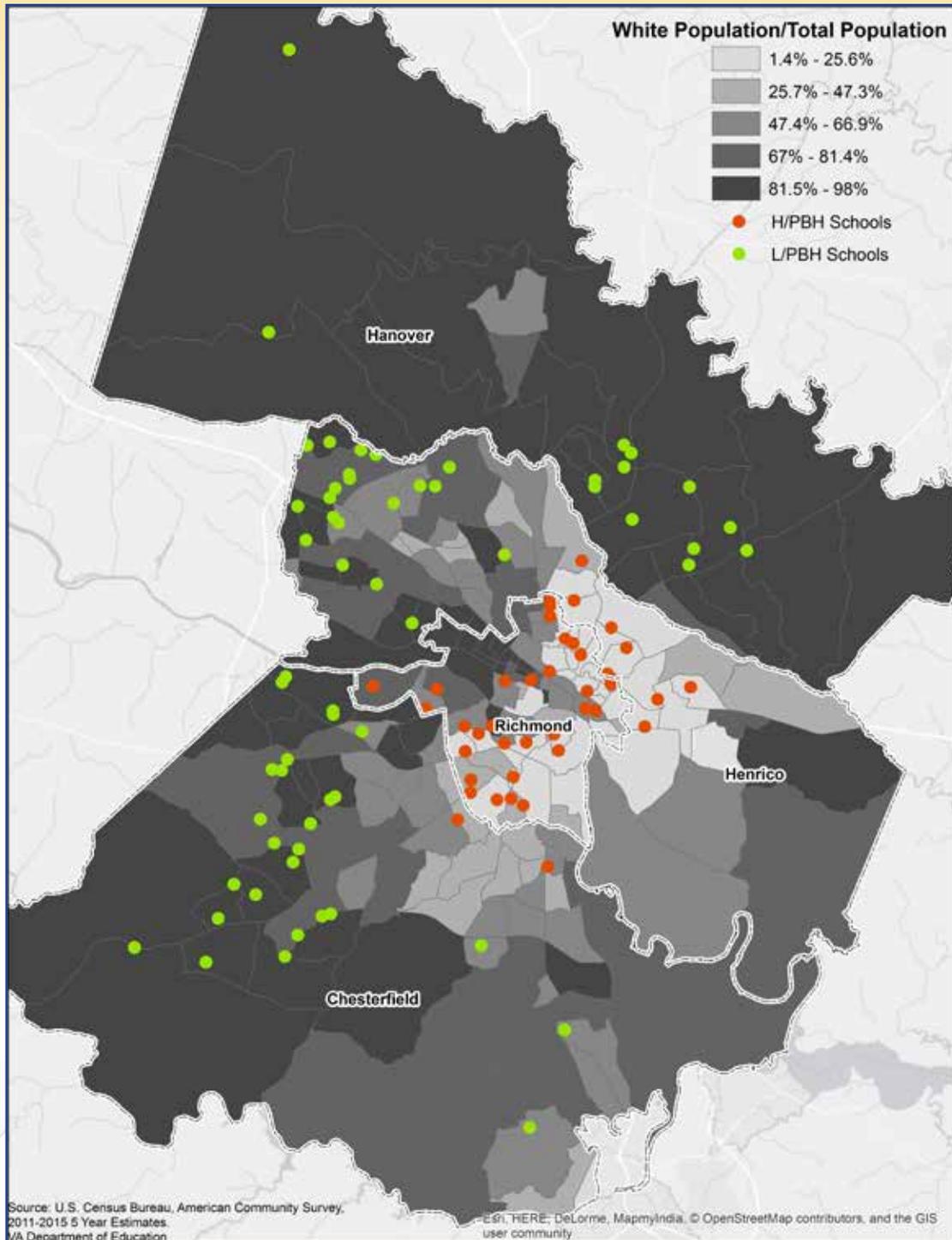
in the Metro-Richmond Area.

In the Richmond region, the legacy of failed city-suburban school desegregation can be seen in the high concentrations of high poverty black and Hispanic schools (H/PBH schools where more than 75% of the students qualify for free and reduced priced lunch and are black or Hispanic) in the city of Richmond in Map 3. Central Henrico, home to several H/PBH schools, is the exception to this trend. Conversely, low poverty black and Hispanic schools (L/PBH, where fewer than 25% of the students qualify for free and reduced priced lunch and are black or Hispanic) are distributed across the western portions of Henrico and Chesterfield.

The outer ring suburbs of Hanover also houses a number of L/PBH schools, suggesting that the geographic scope of our regional school segregation has expanded. Note, though, that Henrico and Chesterfield do have schools in the eastern half of their respective jurisdictions, it's just that those settings serve more racially and economically diverse students.



**Map 3. Concentrations of High Poverty and Black and Hispanic Schools in Metro-Richmond**



Our definitions of high and low poverty black and Hispanic schools are adapted from a General Accounting Office report issued on the sixty-third anniversary of the *Brown* decision that detailed the state of segregation in the nation's schools. It found rapid growth in the number of high poverty black and Hispanic school settings, rising from 9% of all public schools in the country in 2000 to 16% in 2013. This past November, using the same metrics that the GAO developed, the Commonwealth Institute conducted a state-wide analysis for Virginia and found that the number of racially and economically isolated schools increased by over 60 percent between 2003 and 2014. Nearly one in five of Virginia's black students attend high poverty black and Hispanic schools and nearly one in ten of Virginia's Hispanic students do the same.

Locally, contemporary data related to enrollment and segregation in our region's schools also point to rapid shifts over the past five years. At 48.2%, white students now make up a minority share of the region's<sup>8</sup> enrollment. The growth in the nonwhite population has been driven by Latino and Asian enrollment as the overall share of black students in the region has declined.

Though our growing diversity presents new opportunities for bringing students together across color lines, the region's students attend very different types of schools in terms of racial makeup. The typical white student in the region heads to a school that is 64% white, even though white students account for just 48% of the enrollment. Similarly, black and Latino students are disproportionately exposed to their same race peers. Latino students have seen the fastest decline in exposure to white students since 2010, as well as the sharpest rise in exposure to Latino peers. In other words, the isolation of Latino students is rapidly intensifying.

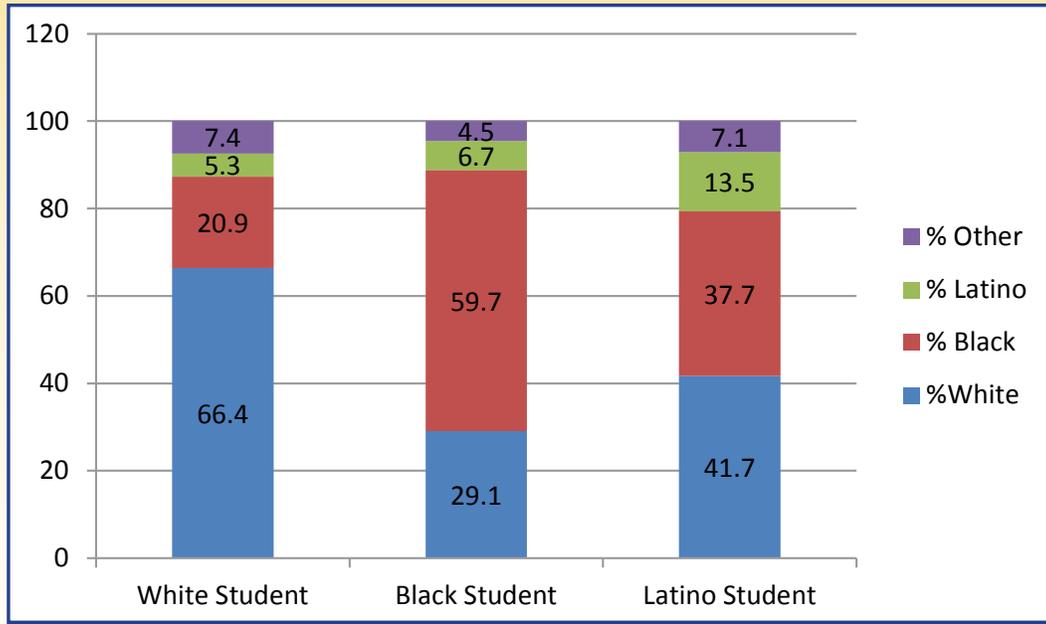
**Table 1. School Enrollment by Race, Richmond CBSA, 2010 and 2014**

	2010	2014	Difference
White	50.6	48.2	-2.4
Black	36.4	34.8	-1.6
Hispanic	6.5	8.8	2.3
Asian	3.3	3.9	0.6
Two or More	2.7	3.9	1.2
All Other	0.5	0.4	-0.1

Source: NCES Common Core of Data.

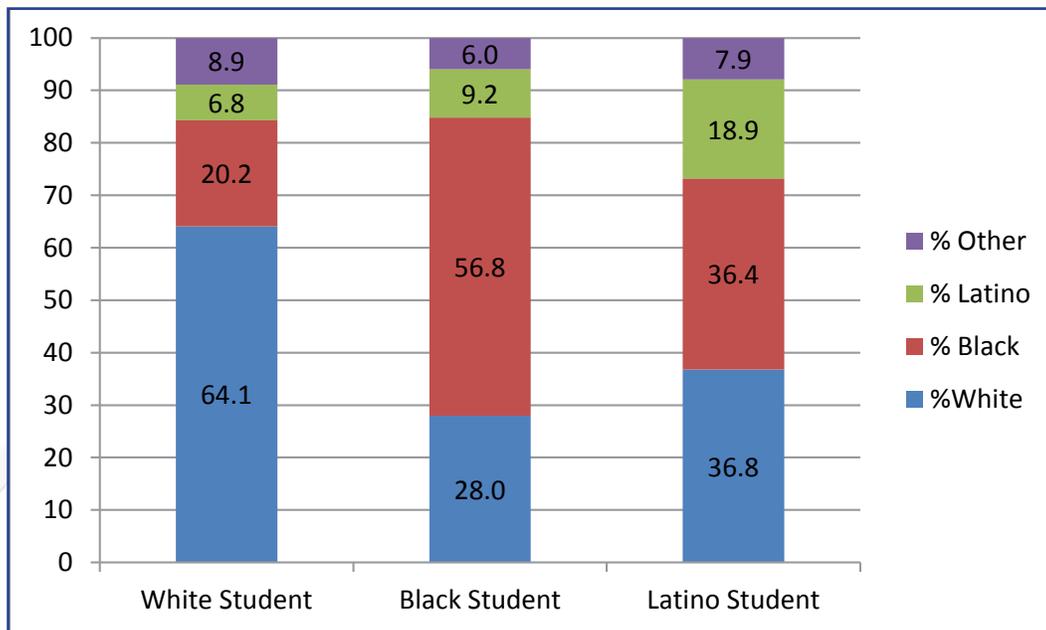
<sup>8</sup> CBSA boundaries were held constant to the 2010 scope of the Richmond-Petersburg CBSA. This included the Amelia, Carolina, Charles City, Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, Hopewell, King and Queen, King William, New Kent, Louisa, Petersburg, Powhatan, Prince George, Richmond, and Sussex school divisions.

