VOLUNTARY INTEGRATION POLICIES

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The paradox

◦ Celebrated the 65th anniversary of *Brown*

◦ Know the importance of integrated schools for inequality and our multiracial democracy

  ◦ Majority of public school students are now students of color
  ◦ Complex number and spread of racial/ethnic groups
  ◦ Racial, economic, and linguistic segregation often overlap

◦ And yet, segregation by race and class is rising across the country

Considerations

- Benefits of integrated schools, particularly if well-designed, for students of <u>all</u> races (Mickelson & Nkomo, 2012)
  - Benefits extend beyond K-12 schooling
  - Intergenerational benefits for black students (Johnson, 2019)
- Harms of minority segregation schools for students who attend them (Linn & Welner, 2007)
  - Typically fewer educational resources & lower student outcomes
- School choice often exacerbates segregation
- School segregation is tightly coupled with neighborhoods–which remain segregated
- Boundaries between districts also matter for segregation, including formation of new districts
- Suburbs are an area of growing enrollment and diversity

Suburbs

	Exposure to White Students by the Typical…				% White Students Enrolled
	White Student	Black Student	Latino Student	Asian Student	
Large Metro					
Central City	45	11.7	12.2	21.9	20.3
Suburb	66	27.2	25.6	40.8	46.9
Midsize Metro					
Central City	51.3	19.3	21.4	35.2	32.2
Suburb	70.3	44.4	36.8	51.2	59
Small Metro					
Central City	60.2	30.9	29.5	38	45.3
Suburb	74.2	49.2	36.5	47.9	62.8
Town	76.0	38.6	37.4	49.2	63.1
Rural	80.4	42.8	43.3	55.1	70.0

From: *Harming our Common Future: America's Segregated Schools 65 Years After Brown*

Research on integration efforts

- Limited about what we know from research about SES strategies
- Will talk here about equitable strategies for integration
- Inequitable strategies or practices can undermine other integration efforts
  - Competitive admissions for a school or program based on standardized tests or other such measures
  - Giving preference on a first-come, first served basis
  - Not providing adequate transportation or information under a choice-based plan
  - Relying on neighborhood* assignment if residential segregation is high

Assignment plan strategies: Questions to resolve

- How to measure diversity
  - Race with socioeconomic or socioeconomic alone
  - Using which characteristics
- Scale of measuring diversity
  - Individual student or student's neighborhood
  - School
- Method for using diversity to assign students
  - Attendance zones
  - Controlled choice
  - Magnet
  - Transfer
  - Some combination of these strategies

Using and defining socioeconomic status

- Often use student eligibility for free/reduced priced lunch
  - Emerging concerns about privacy and accuracy
  - Consent to use this information for assignment
- Other possibilities for defining SES:
  - Census information to describe a small area
  - Eligibility for government programs targeted to low-income households
  - Attendance in a preschool or Head Start program (for elementary)
  - Some inter-district plans use residence in an urban district
- Other measures (not SES, per se)
  - Academic achievement of schools or neighborhood
  - English language proficiency

Race-conscious policies

- Multifactor plans
  - Uses race and socioeconomic factors
  - Often used to assess neighborhood composition
  - Occasionally used to assess student/school composition
  - Examples: Berkeley, Louisville, Nashville, Montclair, NJ, and Ector County, TX
  - Each district uses different factors and in different ways
  - Relatively new, after *Parents Involved*
  - Potentially able to address concerns that SES-only plans, depending on design, may not have much effect on racial integration

Example 1: Berkeley, CA

- How it works:
  - Controlled choice plan for elementary schools
  - Pioneered use of multifactor, race-conscious diversity measure assigning every child in a small geographic unit a diversity code of 1, 2, 3 based on the area's racial composition and socioeconomic factors
  - Uses Census data to calculate diversity code and to draw three zones within which students get preference
- Has since been adapted in other districts including Jefferson County, KY
- Effectiveness: generally low racial segregation, improved integration by FRL since multifactor plan
- Drawbacks of this model:
  - White/more affluent families are more likely to submit applications on time and get first choice schools
  - In Louisville, white/Latinx integration was better; got slightly worse for black students
- Important considerations: zones to reduce transportation burden, efforts to make sure choices are accessible to all; equity among schools

