

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute 2014 Volume III: Race and American Law, 1850-Present

Race, Socioeconomics, the Law, and Public Schools: Should the American Public Care if Our Schools Are Racially and Socioeconomically Segregated?

Curriculum Unit 14.03.06 by Jeremy B. Landa

Introduction

"The American Dream...encourages each person who lives in the United States to pursue success, and it creates the framework within which everyone can do it. It holds each person responsible for achieving his or her dreams, while generating shared values and behaviors needed to persuade Americans that they have a real chance to achieve them. It holds out a vision of both individual success and the collective good of all." ¹

The American Dream itself is a rather uncomplicated vision of our past, present, and future. However, it quickly unravels when we apply this dream to education. Consider this: we claim, on one hand, to have the desire to create equity and equality of opportunity for each person and their education, regardless of the zip code they are born into. On the other hand, the racial composition and socioeconomic status of different zip codes is one of the biggest predictors of educational success and failure. This tension is reflected in the decision of the United States Supreme Court, which had two interesting rulings that tie directly to the American Dream and socioeconomic opportunity. One ruling established separate schools for different races an unequal arrangement; the other ruling maintained separated central and suburban cities educational systems by not allowing buses from different places to cross city lines. These types of rulings, contradictory in nature, have allowed the agenda of some to override the collective good of all.

Directly related to equity of opportunity for all is this surprising fact: American schools today are more segregated than they were in 1970. ² Adding intrigue to that statement, they are trending towards levels of segregation that we have not seen since soon after the pivotal decision in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, KS(1954) 60 years ago. ³ It may distress you to know that our lowest performing schools are often hyper-segregated schools of impoverished youth of color and our highest performing schools are often hyper-segregated schools of middle or upper class white youth. ⁴ Even if these points do not alarm you, they will shock most students who have been implicitly and sometimes explicitly taught that we live in a society that is

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color-blind. It will certainly surprise my students at Cooperative Arts and Humanities Magnet High School in New Haven, CT (Coop to people in the know). Our school has 624 young adults enter the doors each day, with a racial diversity that is approximately 50% Black, 20% White, 25% Latino, 2% Asian and socioeconomic diversity that is 58% Free and Reduced Lunch versus 42% paying full lunch fees. Our school-wide demographics run counter to the narrative of what a majority of students experience in United States public high schools. Segregated and hyper-segregated racial and socioeconomic schools are not just part of the past; they are a present and growing piece of the educational system.

Therefore, my unit will explore the tension that exists between school budgets being inequitable and schools themselves being segregated racially and socioeconomically. Does it matter if schools are inequitably funded if they are in fact segregated? What if they are equitably funded, but still racially segregated? If they are racially segregated, but equitably funded, does this not smack of pangs of Plessy v. Ferguson's doctrine of "separate but equal"? American cities are heavily segregated places, racially and socioeconomically, and have been so for the last half century. The questions posed previously will allow students to explore the relationship between the law, race, socioeconomics, and school success and failure. It will also ask them to assess the educational landscape from a budgetary and demographics standpoint and design education policies that are steeped in history, law, race, and socioeconomics.

Rationale

Students taking my classes often struggle to conceptualize that the schools they attend actually cost taxpayers money. Few know that revenues come from the local, state, and federal governments. Almost none know that "spending on education constitutes only about 2 percent of the federal government's overall budget, while it consumes over 40 percent of all expenditures by localities and over 20 percent of each state's expenditures." ⁵ Likewise, they have little idea about how the revenues are distributed across a system like New Haven and how these revenues are allocated within individual schools. It is logical to infer from this information that education is paramount to a democracy because of how much we are willing to spend on the education of the children of our country.

However, if you were to walk the hallways of a random selection of schools in the United States on any given school day, you would see few signs that indicate schools receive massive amounts of tax revenue. Nor would you know that how this money is spent has been and will continue to be a hotbed of political discourse. Students certainly know little about the controversy that surrounds schools. But they should. Familiarizing young people with the perceptions about schools, the political and economic battles that happen around schools, and the inputs and outputs that people expect from them is vital towards the future of these public institutions. At the same time, it is an opportunity for my AP Microeconomics and Civics students to realize that schools operate similarly to businesses when it comes to requiring revenues to cover the costs of operation. My students struggle to understand these concepts, but they must in order to understand the motivations of business owners, governments, and consumers.

Moreover, our spending on public schools is representative of our social, political, and economic biases. By examining the economic revenues and costs of schools and then examining how the legal trends have impacted this, students are able to begin to examine the relationship between law, race, economics, and our schools. It is important to note that our schools are reflective of a judicial decision, Milliken v. Bradley (1974),

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which deemed busing between Detroit and 50+ suburban cities unconstitutional. This decision has effectively rendered a landscape that we see today with central cities and their suburbs, politically and economically, operating as actors independent of each other. As central cities have become increasing enclaves for minority groups, we have seen these places become segregated not just racially, but socioeconomically as well. Students at my diverse school will likely struggle to recognize the history of cities, the legal history around school equality and equity, and the nexus of politics, law, and economics on their own lives. However, they should not only understand these issues, but be prepared to influence policy-makers and community leaders with solutions to this ongoing problem.

Therefore, I am theorizing that this unit will help students evaluate the funding of schools; it will also allow them to visualize the differences between segregated and desegregated schools today and move from recognizing that schools are only racially segregated to recognizing that they are socioeconomically and racially segregated. It will allow them to question how money is distributed within a city, and it will allow them to ask why our nation's central cities and suburbs do not work together. In doing this, it will allow students to look to the past, both social and legal, and the present to begin understanding how they may be able to influence the future. It will also use economic theories regarding supply and the behavior of producers to help students how economics influences schools and politicians.