**Figure 2. Racial Composition of School Attended by Typical Student by Race, Richmond CBSA, 2010**



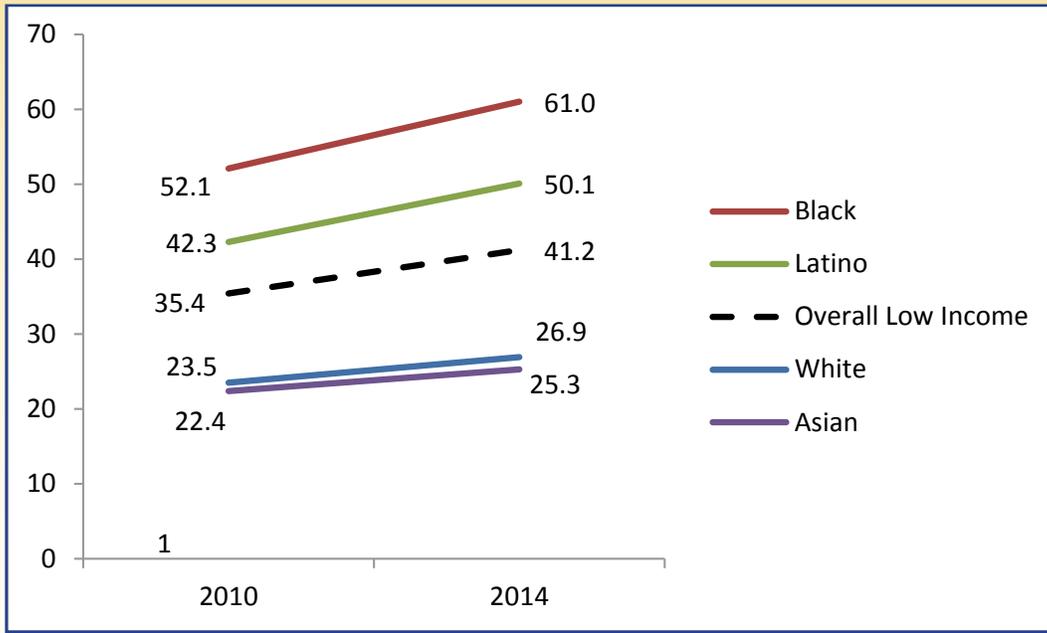
Source: NCES Common Core of Data.

**Figure 3. Racial Composition of School Attended by Typical Student by Race, Richmond CBSA, 2014**



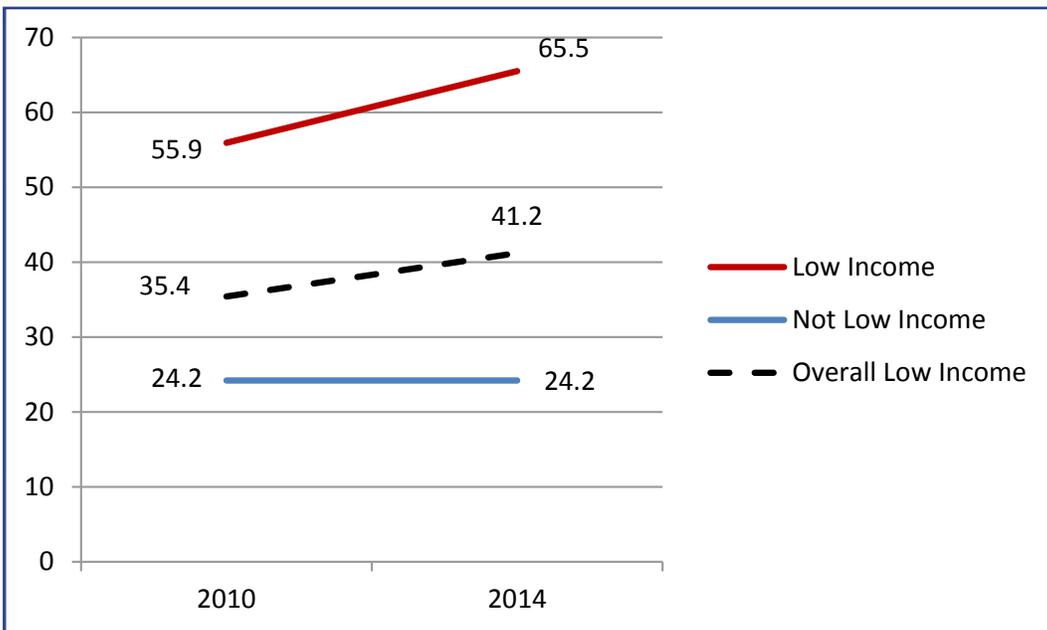
Source: NCES Common Core of Data.

**Figure 4. Exposure to School Poverty by Race, 2010 and 2014**



Source: NCES Common Core of Data.

**Figure 5. Exposure to School Poverty by Income, 2010 and 2014**



Source: NCES Common Core of Data.

Richmond area students experience starkly different exposure to school poverty depending on their racial or income group. Low income, black and Latino students in the region go to schools with much higher shares of low income students than their white, Asian and non-poor peers. The typical black student, for instance, heads to a school in which roughly two out of three of their peers are low income, compared to about one in four for the typical white, Asian or non-poor student. As student poverty has risen across the region, all racial groups have experienced increased contact with it—even though the rate of increase is much sharper for black and Latino students versus white and Asian students. Non-poor students were the only group that did not see a rise in exposure to poverty over this time period. These differences matter because racially unequal exposure to poverty helps drive achievement gaps.<sup>9</sup>

Another way of thinking about segregation is to consider how unevenly students are spread across the region's schools. Over the past five years, regional segregation between black and white students has remained very high and stable. Nearly 60% of the region's black students would need to change schools in

order for all schools to reflect the overall share of black students in the Richmond area. The converse is true for white students.

Segregation between white and Latino students is not as extreme, but has increased very rapidly since 2010. Nearly half of Richmond area Latino students would need to change schools in order for each school to reflect the regional share of the Latino enrollment. Meanwhile, segregation between Latino and black students has declined slightly.

<sup>9</sup> See Reardon, S.F. (2015). School Segregation and Racial Academic Achievement Gaps (CEPA Working Paper No.15-12). Retrieved from Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis: <http://cepa.stanford.edu/wp15-12>.

# segregation and gaps in opportunity and achievement

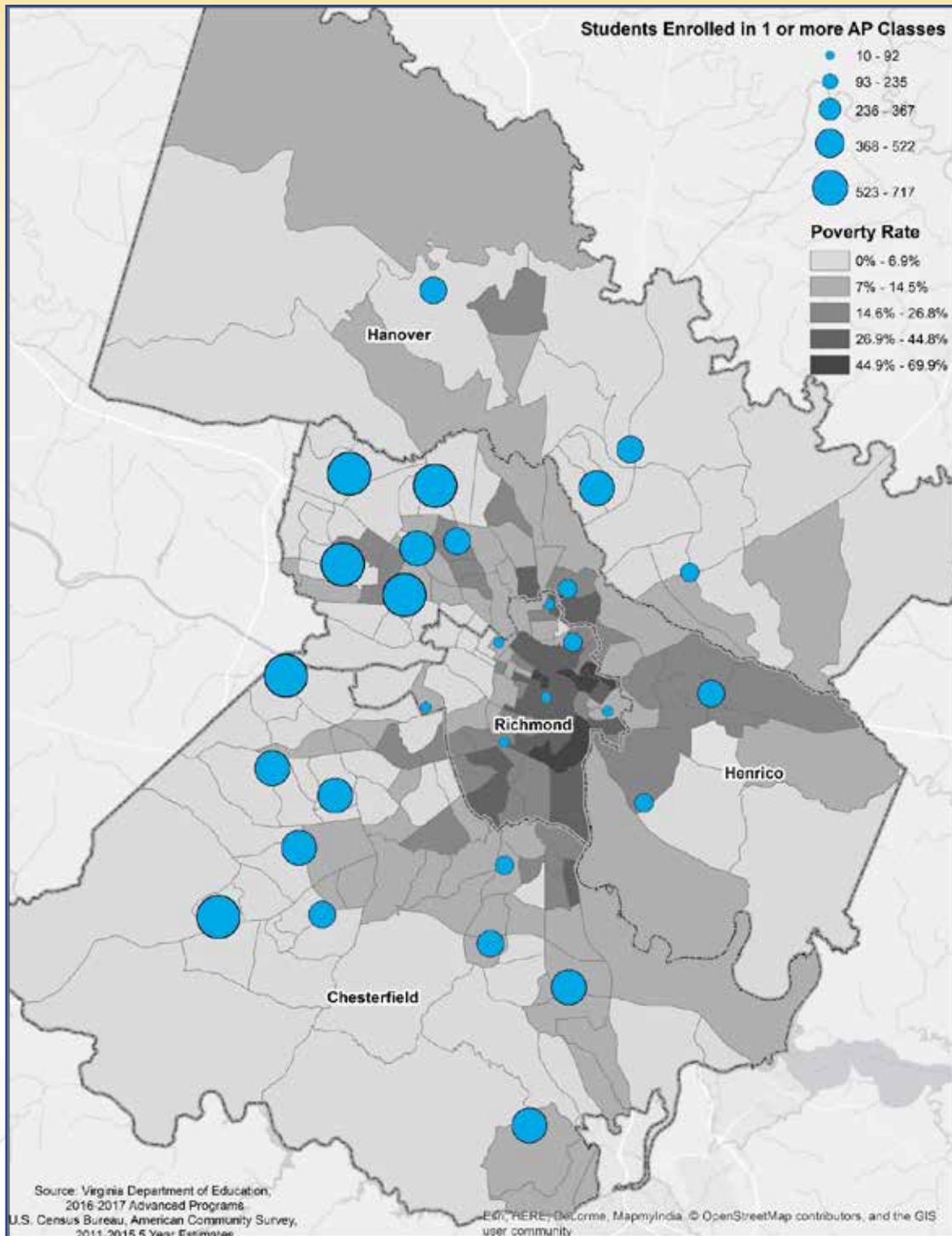
With segregation comes unequal educational opportunity. The GAO report found that high poverty black and Hispanic schools (same definition previously provided, 75-100% of students qualified for free or reduced priced lunch and were black or Hispanic) reported fewer math, science and college preparatory courses, relative to other types of schools, as well as higher retention, suspension and expulsion rates.<sup>10</sup> These trends hold true in the Richmond area.