Sources: Chavez, L., & Frankenberg, E. (2009). *Integration Defended: Berkeley Unified's Strategy to Maintain School Diversity*. Los Angeles: Civil Rights Project; Frankenberg, E. (2017). Assessing segregation under a new generation of controlled choice policies. *American Educational Research Journal*, *54*(1), 219-250

Map of Berkeley

◦ Taken from *Integration Defended* (2009)
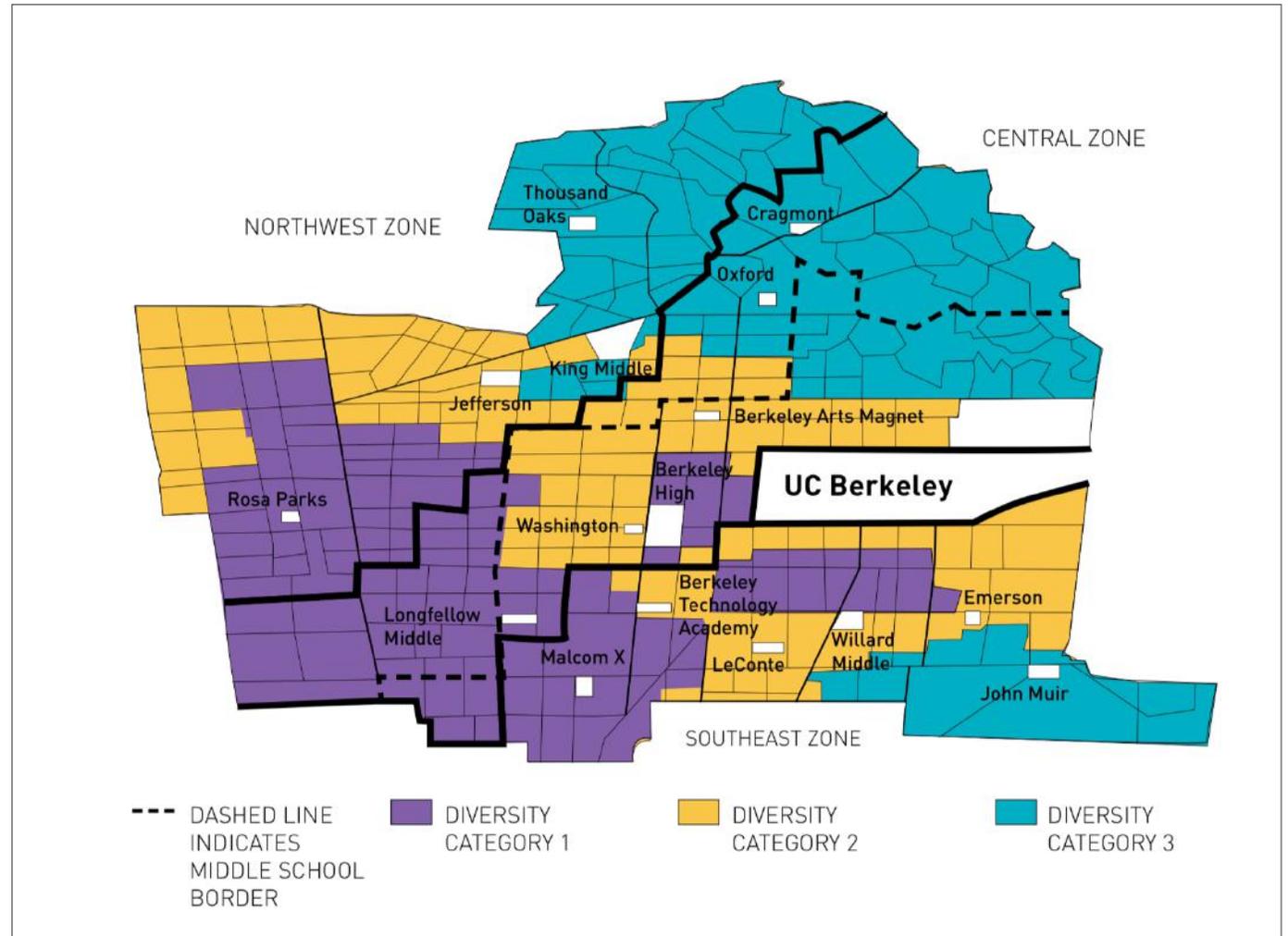
Berkeley's plan