Public Schools: Race, Socioeconomic Status, and the American Judicial System, 1966 - Present

I. The Coleman Report

In 1966, the Coleman Report was released as a product of the Project Talent study commissioned by the Office of Education in the federal government. The study was led by James S. Coleman and is one of the most comprehensive educational studies ever conducted with over 600,000 elementary and secondary students as part of the sample. It included "student attitudes and family social and economic circumstances; it also included math and reading test items." ⁶

The study was expected to find that a gap existed between the performance of whites and African-Americans. It also expected to find a lack of equity in opportunity for young black students in the United States. While the first expected finding was indeed confirmed, the second was not. It found small differences in funding, but "the association between resource differences and a racial achievement gap was surprisingly small". ⁷ The most central finding made was that integration was the most effective method of changing black children's achievement levels. However, this only happened when they were integrated in schools that were composed of a majority of middle-class students. ⁸

That finding was unique, yet popular culture cared little. The New York Times included a description of the report on July 2, 1966, with a damning headline, "Negro Education is Found Inferior." 9 While this article did address the acknowledgement of an achievement gap between whites and blacks, it did not address that socioeconomics and race were linked regarding improvement in school outcomes. The article also buried a centrally crucial finding about families being more important in the development of children, which again links to socioeconomic status of families as high income families are positioned to support their children differently than low income families. 10 Overall, the lack of acknowledgement of some of the key findings in this report

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allowed many leaders to make policy mistakes that continue today.

Regardless, as a stepping-stone towards the development of a pathway of change for our educational system, this report was important. It marked the first extensive study on the intersection of schools, race, and economics. However, the findings that were most relevant to what could alter the outcomes in schools, parents and socioeconomic integration, seemed to be ignored. This choice should not be surprising as schools, especially Southern schools, were still reeling from judicial decisions about racial integration in 1966. Southern schools were not alone as Northern cities were left dealing with extensive migration of blacks from South to North. This complicated mess helped focus the political discourse on race rather than linking socioeconomic factors with race. It also helped prevent people from connecting integrated socioeconomic schools as a way to navigate through the issues that society faced. This quagmire made the Coleman Report's key finding not mean a great deal to the fate of public schools in 1966.

II. Richard Nixon's Speech on Busing: Did his policy lead to the fates of Cities being disconnected with the fates of the Suburbs?

In March of 1972, the nation was intertwined in a deliberate and important educational battle regarding how to best improve the public schools. ¹¹ Some judges had determined that the fate of schools within cities was intertwined with the fate of schools within the suburbs. The debate was leading towards a path where busing and the integration of central cities and suburbs was at stake. Important leaders noticed the trend in central cities of de facto segregation in housing leading to de facto segregated schools. This was noted in Five Miles Away, A World Apart by James Ryan, when powerful individuals such as Lewis Powell, a future Supreme Court Justice said the following in 1969: "[i]n our larger metropolitan area, there are income deficiencies and a racial mix which result in serious educational disadvantages." ¹² While Powell thought this problem had a clear solution of integration, he was mistaken.

While Powell was focused on integrated schools as a solution, Richard Nixon's White House was entangled in a debate over the fate of public schools. George Romney, Nixon's secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from 1968 – 1972 was a leader for improving the integration of housing in all cities. He designed a program called the "Open Communities Initiative...trying to put teeth into the 1968 Fair Housing Act, which prohibited housing discrimination". ¹³ Meanwhile, Nixon was trying to stop Romney because integrated housing was a stepping stone for integrated schools. This battle was one Nixon wanted to avoid because of his suburban white constituents. Nixon won the battle with Romney and followed that with an important educational policy speech which paved the path for the Supreme Court to follow his lead.

Nixon's speech on March 17, 1972, laid the foundation for separating the outcomes of students in central cities from those in the suburbs. There was strong political reasoning for Nixon to do this. He had run as a candidate that would restore order to a tumultuous period in America history, one where the Civil Rights of individuals previously marginalized were slowly evolving. This was a scary proposition to many individuals as they felt their own rights were under attack. Nixon, after reflecting on the events happening in the Courts in both Richmond, Virginia in Bradley v. Richmond School Board (1974) and Detroit, Michigan in Milliken v. Bradley, determined it was his turn to weigh in as the President. He was intent on protecting the rights of individual parents who had staked a claim by buying a home in a certain community because of the quality of their schools.

Nixon said in a television address to the nation, "it is time for us to make a national commitment to see that the schools in the central cities are upgraded so that the children who go there will have just as good a chance

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to get quality education as do the children who go to school in the suburbs. What I am proposing is that at the same time we stop more busing we move forward to guarantee that the children currently attending the poorest schools in our cities...be provided with education equal to that of good schools in their communities".

14 Logically, one can conclude that Nixon was not just setting up the schools to prevent busing across districts. He also was trying to separate the outcomes of the white majority, which had mostly migrated to the suburbs at this point, from that of the minorities, mostly black, that resided in central cities. 15

That his speech also happened in early 1972 signified a victory for him within his bureaucracy, as he mitigated the impact of Romney and his HUD goals with Romney's resignation. Ultimately, Nixon's speech came at a time when two schools of thought had emerged. One group, led by judges, advocated improving the deteriorating status of cities by linking the metropolitan region with busing their schools. The other group, led by politicians and home-owners, wanted no part of busing, but rather wanted to focus on improving schools using funding mechanisms to compensate schools serving students who needed more support. This speech was a marker, not because it ended the conversation about busing, but because it gave people, including the Supreme Court, permission to believe that busing as a means of integration was a poor use of funds.

III. The Supreme Court, Detroit, and Separating Central Cities from the Suburbs

Detroit, Michigan is a controversial city to examine; it is representative as one of the greatest failures of an American cities. The city that remains today is one that is bankrupt, with decaying institutions and buildings. Yet, that city lays in stark contrast to the suburban landscape, which displays moderate to extreme levels of wealth, most of which come from the ever-present automotive industry.

That this landscape has been shaped by the Supreme Court is surprising, even for me, having spent over twenty years of my life in the city and suburbs of Detroit. Nixon's speech on busing laid the ground for the Supreme Court to review and decide on one of the most consequential education cases following Brown and Brown II. In March of 1972, a judicial case regarding Detroit's Public Schools lay embroiled in the federal district court. Judge Stephen Roth, like Powell, concluded that ordering busing only within Detroit would fail because of the fact that the schools were already predominantly black. He ordered that 53 of the 86 school districts in the metropolitan Detroit region be bused for desegregation purposes. ¹⁶

This decision, around the same time as Nixon's speech, placed Michigan at the heart of the busing issue. Surprisingly, northern moderates who had supported school desegregation in the early stages of the Civil Rights movement reneged on that issue when cross-district busing involving their suburban constituents was involved. Simultaneously, urban blacks in Detroit offered only small amounts of support for this type of busing. Both parties lukewarm support was unsurprising: blacks had spent many years fighting for fairness within schools, often to end up in schooling environments so hostile that improved education was all but impossible.