Compared to their suburban peers, students in Richmond City schools are far less likely to enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) courses or take AP exams (Figure 7). Just 5% of Richmond students are enrolled in at least one AP course, versus about 40% in Chesterfield and Hanover. Moreover, low poverty communities reported much higher numbers of students enrolled in AP courses (Map 4). White and other race students were overrepresented in AP coursework across every major area school

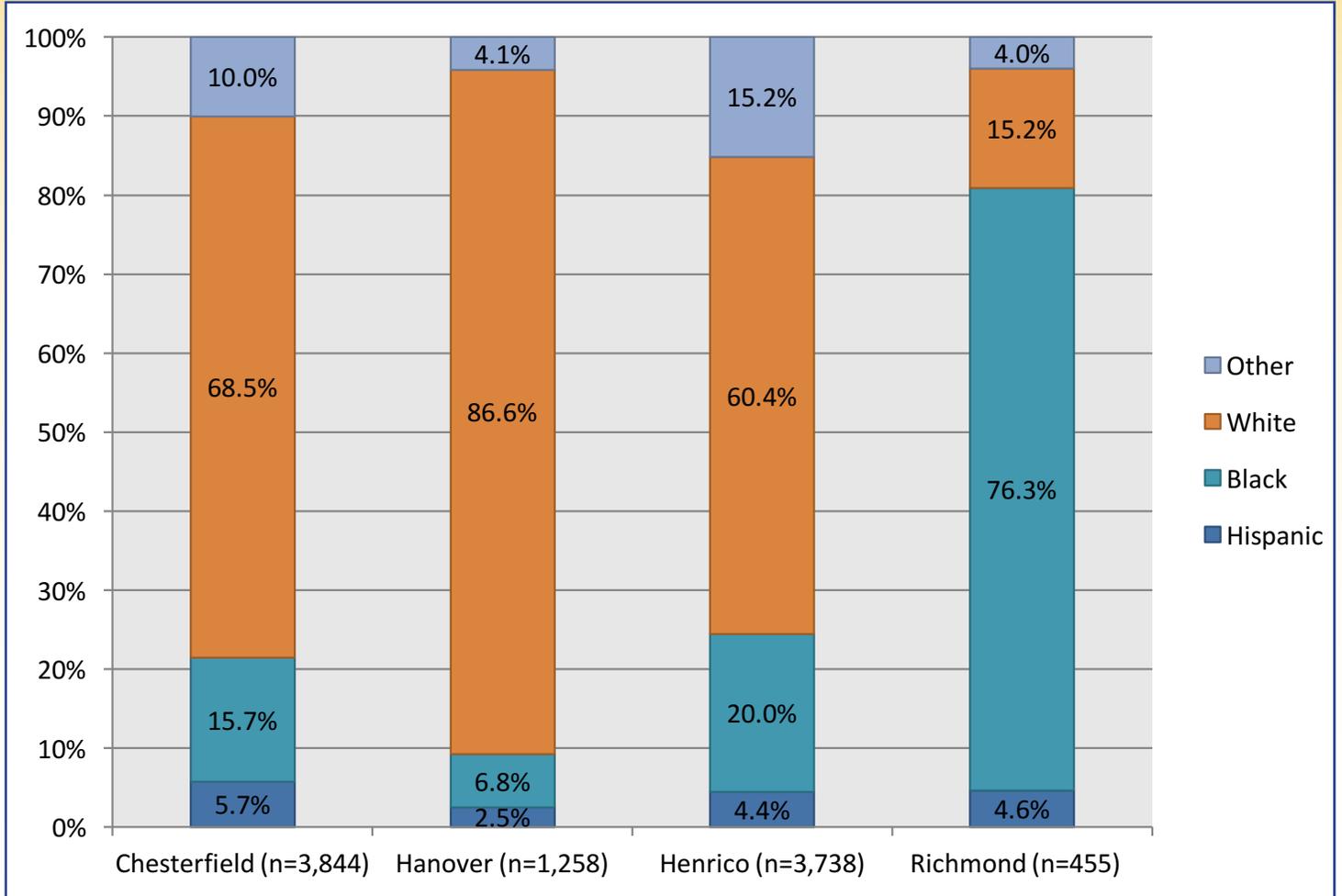
division (Figure 6). AP coursework can boost Grade Point Averages and successful completion of the AP exam earns students' college credits, making access to both an important marker of college readiness opportunities.

<sup>10</sup> GAO report, 2016.

**Map 4. Relationship between Students Enrolled in One or More AP Courses and Neighborhood Poverty Level**

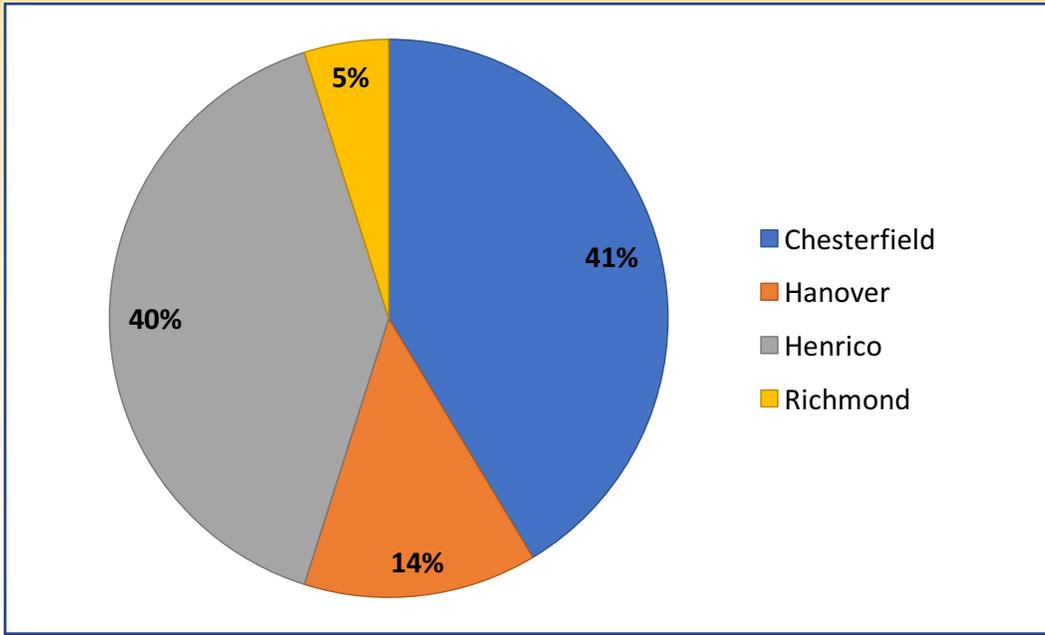


**Figure 6. Regional Share of Students Enrolled in One or More AP Course by Race**



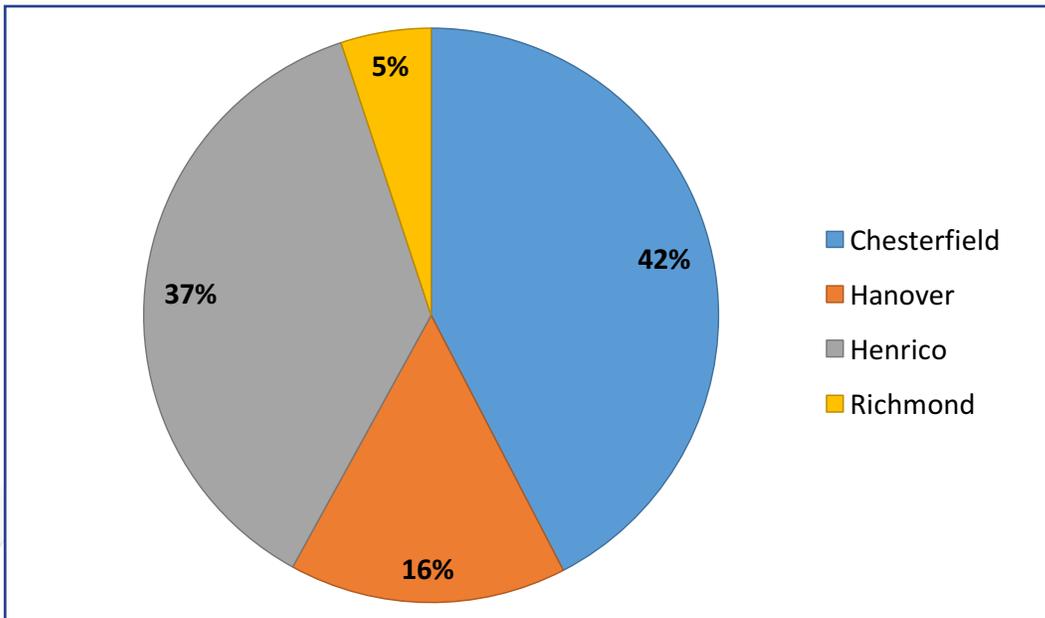
Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2013.

**Figure 7. Regional share of students enrolled in one or more AP courses**



Source: Civil Rights Data Collection, 2013.

**Figure 8. Regional Share of SAT/ACT Participants**



Over the past several decades, student test scores have become a primary indicator of school quality. Rather than being an objective measure of student knowledge and performance, however, test scores often reflect stark gaps in opportunity across schools and communities.<sup>11</sup> These gaps begin very early, before kindergarten, and do not grow significantly over the course of K-12 schooling.<sup>12</sup> They emerge in part because widening inequality and diminishing social mobility mean that key early resources, like access to high quality daycare, are increasingly concentrated in the upper echelons of the income bracket. Test scores often become a measure of wealth and opportunity, not knowledge or school quality. In fact, evidence indicates that schools may help narrow the gap.<sup>13</sup> But they can't do it alone. Much broader social supports are necessary to stave off the negative impacts of inequality.