- Early evidence

- More recently (to 2015):
  - Racial segregation remains low
  - FRL segregation improved since 2000

Taken from *Integration Defended* (2009)

TABLE 5 | Deviation from System-wide Racial-Ethnic & Economic Composition in BUSD among Elementary & Middle Schools, 2008-2009*					
	ASIAN/ PACIFIC ISLANDER	BLACK	LATINO	WHITE	FREE / REDUCED LUNCH
Elementary Schools					
Composition Across All Schools	7.6%	18.4%	21.5%	30.4%	48.0%
# of Schools whose Percentage Deviates 10% or More	0	1	2	0	2
# of Schools whose Percentage Deviates 5% or More	1	4	7	1	6
Middle Schools					
Composition Across All Schools	9.1%	17.4%	28.3%	27.2%	47.8%
# of Schools whose Percentage Deviates 10% or More	0	0	0	1	0
# of Schools whose Percentage Deviates 5% or More	0	2	1	2	3

Source: California Department of Education

Note: There are 11 elementary schools and 3 middle schools in BUSD; Free/reduced lunch data from 2007-2008.

* American Indian/Alaskan Native are 0.3% of the district enrollment & those that either gave multiple racial-ethnic responses or no responses at all account for 20.9% of elementary students.

Proposed Diversity Categories
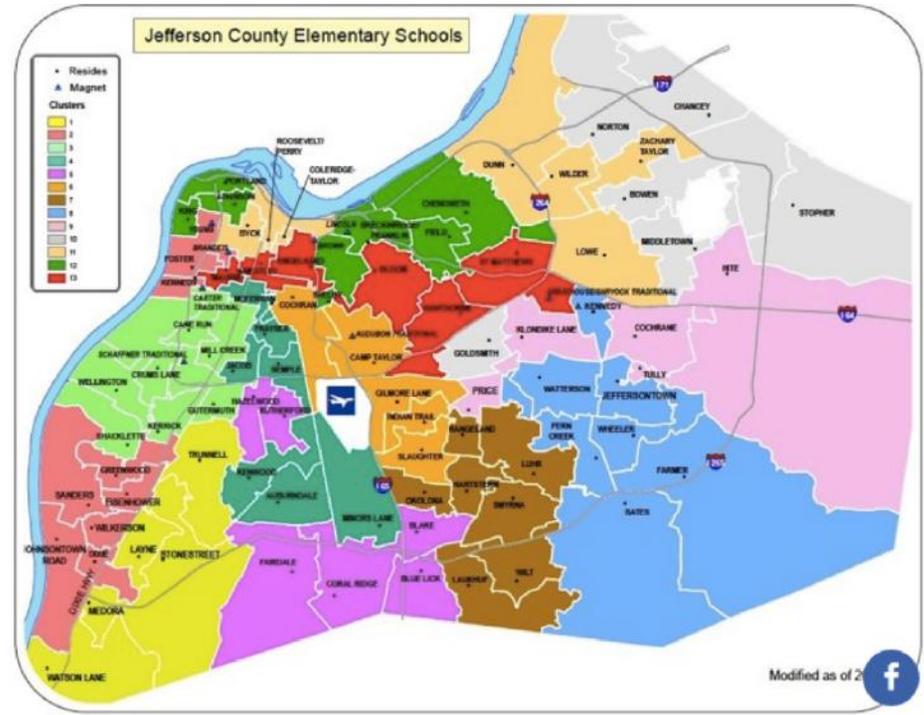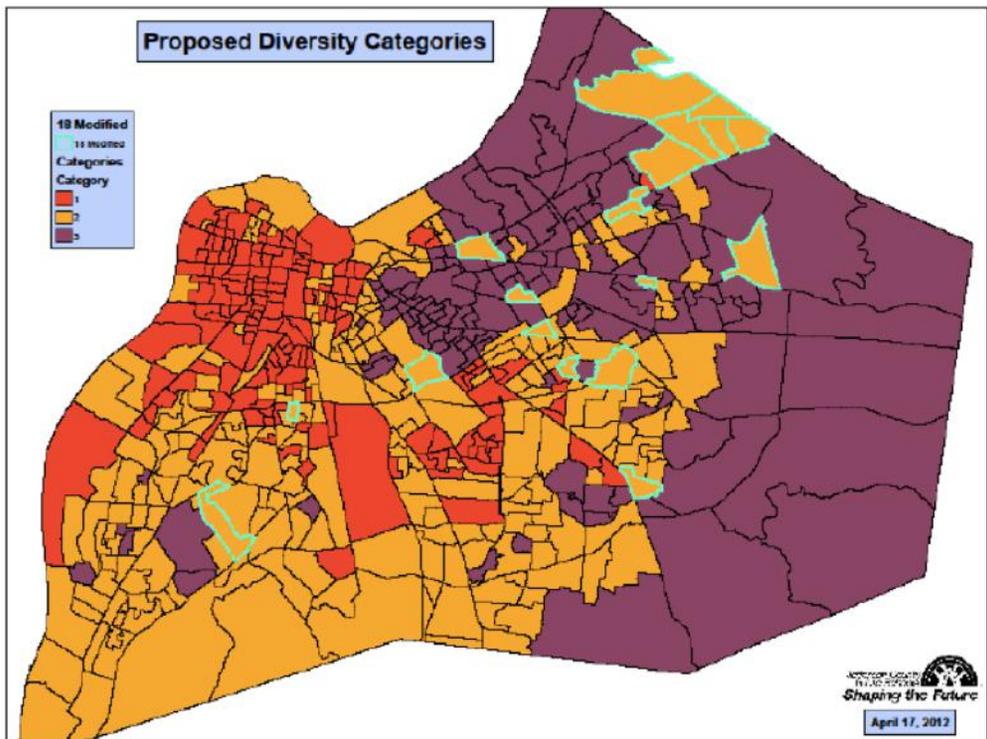
Elementary school clusters in the Jefferson County Public School system