Meanwhile, Judge Roth's decision worked its way through the judicial courts to the United States Supreme Court. The decision, five-to-four in the court, reversed the court of appeals. The following is a summary of the case:

The case was brought to the court asserting that Detroit Public School (DPS) system was racially segregated as a result of the policies of official actions of the state and the city. The court, which challenged the equal protection provision of the 14 th Amendment, found that the DPS had in fact violated the rights of individuals in Detroit by improperly zoning the schools. The District Court required the city to submit a plan to rectify the

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situation as well as a secondary plan to integrate 53 out of the 86 suburban districts with the city of Detroit despite the fact that the suburbs were not respondents in the initial case. The Supreme Court found that the courts below it had made a mistake in believing that the only way to correct the problems of segregation in Detroit were to include the suburbs in the desegregation plan. They found that the state had not intentionally segregated the school districts because they had not acted to draw city lines. Since suburban cities had not acted by law to segregate their own boundaries, they were absolved from remedying Detroit's segregation within their schools. Altogether, the Supreme Court found that since these outlying districts had not committed a constitutional violation to begin with, the courts could not impose them to complete cross-district busing to remedy Detroit's segregation. ¹⁸

The case was decided and the suburbs rejoiced in victory. Meanwhile, the black populace was a mixture of disappointment and defiance. Some were disappointed because of the missed opportunity for their children. Others were defiant; Mayor Coleman Young along with many other blacks believed that "the issue was equal educational opportunity, which could be achieved with greater funding. There was no magic...in having white and black kids sit together." ¹⁹

The end result was a central city, Detroit, left to fend for itself. One way that they and many other cities did this was by seeking large amounts of compensatory funding to make up for the racial and socioeconomic segregation that existed for the students in the schools and the problems that result from living in these conditions. Milliken, unfortunately, became a case that was part of my life as a public school student in the suburbs of Detroit in the mid-1980s through late 1990's. My school, largely white, affluent, and less than a mile from my home, had outstanding educational outcomes. Only 2 miles away in Detroit, students headed to schools that were racially and socioeconomically segregated. These schools often could not overcome the circumstances of the students they served. While it appeared that my own fortunes had risen with the Milliken decision, not growing up around people with vastly different racial and economic experiences could not have helped me be empathetic.

More importantly, the people who suffered most as a result of this decision were those who were born into central city zip codes that were segregated racially and socioeconomically. Where one was born would remain the best predictor for school success. As these arbitrary lines that separated cities became walls, it would become harder for school systems to discover ways to integrate their schools and change the landscape. Cities today have been largely shaped by Milliken and the ideas and attitudes carried by people that agreed with this decision.

IV. The Schools today: Implications for the future

Segregation between central cities and the suburbs is visible today, although less so than when Milliken was decided just over 40 years ago. Yet, we are also arguably more tolerant as a people today. How else can we explain electing Barack Obama the president if this were not true? Yet, schools have followed the trend of segregated cities and not of the improved outcome of individuals like Barack Obama. Our schools today are segregated racially with more students being hyper-segregated than 1970. They are also often socioeconomically segregated starting in kindergarten. ²⁰

The questions that remain have existed since schools first attempted to integrate by race. Does integration improve schools and what kind of integration improves schools? Racially most of the problems that were addressed long ago still exist within the schools. However, because of decisions like Milliken schools have progressed away from the racial composition of these places towards issues of funding. The Supreme Court

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itself has established a rule of strict scrutiny regarding race that has prohibited schools from purposefully sorting students using race as a criteria. The most recent case to do so was Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1 (2007). ²¹ With race all but dead as a mechanism for changing the structure of schools, most districts have resorted to socioeconomics and funding as policy tools for improving schools.

Beginning with the early 2000's many schools have began turning towards socioeconomic status as an indicator to improve schools. In Connecticut, the home to the students in my class, the Connecticut Supreme Court decided the case Sheff v O'Neill (2001) around the idea that the "extreme racial and ethnic isolation in the public school system deprives the schoolchildren of a substantially equal educational opportunity". ²² The end result, while avoiding the socioeconomic question was a clear initiative to improve the educational outcomes beyond race and including ethnic background. Currently, that decision has provided little traction towards actual change in education, but has pushed magnet schools, not unlike Coop High School as a way to improve racial and ethnic isolation.

Some other examples worth mentioning are the debates in finance equity covering inter-district, intra-state, and inter-state funding in schools. While all three exist, the focus of this unit is on one particular district, so two more interesting examples of integration are relevant. The first is the Wake County Schools, which developed a plan of socioeconomic integration that was practiced until controversy arose in 2010. The policy promoted schools with no school having more than 40% free and reduced lunch students (a federal indicator of poverty) and no more than 25% of the students performing below grade level. ²³

Equally intriguing is the Charlotte-Mecklenburg public school system, which successfully integrated its schools racially in the 1970s under court order. Despite the mandate, more affluent whites were able to use their political and social capital to prevent integration in their schools. Once this became known to citizens in Charlotte and Mecklenburg, "less affluent whites resented this exemption" that more affluent whites schools were left untouched, a coalition of integrationists successfully lobbied the district to increase the amount of busing. It helped that the district court judge, James McMillan was also committed to socioeconomic integration. Eventually, Charlotte-Mecklenburg achieved integration that was so meaningful that parents believed it was desirable and essential to society. ²⁴

Race, socioeconomics, law, and schools are issues that currently create a systemic debate about how to improve schools. While many cities are exploring different ways to solve the complicated puzzle that these topics present, many others are ignoring the unresolved issues of our nation. While schools must do better for our students, we have an obligation to not forget the initial ideas that the Coleman Report found in 1966 – outcomes are best improved by mixing low and high income socioeconomic students with majority middle-class students. Considering our great nation has put a man on the moon and built an atomic bomb, we have an imperative to improve our educational system drastically. The future of our country is at stake if we do not figure out a way to resolve the fraying of the binds that connect those in urban, suburban, and rural environments.

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Enduring Understandings

I. Unit Overview

The unit will be an approximately four-week unit that will focus on the economic concepts of costs and revenues.

- Week 1: Race, socioeconomics, and privilege
- Week 2: Contextualizing why schools are this way: Federal and Connecticut Court Cases
- Week 3: Funding of schools: Inventory of Resources, Revenues and Costs
- Week 4: Solving the Problem

II. Overarching Class Essential Question

- Should the design of all public schools focus on integration, by race and socioeconomic status, irrespective of funding?