Maps 5 and 6, which illustrate the relationship between household income and performance on third grade reading and math tests, shows that schools surrounded by higher income communities report very high rates of third grade passage on state math and reading tests. In comparison, schools serving low income neighborhoods display much higher

rates of failure. There are exceptions to these general trends, of course, but they are not the rule. Variations persist both within and across our region's school divisions. Nationally, recent research found that children in the wealthiest school districts, on average, about four grade levels above students in districts with the highest concentrations of poverty.<sup>14</sup> Another study concluded that low-poverty schools were 22 times more likely to perform well on testing measures than high-poverty schools.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Prudence Carter and Kevin Welner, *Closing the opportunity gap* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

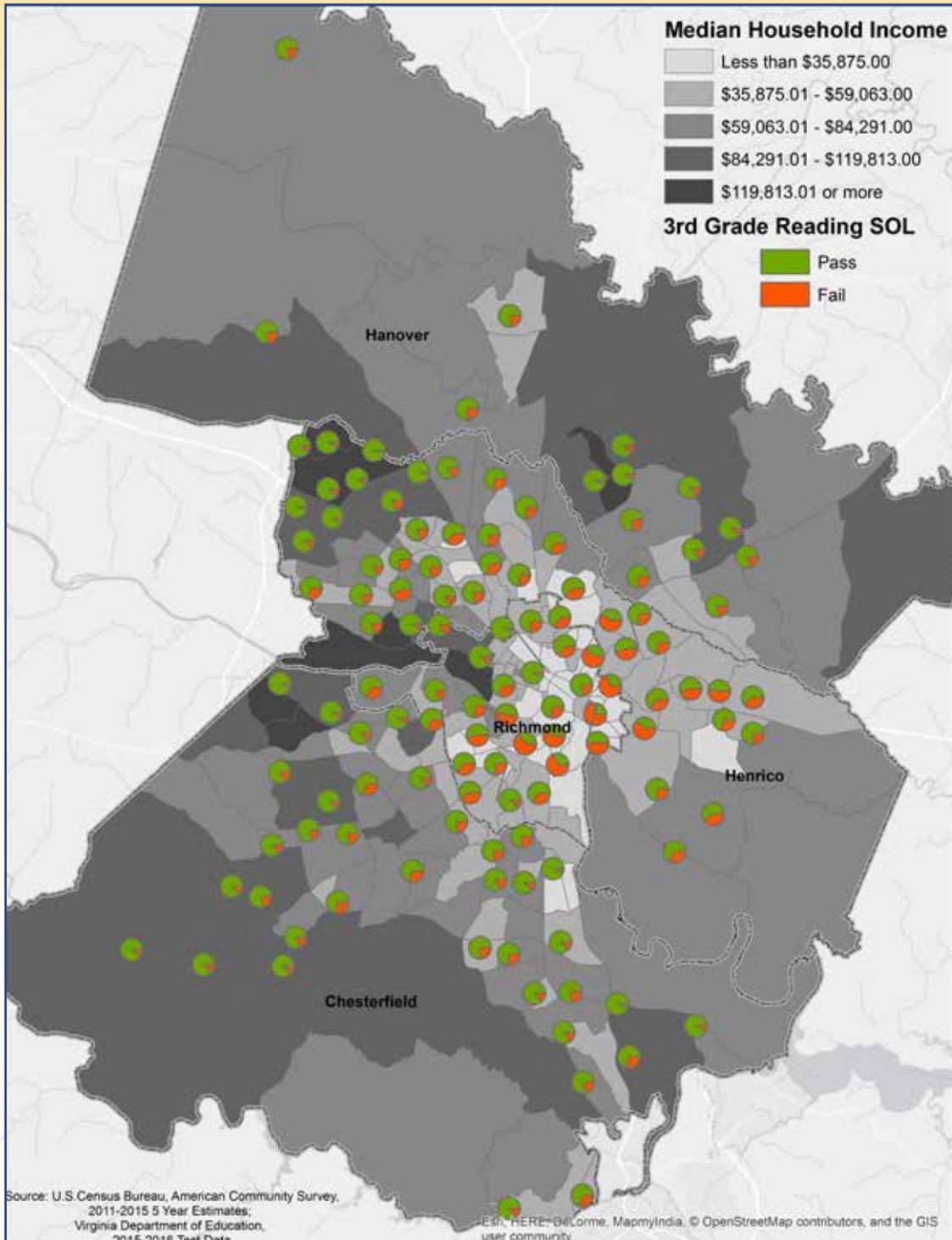
<sup>12</sup> "The Widening Socioeconomic Status Achievement Gap: New Evidence and Possible Explanations" by S. F. Reardon, in R. J. Murnane & G. J. Duncan (Eds.), *Whither Opportunity? Rising Inequality, Schools, and Children's Life Chances*, 2011, New York: Russell Sage Foundation

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*

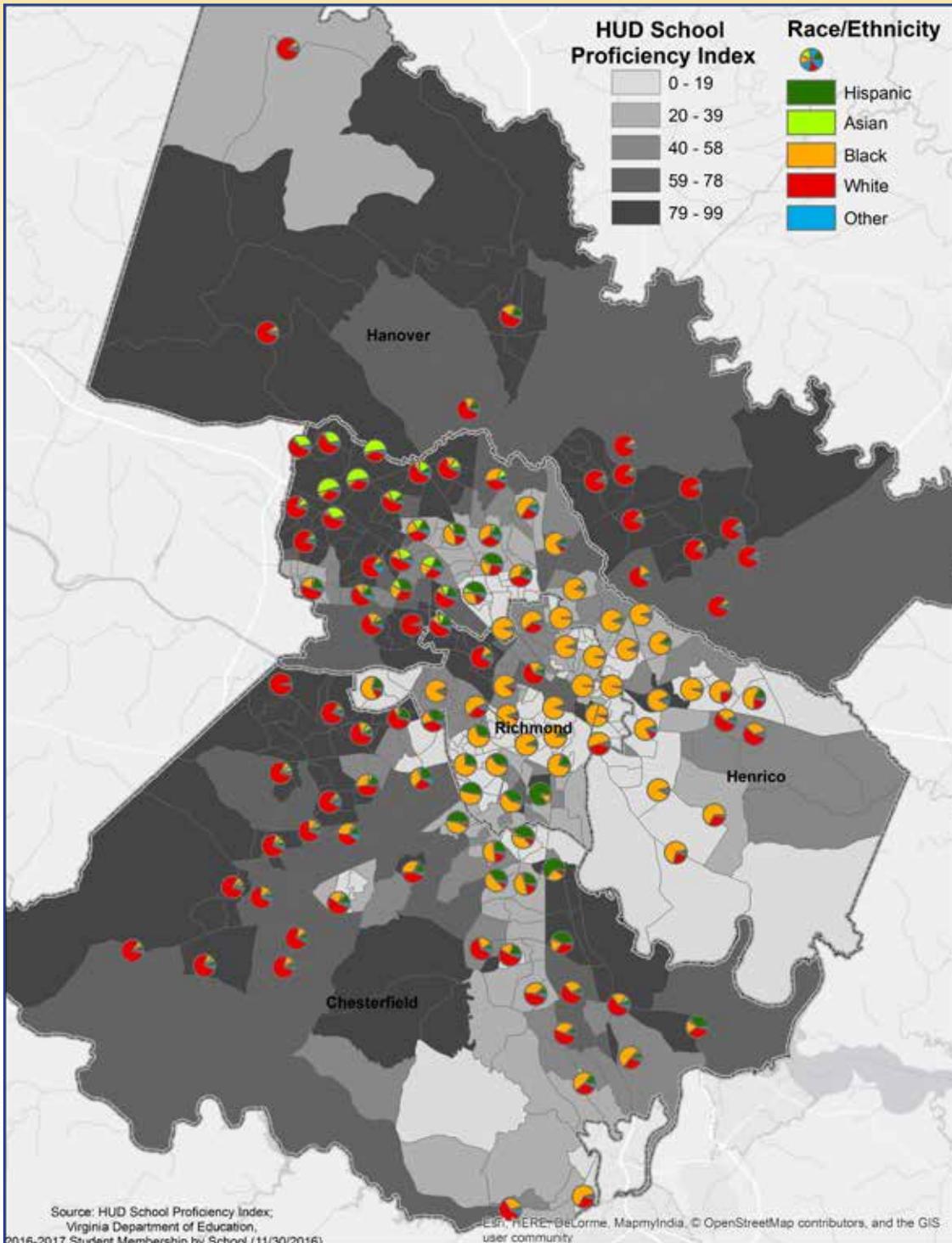
<sup>14</sup> Reardon, S.F., Kalogrides, D., & Shores, K. (2017). *The Geography of Racial/Ethnic Test Score Gaps*.

<sup>15</sup> Douglas N. Harris, "Ending the Blame Game on Educational Inequity: A Study of 'High Flying' Schools and NCLB," *Educational Policy Studies Laboratory*, Arizona State University, March 2006, 20.

**Map 5. Relationship between Third Grade Reading Performance and Median Household Income**



**Map 6. Relationship between School Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and School Proficiency Index**



## Educational and Societal Benefits of Diversity<sup>16</sup>

As each new police shooting of an unarmed black citizen reminds us, prejudice still has life and death consequences in our society. A 2003 meta-analysis of 515 social science studies, spanning 6 decades and 36 countries, found overwhelming evidence to indicate that contact between different groups--such as having classmates of different racial backgrounds--lowers intergroup prejudice.<sup>17</sup> The research showed that exposure to students of other racial and ethnic backgrounds produces more knowledge and awareness of those backgrounds, which in turn lowers anxiety and heightens feelings of empathy.<sup>18</sup> Studies also show that the timing of the contact is important--elementary school age children are both aware of race and most likely to display flexible thinking around what racial differences may or may not signify.<sup>19</sup> Importantly, research has found that students of all races experiencing high levels of intergroup contact were more likely to feel that positive steps should be taken to mitigate exclusion based on race.<sup>20</sup> One study of the Maryland and Virginia suburbs of D.C. that classified districts as either "heterogeneous" or "homogeneous" found that students in more diverse settings were much more likely to use moral reasoning to evaluate racial exclusion. So, for example, students in the heterogeneous district that had experienced lots of contact with students of other races were much more likely to say that not dating someone on the basis of race was unfair and discriminatory than students with lower contact in the more homogeneous district.<sup>21</sup> These findings are particularly noteworthy because they suggest that contact with other racial groups not only reduces prejudice, but that it also can help spur white students towards proactive resistance to discrimination.

Extensive research also shows that, for all students, integrated schools tend to be linked to better educational outcomes, more stimulating classroom discussion and more complex problem solving, higher graduation rates, reductions in prejudice and stereotyping and an increased desire to attend diverse colleges and live in diverse neighborhoods later in life. Perhaps most importantly, diverse schools offer students of all races the best preparation for the fast-changing and interconnected world in which they will live. U.S. employers spend roughly \$200 to \$300 million<sup>22</sup> dollars each year providing diversity training because too few of their employees are prepared to work with people who come from different racial, economic or cultural backgrounds.

## How to Make Diverse Schools Work for All Kids<sup>23</sup>

Because we still live in a society in which racial discrimination is built into our educational,<sup>24</sup> economic<sup>25</sup> and judicial institutions,<sup>26</sup> preventing the replication of similar patterns within diverse schools is imperative. Otherwise, research suggests that the potential benefits of diversity can be diluted or undermined.<sup>27</sup>

In the more than six decades since *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided, researchers have produced a large body of evidence related to best practices for designing integrated schools so that they equally benefit for students of all races and ethnicities. Much of this social psychology research is based on a seminal 1954 study by Harvard social psychologist Gordon Allport, who theorized that four critical elements needed to be present in order to foster optimal contact across different groups.<sup>28</sup> Specifically, he suggested that all group members needed to be given equal status, that clear guidelines for cooperatively working towards common goals should be present, and that strong leadership visibly supportive of intergroup relationships was necessary.

In diverse schools, those four fundamentals can play out in multiple ways. Efforts to de-track students (e.g., remove racialized barriers to honors and AP courses, monitor and disrupt the over-identification of black students as students with special needs, and guard against placing English Learners in separate, full-day English as a Second Language classes) and integrate them together at the classroom level are vital to the provision of equal status.<sup>29</sup> Cooperative, heterogenous grouping in classrooms, along with abundant interracial extra-curricular opportunities like sports teams, can help actualize the process of working towards common goals across racial lines.<sup>30</sup> And finally, highly visible, positive modeling from teachers and administrators around issues of fairness and diversity is critical to the development of strong, equitable leadership.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>16</sup> This section is excerpted from Siegel-Hawley, G. (2012). How non-minority students also benefit from diverse schools." (Washington, DC: National Coalition on School Diversity). Retrieved from: <http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo8.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Aboud, F. E., Mendelson, M. J., & Purdy, K. T. (2003). Cross-race peer relations and friendship quality. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 27, 165-173. Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2011). When groups meet: The dynamics of intergroup contact. New York: Psychology Press. Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 751-783. Rosenthal, R. (1991). *Meta-analytic procedures for social research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

<sup>18</sup> Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2008). How does intergroup contact reduce prejudice? Meta-analytic tests of three mediators. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 38, 922-934.

<sup>19</sup> Brief for the American Psychological Association and the Washington State Psychological Association as Amici Curiae Supporting Respondents, Parents Involved and Meredith, 127 S. Ct. 2738 (2006). Killen, M., Crystal, D. & Ruck, M (2007). The social developmental benefits of intergroup contact among children and adolescents. In E. Frankenberg & G. Orfield (Eds.), *Lessons in integration: Realizing the promise of racial diversity in American schools* (pp. 31-56). Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press.

<sup>20</sup> Killen et al., 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Vendantam, S. (20 January 2008). Most diversity training ineffective, study finds. *The Washington Post*. Available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/01/19/ST2008011901990.html>. See also Dobbin, F., Kalev, A. & Kelly, E. (2007). *Diversity Management in Corporate America*. *Contexts*, 6(4), 21-27.

<sup>23</sup> This section is excerpted from Siegel-Hawley, G. (2012). How non-minority students also benefit from diverse schools." (Washington, DC: National Coalition on School Diversity). Retrieved from: <http://www.school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBriefNo8.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> Anyon, J. (2005). *Radical possibilities: Public policy, urban education and a new social movement*. New York, NY: Routledge. Lipman, P. (2004). *High Stakes Education: Inequality, Globalization, and Urban School Reform*. New York, NY: Routledge. Oakes, J. (2010). *Keeping Track: How Schools Structure Inequality*. New Haven, NJ: Yale University Press.

<sup>25</sup> Oliver, M. & Shapiro, T. (2006). *Black Wealth/ White Wealth: A New Perspective on Racial Inequality*. New York, NY: Routledge. Kau, James B., Keenan, Donald C. and Munneke, Henry J., *Racial Discrimination and Mortgage Lending* (August 22, 2012). *Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics*, Vol. 45, No. 2, 2012. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2134168>

<sup>26</sup> Alexander, M. (2010). *The new Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York, NY: The New Press.

<sup>27</sup> Perry, 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Allport, G. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Cambridge: Addison-Wesley.

<sup>29</sup> Oakes, 2005; Hawley, 2007. Perry, 2002.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. See also Slavin, 2004.

<sup>31</sup> Hawley, W. (2006). *The Keys to Effective Schools: Educational Reform as Continuous Improvement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

# relationship between school and housing segregation

While school desegregation policy works by severing the link between residential and school segregation, housing desegregation policy works by targeting residential segregation—knowing that access to different kinds of schools often flows from access to different kinds of neighborhoods. Both are important. School desegregation can be implemented on a large scale within a year and impacts students early in life, when well-structured contact with different groups is most likely to chip away at prejudice. Contact early in life has long term impacts, to include a willingness to seek out racially diverse neighborhoods.<sup>32</sup> Housing desegregation may take longer to implement comprehensively but is arguably more stable; student assignment policies are subject to frequent revision.<sup>33</sup> Coordinated school and housing desegregation policy, seemingly common-sense given the close relationship between the two sectors, is rare.<sup>34</sup>

This matters because a significant body of research suggests that neighborhoods have a profound influence on child development.<sup>35</sup> Studies of the Moving to Opportunity experiment allowed for comparisons between the outcomes of randomly selected families who received a housing choice voucher to move from a high-poverty neighborhood to a high-opportunity neighborhood and a control group of families that remained in high-poverty neighborhoods. Recent analyses

of the MTO experiment found that moving to low-poverty neighborhoods dramatically improves educational outcomes and lifelong earnings for children, especially those that moved when aged 13 or younger. Those children that moved to a lower-poverty neighborhood before the age of 13 were found to have an annual income 31% higher on average relative to the control group by their mid-twenties.<sup>36</sup>

As all of these maps illustrate so clearly, school segregation flows from residential segregation—especially when proximity drives student assignment policy. Said differently, when school officials draw attendance boundaries around the neighborhoods closest to a school, existing segregation in those neighborhoods will likely be replicated in schools. And as long as today's exclusionary housing policies prevent working class families from moving into wealthier communities, those communities—and schools—will remain out of reach. In fact, Maps 7 and 8 show just how infrequently the region's low income housing stock helps families gain access to high opportunity schools.

<sup>32</sup> Roslyn Mickelson, "Exploring the School-Housing Nexus: A Synthesis of Social Science Evidence," in *Finding Common Ground: Coordinating Housing and Education Policy to Promote Integration*, ed. P. Tegeler (Washington, D.C.: Poverty and Race Research Action Council, 2011), 5–8

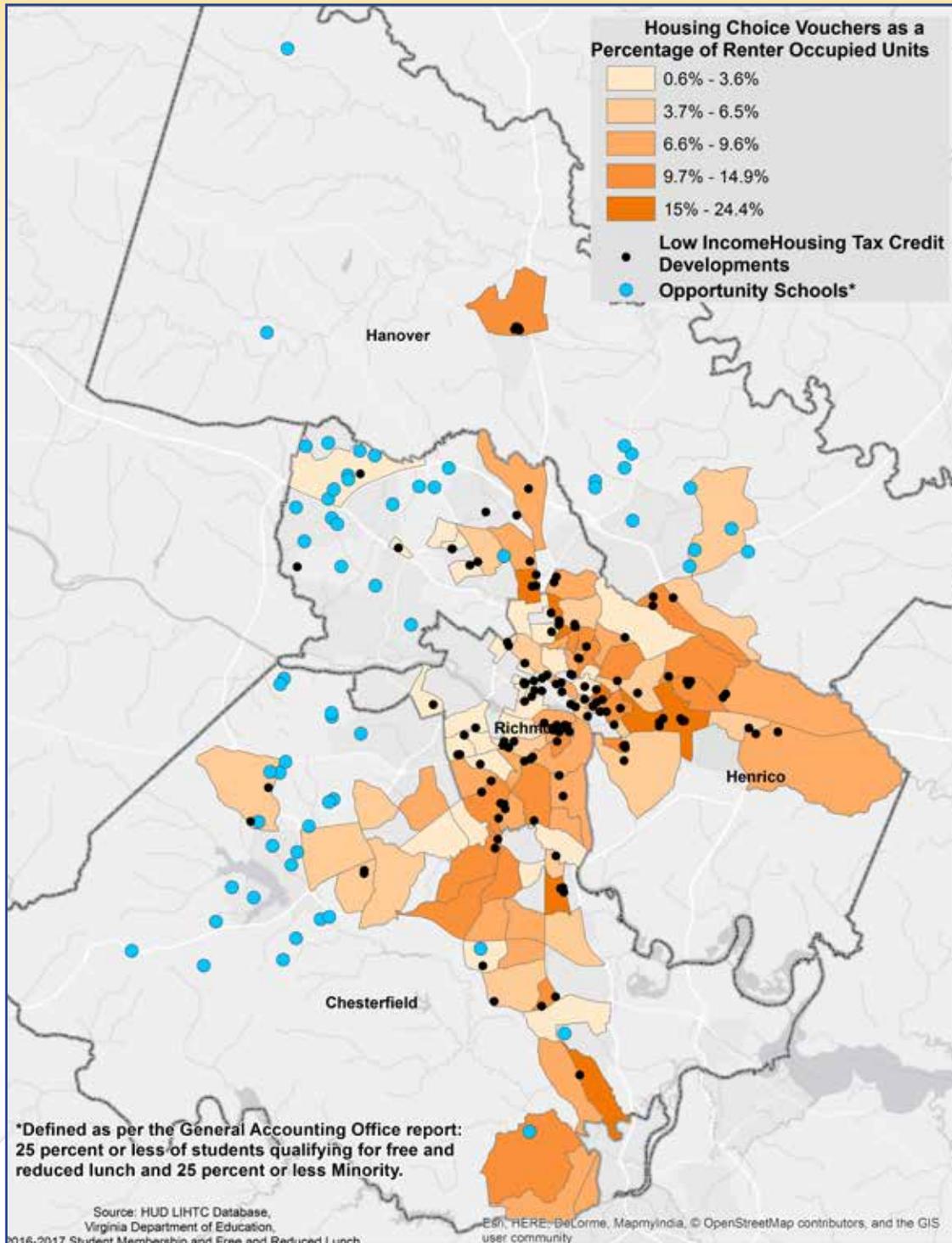
<sup>33</sup> For more detailed summary of the school-housing relationship, see chapter 2 in Genevieve Siegel-Hawley, *When the Fences Come Down* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2016).