III. Unit Specific Essential Questions Based on Class Content

- For AP Microeconomics: How are revenues collected, how are these revenues distributed to cover costs, and how does that reflect the market structure of individual districts in the public school system?
- Sociology: Does racial and socioeconomic diversity hurt the culture of a school?
- Civics/Government: Does and should government attempt to create equitable outcomes in society? In other words, are taxes worth levying and when are taxes unfair?
- Civics/Government: How can the powers given to our judicial system impact citizens on an everyday basis and how can individual citizens change the behaviors of those in charge?

IV. Standard Alignment

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

V. Enduring Learning from Unit

As a result of a student working through this unit, they will gain the following:

- Understand that the reform movement for education is one that is desperately trying to improve outcomes for students by focusing on the resource inputs (land, labor, and capital) with less discussion about integrating students racially and economically.

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- Evaluate how fields such as mathematics, economics, business, law, and government are frameworks that can shed light on issues like the impact of segregation on students' academic performance.
- Compare and contrast criteria created by politicians for integrating schools and questioning whether this is more effective than increasing funding for schools with more students that provide services to higher percentages of low-income individuals.
- Interpret if the American legal system often mirrors societal flaws equity of schooling is currently not perceived as anything but a financial issue. The courts reflect this trend of compensatory education over integrated education.
- Synthesize information from public schooling systems spending and develop a coherent policy proposal for policy-makers to help us better understand schools as a business and schools as economic reflections of societal goals.

VI. Students will be able to:

- Define privilege and the impact of privilege on societal constructs that are social, racial, economic, or political
- Explain the four factors of production in schools (land, labor, capital, entrepreneurship)
- Evaluate the inputs in schools and the expected output from schools
- Evaluate costs and revenues
- Evaluate fixed and variable costs
- Explain the economic theory of marginal thinking and calculate marginal costs and revenues
- Utilize accounting and economics practices and methods to report total revenues and total costs.
- Evaluate how total costs and revenues relate with average total, variable and fixed costs help us understand different businesses
- Assess the efficiency and equity of a school system
- Appraise current budgets through an economic and legal framework to communicate successes and failures to government policy makers and impact their future decisions

Lesson Plans

Each lesson plan is a suggestion for the sequencing of learning that I anticipate in my class, which are 80 minute block periods that meet five times every two weeks. The sequencing follows a similar nature to that designed for learning by the Facing History and Ourselves organization, which focuses students through a process that begins with themselves and their identities, focuses on how societal forces contribute to

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misunderstandings between individuals and groups, studies the history itself, judges that history, and finally chooses to participate in that history. ²⁵

Throughout the process, I've found that engaging students with this type of pedagogical technique has two firm benefits: 1) students engage from a foundation of their own lives and understanding of the world 2) students use this entry point into their lives to engage with why history – whether from an economic, legal, political, or social standpoint – matters in their own lives.

More importantly, this allows a process where students are engaged to think about and then design responses to problems. This moves students from simply learning history to understand that it happened in the past towards a process where they learn history to become informed and understand how they may potentially impact the future of that history.

The other primary pedagogical strategy that I will use comes from Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana who have developed a protocol called the Question Formulation Technique™. This technique allows the teacher to develop focuses, but positions students to do all the questioning. The intent here is that students are the ones who inquire and seek the knowledge. For this reason, even though I have designed lessons that are comprehensive and involve specific questions, once we have moved past the first day, students will help derive many of the questions that drive our inquiry. Any time you see me mention questions, I will be using this book as a framework for working with students. ²⁶

Lesson Plan Day 1 - Introduction to the Question of Equity in Schools

Question of the Day: Can someone be privileged in some aspects of their life and not in others?

Practice (Most circles known as homework): Design a question within the class that you can write a reflective writing response of one page. The question should be an open-ended, inquiry question that will help lead us through the class. It should deal with the nexus of education, privilege, and microeconomics.

Teaching Strategies: Reading and Questioning Together, Class discussion, Pair-Share

This class is meant to complicate the ideas around privilege, socioeconomics, and race. It will begin with an introduction to kids considering privilege using two different sources. One is the book The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide by Meizhu Lui, et al. to establish a better understanding of how wealth disparity impacts day-to-day life. Using this book, students will read a short passage that will help them define the difference between wealth and income. It will also discuss some historical context that has shaped different individual experiences interacting with wealth.

Before reading this passage, students will address the following questions – "When does privilege or race happen in your life?, What positives occur as a result of race or privilege that happen in your life?, and What negatives occur as a result of race or privilege that happen in your life?" These questions are meant to prime students to talk about rather explosive topics in a way that acknowledges their experiences. As a class, we will create a collective identity map that acknowledges our racial experiences and the privileges we have. One acknowledgement here is that we all have racial experiences – some are more hostile and negative than others. This is a primer for students to begin unpacking the concepts of economic, racial, and social privilege in the context of schools.

Following this part of class students will read pages 8 - 13 from The Color of Wealth 27 and participate in an

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activity that involves statements regarding privilege, class, and race. ²⁸ The point of this is get students ready to ask questions about this topic. The final part of this lesson will help students continue expanding the privilege bubble to their own schooling. We will conclude the lesson with writing open-ended, inquiry questions that are built around race, privilege, and their own identity. Students will select a question that they like from the group share-out of questions and write a response that will help relay their initial understanding of the concepts.

One area that I would also suggest, depending on the reading skill of the class would be the recent privilege article written by a freshman at Princeton University that discusses the concept of the phrase, "check your privilege". It is a great example of the challenges of teaching students who come from the standpoint of "I've earned everything I have received in my life". ²⁹

Day 2 – Idealizing Schools

Question of the Day: What are the ideal school demographics when it comes to race and socioeconomic status? Do these ideals match with what we actually observe within schools?

Practice: Using a class created survey, ask 5 people to tell you their ideal racial and socioeconomic diversity within a school

Teaching Strategies: Tactile Activity, Defining Key Words, Small and Large Group Discussion, Compare and Contrast Together

This lesson will involve students beginning to consider the idea of segregation, hyper-segregation, socioeconomic status, poverty, and the issues of equality and equity. We will begin by writing words that come to mind when students hear the words segregation, poverty, and equality. After they have independently brainstormed ideas, we will share out words or phrases, which will be used for students to define segregation, poverty, and equality by defining what a school that is equal does regarding segregation and poverty. These definitions will be used at the end of the unit for students to clarify to policy-makers what they believe these issues to be.