<sup>34</sup> Gary Orfield, *Toward a Strategy for Urban Integration: Lessons in School and Housing Policy from Twelve Cities* (New York: Ford Foundation, 1981).

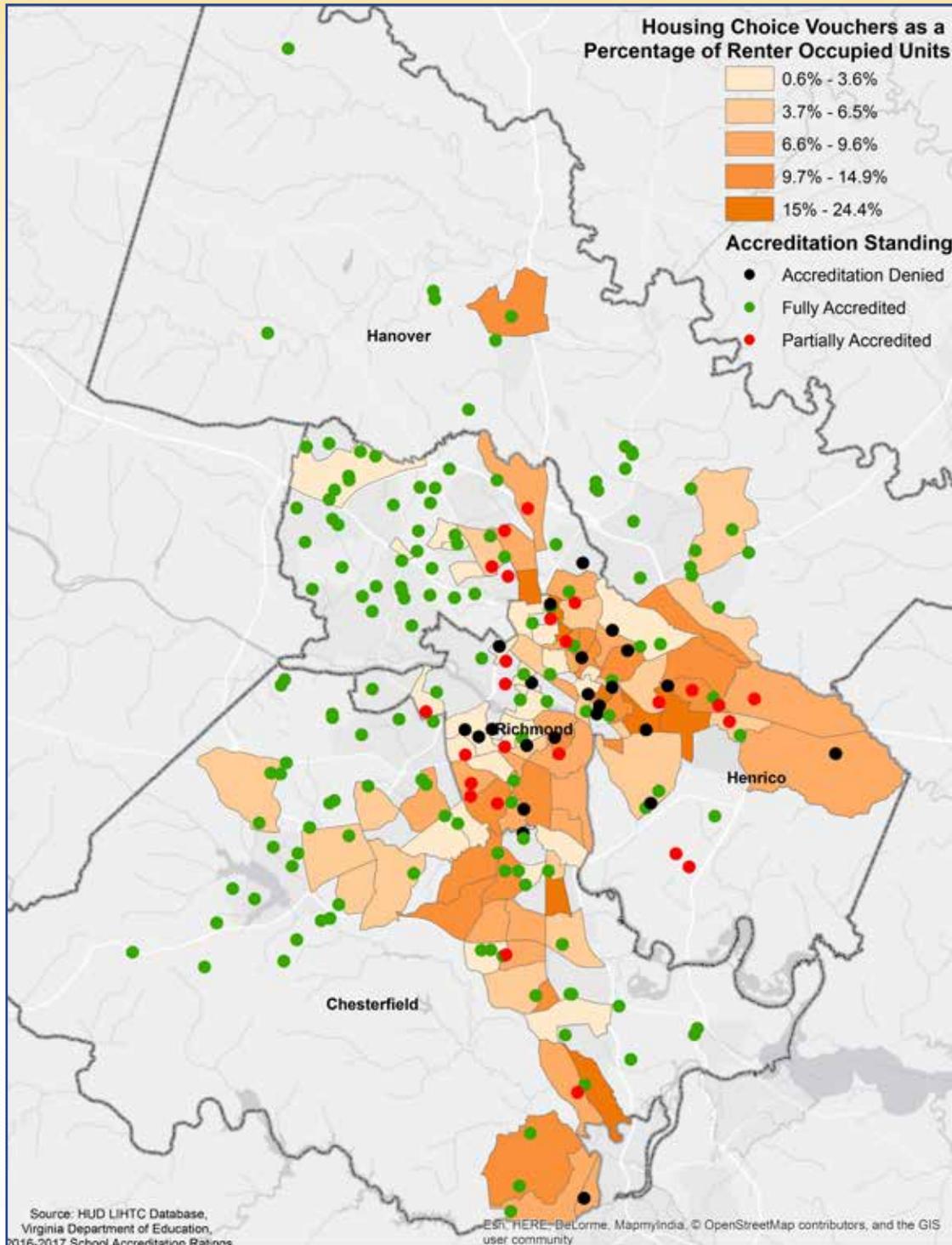
<sup>35</sup> For summary see Paul Jargowsky and Mohamed El Komi, "Before or after the Bell? School Context and Neighborhood Effects on Student Achievement," in *Neighborhood and Life Chances: How Place Matters in Modern America*, ed. H. Newburger, E. Birch, and S. Wachter (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 50–75.

<sup>36</sup> Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence F. Katz. 2016. "The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." *American Economic Review*, 106(4): 855–902.

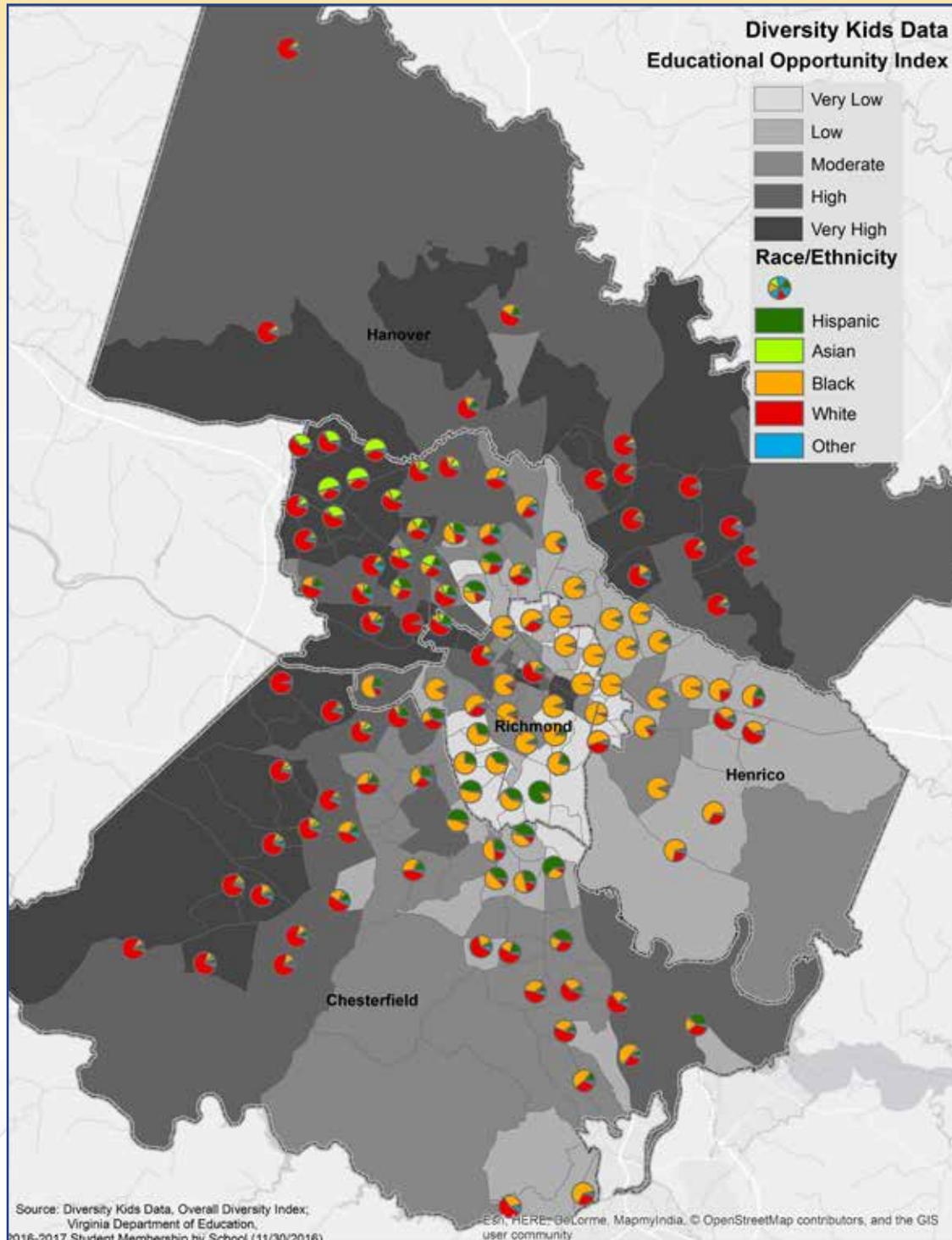
**Map 7. Relationship between Subsidized Housing and Opportunity Schools**



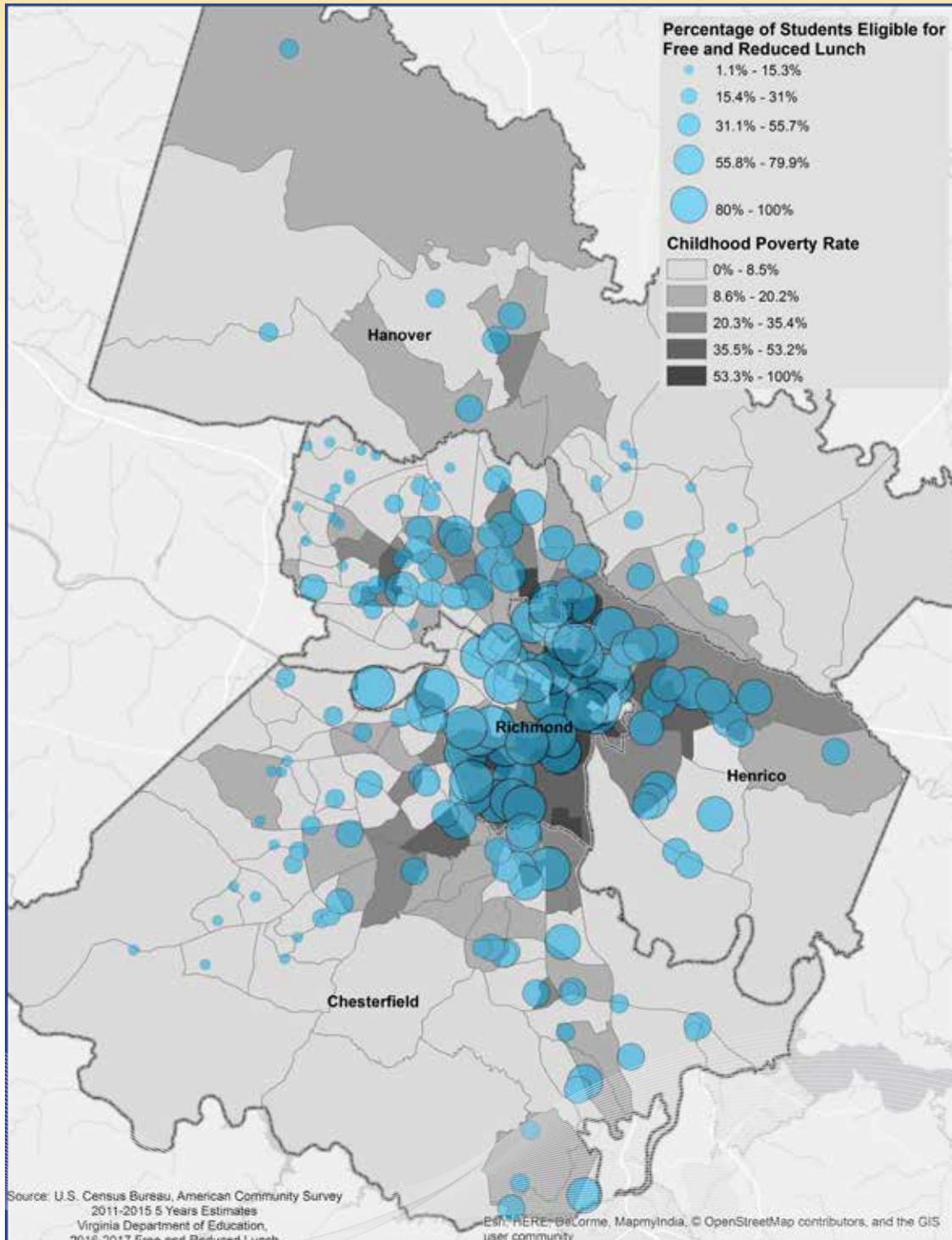
**Map 8. Relationship between Subsidized Housing and School Accreditation Standing**



**Map 9. Relationship between Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity and Community Opportunity Index**



**Map 10. Relationship between School and Community Poverty**



A university research partnership has developed a multidimensional measure of child opportunity, which includes student poverty rates in schools, math and reading proficiency levels, proximity and participation to early childhood education, and high school graduation and adult educational attainment.<sup>37</sup> Map 9 shows that Richmond area schools serving overwhelmingly high shares of black and Latino students are heavily concentrated in communities with the lowest opportunity, while predominately white and Asian schools tend to be located in high or very high opportunity communities.

School segregation by race maps closely onto school segregation by poverty in the Richmond area. That, in turn, closely reflects childhood poverty rates in surrounding communities.

The data displayed here clearly indicate that the Richmond area is not seriously engaged in either school or housing desegregation policy.

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.diversitydatakids.org/files/CHILDOI/DOCS/DDK\\_KIRWAN\\_CHILDOI\\_METHODS.pdf](http://www.diversitydatakids.org/files/CHILDOI/DOCS/DDK_KIRWAN_CHILDOI_METHODS.pdf)

# towards policy solutions

Our region urgently needs to consider the data presented here highlight an urgent need to consider school and housing desegregation policy in tandem with one another. Rapid growth in the number of students of color in our region, alongside clear barriers to their opportunities, means that the economic and moral stakes are rising. If we continue to wall off our new racial majority in segregated, low opportunity schools and neighborhoods, we imperil the health of our economy by under-educating our future workforce—with myriad implications for our ability to replace and support a wave of Baby Boomer retirements. We are also exposing all of our region’s children to the moral stain of segregation. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, “Segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority.”<sup>38</sup> White children who grow up without meaningful, equal status contact with the new racial majority will be ill prepared to navigate color lines as adults in their workplaces, neighborhoods and democratic institutions.

The data here also show that the region is the appropriate scope of intervention in ongoing and new patterns of segregation. While important work can and must be done within individual area jurisdictions, regional efforts are necessary to promote meaningful and lasting integration.

We have two recent and important examples of regional initiatives that provide equitable access to high opportunity schools and

neighborhoods. CodeRVA, an innovative high school focused on computer science and coding, uses a weighted lottery to govern the admissions process. One of the school’s goals is to reflect the rich diversity of participating school divisions and the lottery is designed to help them do so. CodeRVA represents a departure from the competitive admissions policies that govern so many other schools of choice in the area, including the Governor’s Schools and the specialty centers at area high schools. It offers a model for how to think about designing schools of choice in a way that prioritizes a student or family’s interest rather than the school’s interest in the student. CodeRVA has also paid special attention to outreach and recruitment and will be providing free transportation for families, other elements of choice policy designed to promote equity and diversity.

On the housing side, House Opportunities Made Equal (HOME) began its mobility counseling program in 2014 to address the spatial concentration of housing choice voucher utilization in the inner-city and to provide access to higher opportunity neighborhoods for households using vouchers. The Move to Opportunity Program is a tenancy program which combines mobility counseling, tenant education and landlord recruitment services to assist households with a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) in finding housing of their choice. The program model serves to promote residential choice and mobility and is specifically focused on moving households from low opportunity communities to neighborhoods of higher opportunity. With essential supports, the move to

<sup>37</sup> King, M.L. (1963). “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” Retrieved from: [https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html)

high opportunity (low-poverty) environments transforms the lives of families and provides access to better educational, employment and social opportunities.

To date, HOME has provided counseling to over 500 voucher households and successfully placed nearly 100 households into the neighborhood of their choice, while also recruiting 176 new landlords willing to accept housing choice vouchers in properties located in low poverty neighborhoods. Importantly, the program has been responsible for moving clients living in neighborhoods with an average poverty rate of 27 percent to an average poverty rate of 17 percent. Ensuring that voucher holders have the information and assistance to make informed choices as to where they desire to live has proven to have a significant impact on childhood and familial outcomes.

Other parts of the country have engaged in more comprehensive regional strategies to promote integrated schools. In metropolitan Connecticut, for instance, systems of regional magnet programs ensure that larger numbers of students gain access to high opportunity educational settings than would be the case with just a handful of such schools. Louisville-Jefferson County, KY, a merged city-suburban district, includes magnet schools in a broader choice-based effort to ensure that every school in the district roughly reflects its overall racial/ethnic makeup. The district's controlled choice policy works like this: families rank-order a set of school options, which include magnets, and the school district makes the final assignment decision based on factors

like proximity, stability and diversity. Massachusetts' state-funded inter-district transfer program offers another way of thinking about regional school integration. The Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity, or METCO, allows students from Boston or Springfield to transfer into opportunity-rich suburban school divisions. The program provides free transportation, extensive outreach, counseling services to the students navigating two worlds, and host families to enable extra-curricular participation. It is one of 8 inter-district transfer programs around the country.

Rarely have the school and housing sectors worked in concert, however, which would produce a much more substantial impact on integration. The tables below walk through the basic outlines of both coordinated and separate school and housing policy initiatives that could begin to reverse the legacy and ongoing damages of segregation and capitalize on the tangible benefits of diversity. They are divided into short- and long-term categories to help stakeholders start to envision the kinds of advocacy and grassroots organizing needed to make these recommendations a reality.

SHORT TERM HOUSING	LONG TERM HOUSING
<p>Additional vouchers for Moving to Opportunity, a housing mobility program, in Richmond and other metro areas.</p>	<p>Expand housing mobility programs that target families with young children and help them move to higher opportunity school districts.</p> <p>Ensure that schools are part of the metric for designating an area as high or low opportunity.</p>
<p>Provide state tax credits to private landlords in high performing school zones that will accept housing vouchers. Improve [market and administer] existing program For &lt;10% poverty areas **Specifically target high opportunity school attendance zones (HUD School Proficiency Index)</p>	<p>For Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), ensure that the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) allocates points to incentivize developments which will deconcentrate poverty, promote racial integration, and increase the number of affordable housing units in neighborhoods with high opportunity factors such as high performing schools and close proximity to employment.</p> <p>Incorporate standardized school performance metric (HUD School Proficiency Index) to allocate points.</p> <p>Provide effective incentives to develop affordable housing in low poverty neighborhoods.</p> <p>Conduct strong affirmative marketing. Make sure that LIHTC developments recruit families intentionally from high poverty areas and place families with kids in a high poverty school at top of the list.</p>
<p>Provide additional "case management" support to voucher families with children seeking to relocate to high performing school districts.</p>	<p>Inclusionary Housing Policy implementation in suburban communities that encourage and facilitate the production of affordable housing. One example of a successful housing development policy is the one adopted by Montgomery County, Maryland. The MPDU (Moderately Priced Development Unit Policy) requires developers of market rate housing to set aside 15% of their land for below-market housing. Doing so carries a density bonus allowing them to build 20% more units on the site than conventional zoning would permit.</p>
<p>Create a state level work group to follow up on the June 2016 joint letter from HUD, DOT and DOE on policy coordination.</p>	<p>Put teeth into state comp plan requirements related to an "affordable housing" component.</p>
<p>Use AFFH HUD data to assess and track progress in jurisdictions meeting goals to deconcentrate poverty/ create affordable housing in low poverty communities. Consider creating a scorecard / rating by locality</p>	<p>Ensure that entitlement jurisdictions are Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. Incorporate standardized HUD metrics to track, over time, community success in deconcentrating poverty and increasing residential segregation.</p>