Following this, we will conduct a tactile experiment. I've attached a chart to graph this experiment. In this experiment, students will be identifying the ideal racial and socioeconomic demographics that schools should have according to their own beliefs. They will each, individually, select 10 figures from a basin that contains army figurines in secret. There are four different colors available, which will be representative of White, Black, Hispanic, and Asian. Some students may and should question if these are the right groupings, a immediate conversation into the issues with segregation, poverty, and how to make places equal. They will record their numbers and then as a class we will share the numbers and record them. Using the spreadsheet, I will calculate the averages based on the class. We will have the ability to sort respondents to the activity by race to try to discern if they are different from their peers who are different races.

Once we have completed this, we will repeat for the socioeconomic demographics. Once this is all done, the students will meet with a small group and discuss the results of this experiment. They will be required to write 3 – 5 new questions that have emerged from this experiment. The resolution of this class period will involve students writing an exit ticket that discusses the positives and negatives of trying to enact a plan where all schools have demographics similar to our class ideal.

The practice for this lesson involves kids speaking with up to five people they know and finding out what their

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ideals are regarding racial and socioeconomic demographics of schools. They will record information for our data set to gain more people and for us to work to determine if there are differences in the ideals of people of different races and ages.

Name	Your Race	Age	Ideal # of White students	of Black students	Ideal # of Hispanic students			Ideal # of Middle income students	Ideal # of low income students
Jeremy Landa	White		3	2	3	2	3	4	3

Day 3 - Inputs and Outputs/Four Factors of Production of Schools - School Inventory

Question of the Day: How does our school use inputs to improve the quality of its output?

Practice: Determine who has close friends in different schools. Conduct an inventory of the other 9 schools beyond our own

Teaching strategies: Using school based practice to help students conduct research about the resources that other schools have, re-visit definitions of school equality and ask questions about resource equality in schools (land, labor, capital), Defining Words together

This lesson will be about reviewing vocabulary that is economics specific and then conducting research by going on a scavenger hunt around the school. The vocabulary review will involve reviewing class-wide definitions of equality and reviewing the four factors of production and the difference between inputs and outputs.

On a macro-level, this lesson is meant to preview the Supreme Court case, Milliken, which we will review the case following this.

Day 4 - Historical Contextualization of Schools: Milliken v Bradley & Sheff v O'Neill

Question of the Day: How has the judicial branch affected what we see in schools, both racially, economically, and regarding their funding?

Practice: Write your own question and reflect on the legal history and how you believe it has affected your life as a public magnet school student.

Teaching Strategies: Mini-Lecture – Sheff v. O'Neill, Practice together making inferences from tables regarding segregation racially and socioeconomically in schools, Questioning, Chunking Supreme Court case – Milliken v. Bradley

This class is the most important for helping students understand how decisions made within the federal judicial courts in 1974 eliminated busing as a policy for integrating schools and left cities with few options besides increased funding to improve schools. We will also look to Connecticut for one option that originated from this funding option that offered magnet schools of choice to try to change how segregated schools are in the state. The main purpose of this class is to ask questions about the legal cases and how the decisions may have impacted us today.

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In that vein, the class will start with us reviewing the current state of American segregation federally and on the state level in Connecticut. The references will be the USA Today article written by Jolie Lee, which has outstanding infographics on school hyper-segregation since the 1950's as well as the 20 most segregated states for blacks in 2011- 2013. ³⁰ Likewise, we will use infographics from a Connecticutt Voices For Children report released, which will allow students to examine state definitions of hyper and moderately segregated schools as well as integrated schools. ³¹ Within this report is the breakdown of individual school demographics on minorities and students who are free and reduced lunch. This will lead us towards a discussion about the ideal school again and compare it to what politicians have defined as ideal through Sheff v O'Neill, as noted in the report mentioned. Interestingly, the state to improve equality of opportunity, has defined an integrated school of choice as 25 – 75% minority as well as 25 – 75% free and reduced lunch (the federal measure of poverty in public schools). As a result, the class will further in Connecticut. We will record important questions students about the work of politicians and segregation practically defined.

At this point, we will read pieces of Bradley v. Milliken in order to gain some historical legal context for why solving the problem of segregated schools has been difficult. We will break into 3 groups in order to establish an understanding of the components of the case. One group will focus on the opinion of the Court delivered by Chief Justice Warren Burger, one group will focus on Justice Potter Stewart's concurring opinion, and one group will focus on Justice Thurgood Marshall's dissenting opinion. ³²

The purpose behind this activity, besides allowing the students to work together to understand the complexity of reading difficult case law decisions, is to question the legacy this decision left on people of different races and socioeconomic statuses in cities and suburbs. In particular, I will ask students to connect their question to their own personal experience as magnet students that are mostly bused to their school of choice. This legal history is vital for students to begin questioning why schools demographics are the way they are today.

Day 5 - School Funding Revenues

Question of the Day - How do schools in cities get their money? What questions does this process provoke?

Practice: Review the funding formula for New Haven's revenues. Identify where different revenues are coming from. Write 3 – 5 questions that remain unanswered.

Teaching Strategies: Mini-lecture – Educational Cost Sharing Fund in Connecticut, Model-Together-Independent Practice of calculating revenues, Questioning of Revenues, Guest Speaker

This class will begin with an experiment that helps students understand how funding happens at the local and state level. In order to do this, we will begin with students understanding the average breakdown of funding between federal, state, and local governments. Since most local funding comes from property taxes, we will run a simplified example of how property taxes in property rich and poor areas impact schools. We will assume that we are looking at New Haven and Greenwich. New Haven will have a property wealth of \$50,000 per student while Greenwich will have a property value of \$100,000 per student. We will calculate taxes collected in each place with a 5% tax and notice that New Haven receives \$2,500 per student and Greenwich \$5,000 per student. We will then imagine that Greenwich lowers its rate due to political pressure to 3%. Students will see that despite the lower rate, Greenwich still collects \$3,000 to New Haven's \$2,500. 33 All of this will set the stage to then look at the state equity solution to unequal funding called the Connecticut Educational Cost Sharing Fund.