SHORT TERM EDUCATION	LONG TERM EDUCATION
Develop and support a new regional magnet school and/or magnet schools within divisions.	Develop and support a system of regional magnet schools.
Develop and support voluntary plans promoting diverse and equitable schools through controlled choice and/or rezoning within demographically changing school divisions.	Develop and support voluntary, cooperative regional plan to promoting diverse and equitable schools through controlled choice.
Pilot inter-district transfer program with diversity and equity goals to ensure that disadvantaged students get priority in moving to higher opportunity school divisions.	Develop and sustain inter-district transfer program with diversity and equity priorities.
Support school closure and rezoning processes that include diversity and equity as guiding principles and priorities.	
Add diversity to the new federal accountability framework in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), include integration as a Title I intervention.	
SHORT TERM EDUCATION AND HOUSING	LONG TERM EDUCATION AND HOUSING
Pilot local <b>and</b> regional collaborative structures for school and housing officials to work together (e.g., creation of executive offices/departments, task forces or commissions, appoint local housing official to sit on school boards and vice versa, regional planning commissions, quarterly exchanges).	Creation of new governing agency or position responsible for helping to bridge school-housing worlds. Bring resources and expertise together. Would help communities be proactive and engage in processes related to new schools/development and zoning earlier. Local or regional scale.
Set regional <b>and</b> local goals for diversity in schools and housing:	<p>Incorporate standardized metrics such as those established by HUD in its AFFH data tool to track, over time, progress in deconcentrating poverty and decreasing residential segregation.</p> <p>Annually examine elementary school demographics to track racial/ethnic isolation and establish benchmarks and goals for demographic/ethnic and income composition at the regional and school levels.</p>
State and local school organizations should consider housing patterns in their decisions about school construction and location of new schools. Housing entities at the state and local level should be thinking intentionally about where schools are located and what kinds of schools they are when making housing program decisions.	Target housing and community development resources to the revitalization of communities surrounding low performing schools to attract middle income families back to these neighborhoods.
Discussion of school boundary lines should consider residential patterns of race and poverty.	Develop and implement best practices for coordination and joint planning between housing authorities and schools in the redevelopment of older public housing communities.
Utilize the Children’s Cabinet to examine housing and education segregation. The Children’s Cabinet is a joint effort of all the state agencies that focus on policies related to children.	Target some state housing resources to the redevelopment of older public housing (i.e., Armstrong redevelopment site).
	Create a new state housing tax credit that is tied to schools (ie. affordable housing in communities of opportunity and market rate housing in revitalization areas).

# authors & acknowledgements

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# additional resources

## **The Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles (CRP)**

[www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu](http://www.civilrightsproject.ucla.edu)

The CRP at UCLA is devoted to researching social inequities, particularly in the areas of segregation in K-12 schools, Asian and Latino populations, high-stakes testing and Title I reforms. The CRP collaborates with scholars as well as with advocacy organizations, policy-makers, and journalists. CRP released a report called Miles to Go in 2010 on the state of segregation in Virginia's schools.

## **National Coalition on School Diversity**

<http://school-diversity.org/>

The National Coalition on School Diversity (NCSD) is a network of national civil rights organizations, university-based research centers, and state and local coalitions working to expand support for government policies that promote school diversity and reduce racial and economic isolation in elementary and secondary schools.

## **Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia**

<http://homeofva.org/>

HOME fulfills its mission to ensure equal access to housing for all people by addressing the still glaring individual instances of housing discrimination. Additionally, HOME works to tackle systemically divisive housing practices on a larger scale through fair housing enforcement and research, advocacy and statewide policy work. HOME also takes direct action to aid first-time homebuyers and families with homes under the threat of foreclosure. At a time when unequal access to housing and credit contributes most to the United States' growing wealth gap, HOME's multi-faceted approach is a powerful catalyst toward furthering fair housing.

## **Poverty and Race Research Action Council**

<http://www.prrac.org/>

The Poverty & Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) is a civil rights policy organization convened by major civil rights, civil liberties, and anti-poverty groups in 1989-90. PRRAC's primary mission is to help connect advocates with social scientists working on race and poverty issues, and to promote a research-based advocacy strategy on structural inequality issues.

## **The Century Foundation—School Integration**

<https://tcf.org/topics/education/school-integration/>

Most K-12 education reforms are about trying to make "separate but equal" schools for rich and poor work well. The results of these efforts have been discouraging. The Century Foundation highlights the benefits that socioeconomically and racially diverse schools offer and looks at ways to promote school integration.

## **Center for Education and Civil Rights**

[www.cecr.ed.psu.edu](http://www.cecr.ed.psu.edu)

CECR is a hub for the generation of knowledge and coalition building within the education and civil rights communities to promote racial and ethnic equality in education. Based at Penn State University, the Center supports democratic values that are central to the mission of public universities.

## **Looking Back, Moving Forward Conference**

<http://spcs.richmond.edu/centers-institutes/leadership-education/moving-forward/>

In March 2013, the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Education, the University of Richmond Center for Leadership in Education and the School of Professional and Continuing Studies, convened national and local researchers, policymakers, educational practitioners, advocates, community members and students for a conference focused on the contemporary scope and impact of Richmond metro-area school segregation, with a central goal of generating new possibilities and regional solutions for advancing high quality, diverse learning opportunities.

# appendix

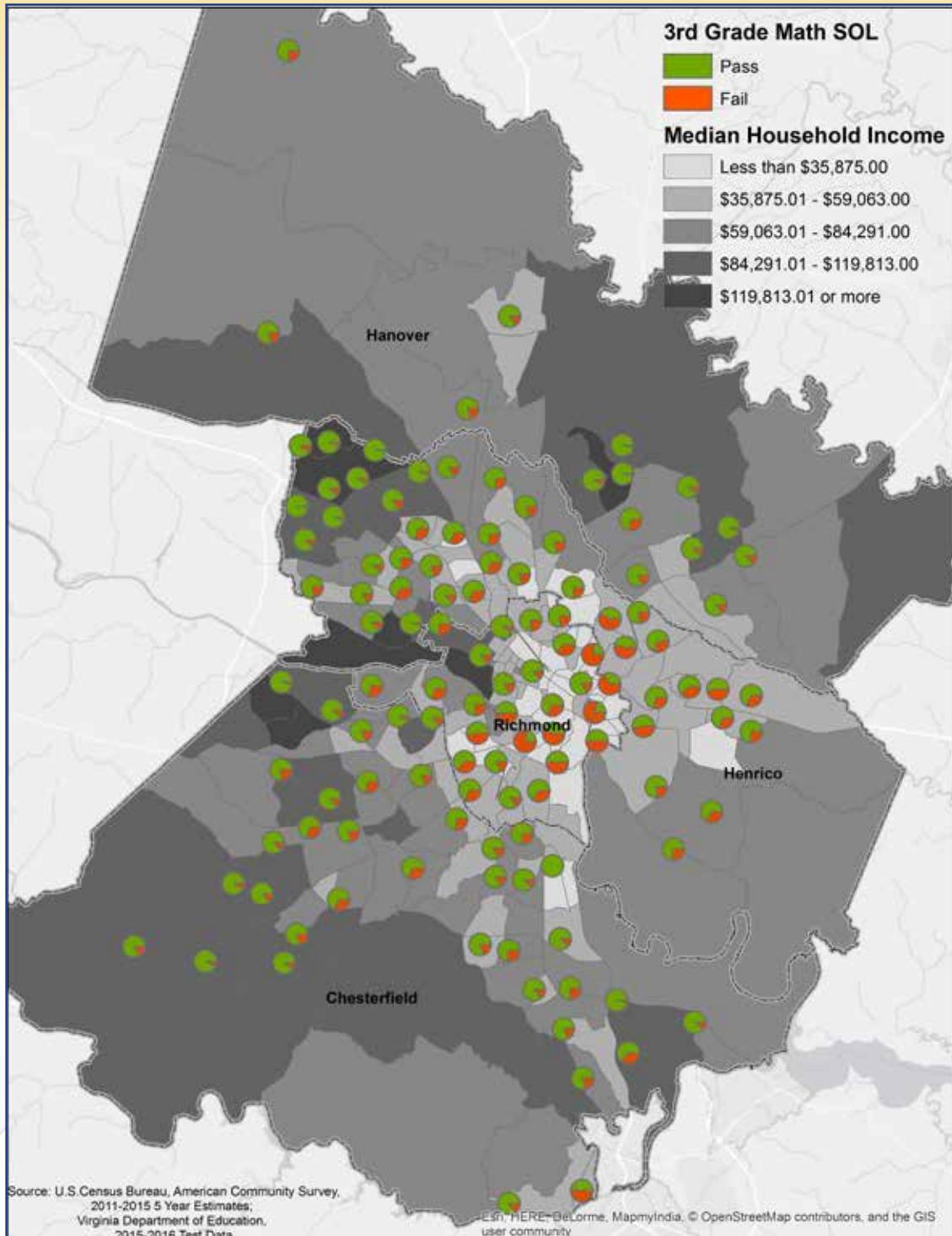
**Table 1A: School Index of Dissimilarity,  
Richmond CBSA, 2010 and 2014**

	2010	2014
Black-White	0.57	0.57
Hispanic-White	0.45	0.49
Black-Hispanic	0.43	0.42

Source: NCES Common Core of Data.



Map 1A. 3rd Grade Math SOL and Median Household Income



**Table 2A: Poverty and Race in the Richmond Quad-County Region, 2015**

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Other/Two Race
Richmond	39.7%	49.3%	1.9%	6.3%	4.4%
Chesterfield	64.3%	22.1%	3.5%	7.7%	4.8%
Hanover	84.9%	9.2%	1.4%	2.5%	2.6%
Henrico	55.4%	29.4%	7.4%	5.3%	4.1%
<b>Region</b>	<b>58.2%</b>	<b>29.1%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>

**Table 3A: Poverty by Race of Individual in the Richmond Quad-County Region, 2015**

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Other/Two Race
Richmond	22.0%	64.0%	1.9%	8.9%	5.1%
Chesterfield	46.2%	27.4%	2.6%	20.6%	7.8%
Henrico	34.7%	47.4%	3.5%	11.9%	6.8%
Hanover	67.1%	18.8%	2.9%	6.5%	5.9%
<b>Region</b>	<b>33.1%</b>	<b>49.2%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>

\*this table was made by dividing the total number of people in poverty for each race by the total number of people in poverty. This gives a percentage of the total population living in poverty that belong to each race/ethnicity

**Table 4A: Over/Under Representation of Poverty by Race, in the Richmond Quad-County Region, 2015**

	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	Other/Two Race
Richmond	-17.7%	14.6%	0.0%	2.6%	0.7%
Chesterfield	-18.0%	5.3%	-0.9%	12.9%	3.0%
Henrico	-20.7%	18.0%	-3.9%	6.6%	2.7%
Hanover	-17.8%	9.6%	1.4%	4.0%	3.3%
<b>Region</b>	<b>-25.1%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>	<b>-1.7%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>

\*this table was made by subtracting the Poverty by Race of Individual from the total Racial Diversity table. This gives an over/under representation of poverty based on race. Ex: in the Region White people make up 58.2% of the population but only 33.1% of the people living in poverty. This is a 25.1% under representation.