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Since the problem presented has New Haven receiving less funding, the state of Connecticut will then become the actor to help equalize spending between the districts. They will have established a foundation that equalizes spending at \$3,000. In the case we examined, Greenwich would not need any money from the state while New Haven would receive \$500 per student. Students will then be exposed to the actual Foundation number in Connecticut, which has been \$9,687 since 2007. It includes a formula to account for students in poverty and those that are limited English proficiency to fill the gap between local expenditure and state aided expenditure that attempts to equalize spending. Despite the foundation number being at \$9,687, the average spending per pupil in 2008 was \$12,518. ³⁴ This is problematic as what government set as a price ceiling, a number to not have to be exceeded by any district, has been exceeded by nearly every district in the state. The equity fund has not had much of an impact in improving equality in funding around the state because the state is not filling huge gaps; localities still rely on their property taxes more than is ideal. We will conclude with this interesting statement meant to generate questions about funding: the state of Connecticut should use its ECS fund to set a minimum price below what most localities spend on education.

After questions have been generated, we will have a guest speaker who is versed in educational financing. Some possible places to draw upon this speaker is an administrator like the Chief Financial Officer of New Haven Public Schools, a policy expert from Connecticut Voices For Children, or a Doctorate student from Yale or UConn who is focused on educational finance. This speaker should fill in gaps and be able to answer questions that students generated regarding funding between state and localities.

Day 6 - School Funding Costs

Question of the Day: How do schools in New Haven distribute the money they receive in the high schools? What questions does this process provoke?

Practice: Review the concepts of revenues and costs from economics. Complete calculations for discussion in the following class.

Teaching Strategies: Model-Together-Independent Practice of Economic Concepts, graphing for economics, Economics Application

This class is for students to be introduced to the public budgets that are posted for all the New Haven public schools. ³⁵ These budgets are representative of schools that are representative of a diverse student population at traditional, magnet, vocational, and alternative schools that encompass New Haven's high schools. The students will be remain with the groups they did the school inventory in the third lesson. The purpose of looking at the budget is to understand the purpose of schools from a governance and business standpoint. In this case, schools are self-sustaining because they have an expectation of money spent being equal to money brought in (tax revenue).

As the students review the costs, they will do two things. One is write a list of questions that they come up with regarding funding of New Haven schools. The second is that students will graph the information they have about schools for economics. They will determine the Average Total Cost, Average Fixed Cost, Average Variable Cost, Marginal Cost, and Marginal Revenue of a school and use this information. From this, they can determine what type of market structure – from a perfectly competitive market to a monopoly market. This will help them better understand how complex it is to run a school as a business.

Likewise, it will allow students to write a list of questions that they would ask policy-makers regarding funding schools. These questions will be used in the final project as they create a policy brief meant to help inform and

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debate the issues within school finance.

Day 7 – Fair? Equitable? Equal? All of the above? None? What relationship exists between the law, race, socioeconomics, and schools?

Question of the Day: What are the goals of schools in the context of government? How do revenues and costs, both total and on the margin help us understand how privilege plays out in schools each day?

Practice: Review and prioritize top 3 questions from the unit and list them to help complete final project

Teaching Strategies: School lottery activity Re-visit definitions of privilege using the school inventories we did, discussion of purpose of school, distribution of funds, and development of more questions

This class will examine the purpose of schools to contextualize the chaos and difficulty that exists for our country to create equitable and equal opportunities for students who attend schools. The beginning of this class will involve an activity where students become parents that are part of the New Haven Public School magnet lottery. This will allow us to address schools of choice as well as have students understand this process as parents would. This process should help students see the impact of laws that allow these types of schools to help solve problems.

This will introduce the tension that exists with individuals wanting fairness in society and using their own privilege, when they have it, to protect their own interests – in this case, their own child's human capital. This tension cuts to the core of privilege and might begin explaining how our country can be founded on equality and still not be equal. We will use this opportunity to re-visit definitions on privilege, race, and the purpose of schools.

The second part of this class will involve students sharing the information they discovered about their individual schools and questions they came up with regarding financing. At this point, they will have examined a number of frameworks – legal, economic, social, and political. They will have opinion regarding the purpose of schools, the funding of schools, and questions about how schools are run. We will share opinions, questions, and ideas that students have to prime them for the final project for the class.

Day 8 – 12 – Developing Modern Eco-Political Solutions to School Racial and Socioeconomic Segregation & Intra-district Inequity

Question of the Day: How can school budgets be re-allocated and what recommendations would you make to policy-makers?

Practice: Work through stages of the assignment. 1) Create a visual display (table, chart, graph) that explains and helps someone understand segregation and inequity in New Haven Schools from an economic standpoint 2) Write a 1 – 2 page policy brief for the Board of Education of New Haven directed to the President of the Board, the Superintendent of Schools, and the Mayor of New Haven

Teaching Strategies: Class Independent Work with Guided Conferences with Teacher

These classes are meant for students to synthesize the information they have learned and turn it into a policy recommendation with supporting documentation for policy-makers. The assignment will ask students to complete two important tasks. One is to use the quantitative information to develop a chart, graph, or table to help others understand their learning. This will be the first part of the assignment. It will be peer reviewed and

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reviewed by me to ensure quality and ensure proper feedback. The class will use a rubric that looks like the following:

Visual Data Presentation Rubric

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	5	4	3	2	1		
Labels	Labels are exemplary — clear, crisp, and concise The labels include title, X & Y axis labels, and a legend. All information is simple to decipher.	Labels are effective — clear & crisp The labels include title, X & Y axis labels, and a legend. All information is available.	Labels are mostly effective — they can be understood Some of these labels - including title, X & Y axis labels, and a legend — may be missing	Labels are present – they can be understood somewhat, but may be wordy. Some of these labels – including title, X & Y axis labels, and a legend – may be missing	No labels completed		
Clear explanation accompanies the data	Language used is relevant, appropriate, and helps clarify points that need explanation.	Language used is relevant, appropriate, and mostly clarifies points that need explanation.	Language used is not always relevant, appropriate and sometimes clarifies points that need explanation.	Language used is not relevant, appropriate, and does not clarify the points that need explanation.	No explanations accompany data		

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Following students adequately completing their visual data interpretation, they will then write a policy brief that is addressed to any policy-maker that would be relevant to education. The minimum length of the policy brief will be 500 words and will require students to reference the revenues and costs of running schools. They will be expected to communicate this as economic policy experts, so the language should reflect a clear understanding of the economics of running a business. The purpose is to communicate the current policies in

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New Haven schools regarding economics and help define the policies that should continue and the policies that would improve if they were reformed. This is where they will demonstrate understanding privilege, racial and economic segregation, and the law within schools. The ideal demonstration would occur with presentations, preferably with at least a principal in the room. I am planning on inviting administrators from Central Office and from other political bodies of New Haven to hear the student's recommendations for school reform.

Works Cited

City of New Haven, "New Haven Public Schools Site Based Budget 2013 – 2014", City of New Haven, Accessed May 25, 2014, http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/uploads/Complete_2013-2014_Budget_Book.pdf. - For both teachers and students. One of the more comprehensive site-based school budget documents that I have come across in my research. Includes all labor costs for each school building, land costs, and capital costs. It also includes costs that are included in the budget.

Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. "The State-Local Partnership For Education: An Unbalanced Relationship." 2011. Accessed July 19, 2014, http://advocacy.ccm-ct.org/Resources.ashx?id=e9ec4b7a-9387-4679-95cc-6b748ff86412.

Cotto, Robert, Jr. and Kenneth Feder. "Choice Watch: Diversity and Access in Connecticut's School Choice Program." Connecticut Voices For Children, April 2014. Accessed July 16, 2014, http://www.ctvoices.org/sites/default/files/edu14choicewatchfull.pdf - This resource can be used as a resource of knowledge for teachers, but it also has great infographics including tables, charts, and graphs, which students can use to understand how the demographics of schools of choice compare to their local, public school peers.

Facing History and Ourselves. "Scope and Sequence Journey". Accessed May 25, 2014. https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/our-pedagogy/scope-and-sequence - This resource is for teachers, but if you gain access as a member, you also are able to find many resources, which you can use in your classroom with students.

Fortgang, Tal. "Checking My Privilege: Character as a Basis for Privilege". The Princeton Tory. Accessed May 25, 2014. http://theprincetontory.com/main/checking-my-privilege-character-as-the-basis-of-privilege/ - This resource is for both teachers and students. It was a recent editorial that created a large amount of controversy nationally after a Freshman attending Princeton argued about contextualizing his privilege against people who were telling him that he was acting privileged without empathizing with the lack of privilege of others.

Herbers, John. "Negro Education is Found Inferior". The New York Times, July 2, 1966.

Hochschild, Jennifer and Scovronick, Nathan. The American Dream and the Public Schools. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003. – This resource is for teachers only regarding the public education system.

Lee, Jolie. "Still Apart: Map shows states with most-segregated schools." USA Today, May 15, 2014. Accessed June 23, 2014. http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/05/15/school-segregation-civil-rights-project/9115823/ - This is great for students. Excellent graphics that students can use to understand how school demographics have changed since Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, KS.

Lui, Meizhu, Barbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer, and Rebecca Adamson. The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide. New York, NY: The New Press, 2006. – For teachers and students to understand the nexus of race and wealth. The introduction is thought provoking for students to read and discuss because it evaluates institutional policies enacted by

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government that have increased wealth disparity between races.

Nixon, Richard. "Transcript of Nixon's Statement on School Busing". New York Times, March 17, 1972. – Nixon's speech on busing would be a great political speech to use to help students understand the President's viewpoint on a very controversial issue. It is highly readable for higher level readers and would need chunking or the use of specific reading techniques to help students better understand Nixon and his commentary. Uses strong rhetoric related to his goals as the president towards protecting the state of white suburbanites in America.

Rothstein, Richard. Class and Schools: Using Social, Economic, and Educational Reform to Close the Black-White Achievement Gap. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 2004. – This is a teacher only book that gives a huge amount of background information for people looking to investigate the achievement gap and the policy tools available that would best impact the output expected from schools regarding student performance.

Rothstein, Dan and Luz Santana. Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2011. – This is a great book for pedagogy. It provides an outstanding framework for leading students into the process of being questioners of the world. It promotes lifelong learning skills and it is a technique that I have been refining in my classroom for the last two years. This provided an excellent protocol that you can use all of or pieces of to improve as a practitioner.

Rothstein, Richard. For Public Schools, Segregation Then, Segregation Since: Education and the Unfinished March. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 2013. Accessed 3/29/14 on http://www.epi.org/files/2013/Unfinished-March-School-Segregation.pdf - This is a great synopsis of schools and segregation. The title is a great play on words of the George Wallace's infamous commentary on schools. Also, has excellent tables and graphs for students to use to learn better visual analysis skills.

Ryan, James. Five Miles Away, A World Apart: One City, Two Schools, and the Story of Educational Opportunity in Modern America. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010. – For teachers as a background for understanding how inequity and segregation have occurred against the backdrop of judicial decisions. It is an excellent demonstration of the relationship between theoretical politics, race, and law, and the real-life events that transpire from these theoretical discussions.

Weiss, Emma and Emma Garcia. "Black and Hispanic Kindergarteners Are Disproportionately in High-Poverty Schools". Economic Policy Institute, June 25, 2014. Accessed July 19 th, 2014.

http://www.epi.org/publication/black-hispanic-kindergartners-disproportionately/. – For use by teachers for research with strong infographics and a link to a full report for use in and outside of class.

Yudof, Mark, Betsy Levin, Rachel F. Moran, James E. Ryan, and Kristi L. Bowman. Educational Policy and the Law5th ed. USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011. – For teachers to research educational policy and law. Two chapters are particularly strong for the topic of this unit. One is equal educational opportunity and race. The other is equal educational opportunity and school finance. Both are necessary backdrops to understanding the law, race, and socioeconomics from a historical perspective.

Electronic Resources

facinghistory.org - excellent resource for all classroom teachers

http://www.ctvoices.org - Policy firm located in New Haven. Releases policy briefs that have excellent infographics

nytimes.com - archives available when you pay for access. Articles available from the 1850's to present

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http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/05/15/school-segregation-civil-rights-project/9115823/ - excellent story based on work from the Civil Rights Project in UCLA with 2 great graphs that can be used in a classroom

albany.edu/ssw/efc/pdf/Module%205_1_Privilege%20Walk%20Activity.pdf - possible activity that is good for unpacking privilege

theprincetontory.com/main/checking-my-privilege-character-as-the-basis-of-privilege/ - controversial editorial written by a Princeton freshman

Notes

- 1. Jennifer Hochschild and Nathan Scovronick, The American Dream and the Public Schools (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003),1.
- 2. Jolie Lee, "Still Apart: Map shows states with most-segregated schools," USA Today, May 15, 2014, Accessed June 23, 2014, http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/05/15/school-segregation-civil-rights-project/9115823/.
- 3. Ibid.
- 4. Robert Cotto, Jr. and Kenneth Feder, "Choice Watch: Diversity and Access in Connecticut's School Choice Programs", Connecticut Voices For Children, April 2014, Accessed July 16, 2014, http://www.ctvoices.org/sites/default/files/edu14choicewatchfull.pdf, 24 26.
- 5. James E. Ryan, Five Miles Away, A World Apart: One City, Two Schools, and the Story of Educational Opportunity in Modern America (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 121.
- 6. Richard Rothstein, For Public Schools, Segregation Then, Segregation Since: Education and the Unfinished March (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, 2013), 3.
- 7. Ibid, 3.
- 8. Ibid, 4.
- 9. John Herbers, "Negro Education is Found Inferior," The New York Times, July 2, 1966, 18.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11. Ryan, 68 69, 94 98. The material in the next four paragraphs is drawn from the work of Jim Ryan, pages 68 69 and 94 -98 regarding a famous Richard Nixon speech and its affect on legal and social conditions in the U.S in 1972.
- 12. Ryan, 70.
- 13. Ibid, 68 69.
- 14. Richard Nixon, "Transcript of Nixon's Statement on School Busing", New York Times, March 17, 1972, 22.
- 15. Ryan, 97.
- 16. Ryan, 91 93.

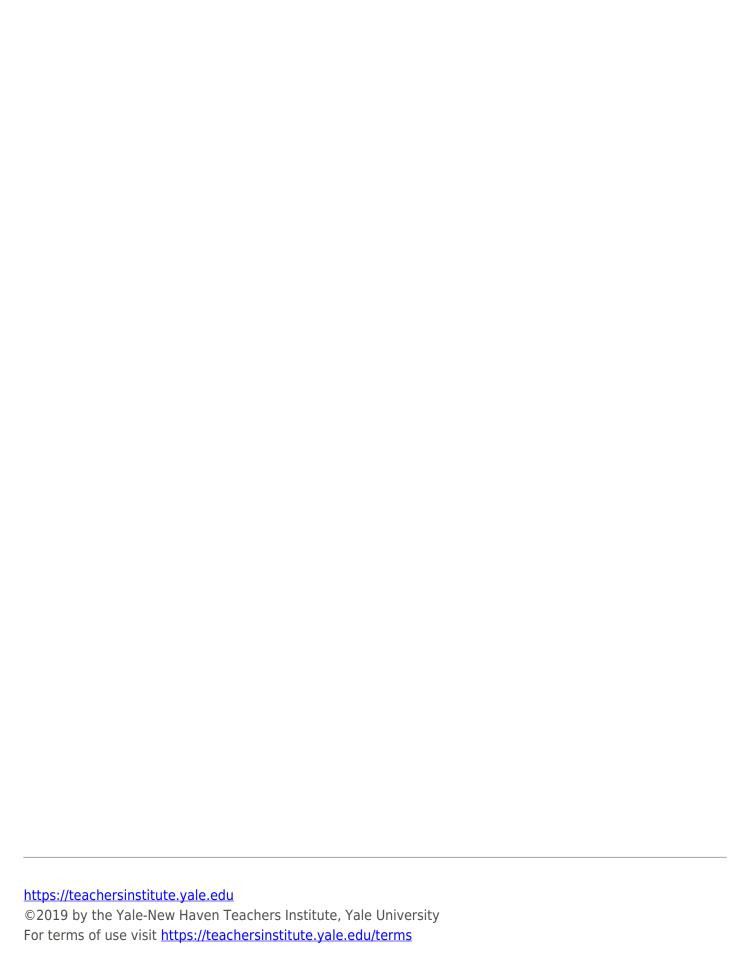
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- 17. Ibid, 93 97.
- 18. Milliken v. Bradley, 418 U.S. 717 (1974).
- 19. Ryan, 103 105.
- 20. Emma Weiss and Emma Garcia, "Black and Hispanic Kindergarteners Are Disproportionately in High-Poverty Schools", Economic Policy Institute, June 25, 2014, Accessed July 19 th , 2014,

http://www.epi.org/publication/black-hispanic-kindergartners-disproportionately/.

- 21. Mark Yudof et al., Educational Policy and the Law5th ed. (USA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011), 468 490.
- 22. Ibid, 445.
- 23. Ibid. 485 489.
- 24. Ryan, 112 115.
- 25. "Scope and Sequence Journey," Facing History and Ourselves, accessed May 25, 2014, https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/our-pedagogy/scope-and-sequence.
- 26. Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana, Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2011), 15 26.
- 27. Meizhu Lui et al., The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide (New York, NY: The New Press, 2006), 8 13.
- 28. Accessed May 25, 2014, http://www.albany.edu/ssw/efc/pdf/Module%205_1_Privilege%20Walk%20Activity.pdf. Privilege walks, which this activity is built upon, are found anywhere on the web. A note about these: the participation in this is a difficult task. You will be requiring people who may be uncomfortable with their level of privilege or lack thereof to acknowledge and engage in a discussion about this. It involves issues of identity and without proper trust-building before this activity could result in a negative outcome of learning for the class. Approach this with caution be prepared to build and acknowledge the danger to your students.
- 29. Fortgang, Tal, "Checking My Privilege: Character as the Basis for Privilege", The Princeton Tory, accessed May 25. 2014, http://theprincetontory.com/main/checking-my-privilege-character-as-the-basis-of-privilege/.
- 30. Lee, USA Today May 15, 2014.
- 31. Cotto, Jr. and Feder f, 24 26 and Appendix 1- 8.
- 32. Milliken v. Bradley, 418 U.S. 717 (1974), Accessed July 16, 2014, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Milliken v. Bradley.
- 33. Ryan, 127 135.
- 34. "The State-Local Partnership For Education: An Unbalanced Relationship", Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, 2011, Accessed July 19, 2014, http://advocacy.ccm-ct.org/Resources.ashx?id=e9ec4b7a-9387-4679-95cc-6b748ff86412, 8.
- 35. "New Haven Public Schools Site Based Budget 2013 2014", City of New Haven, Accessed May 25, 2014, http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/uploads/Complete 2013-2014 Budget Book.pdf, 239 319.

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