JEFFERSON COUNTY, KY
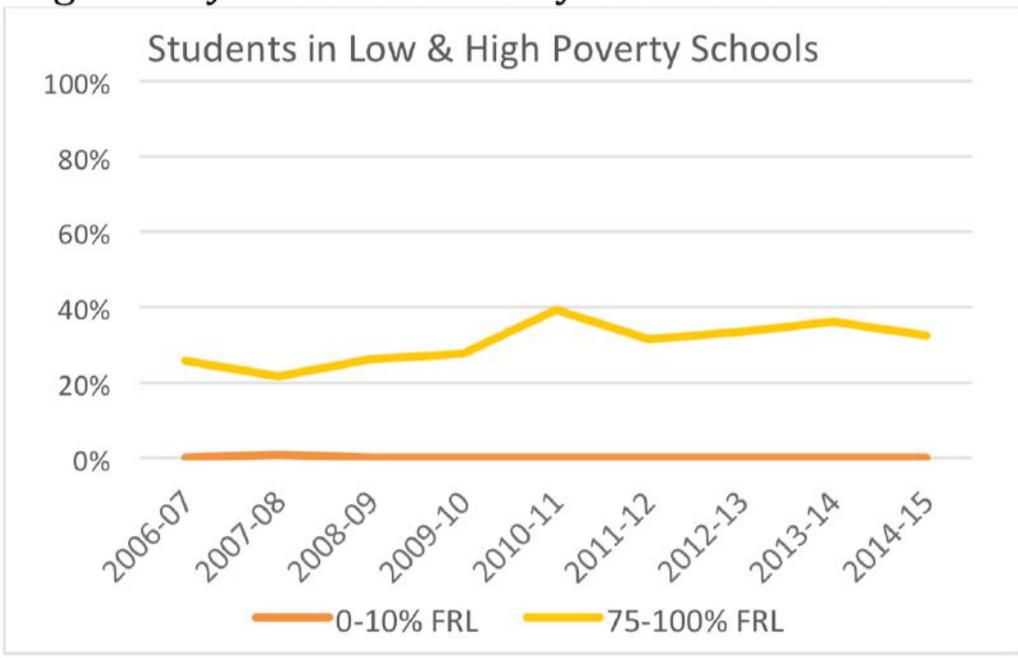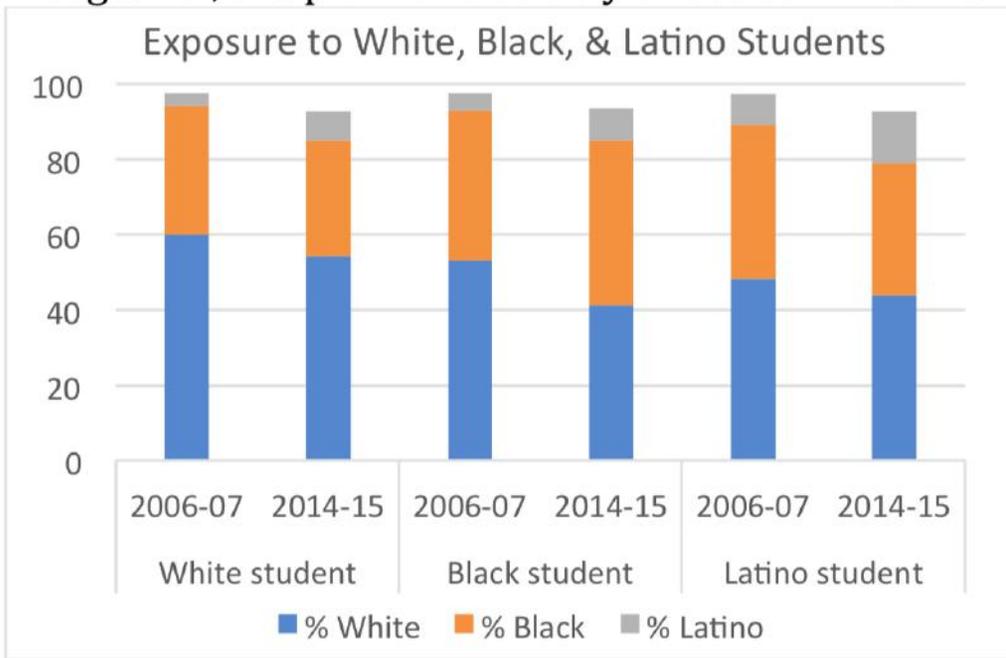
Exposure is a segregation measure that is a weighted average of the school-level racial composition for the "typical" student of each race. If integration were perfect, students of all races would have same exposure. Adapted from Frankenberg (2017).

EFFECTIVENESS OF JEFFERSON CO.

see: Holme & Frankenberg (2017)

Example 2: Cambridge, MA

◦ Like Berkeley, Cambridge uses a controlled choice plan that governs elementary school assignment

◦ Measure of diversity is eligibility for free/reduced price lunch (FRL); goal is to have all schools with 10% of districtwide percentage

◦ How it works: families rank choices; districts allocates the available seats based on district FRL and has lottery to assign students

◦ Preferences given for several things including siblings, proximity to school and special programs

◦ Effectiveness:

   ◦ 86% of students received one of top 3 choices
   ◦ -some seats in west side schools are difficult to get into without a preference
   ◦ -west side schools are more in demand, closer to where white and more affluent families live

◦ District has a range of efforts to try to provide as much information about historical choice trends for families who are applying.

Example 3

- Rezoning
- When lines are drawn, can intentionally create integration
- Politics of rezoning are intense
- Richmond in 2013 adopted boundaries that furthered segregation; adopted plan in 2019 that lessened segregation but did not adopt more integrative option

- Maps from https://croppermap.com/richmondrezoning/documents/RPS_VA_Recommendation_Proposal_Statistics_191113.pdf
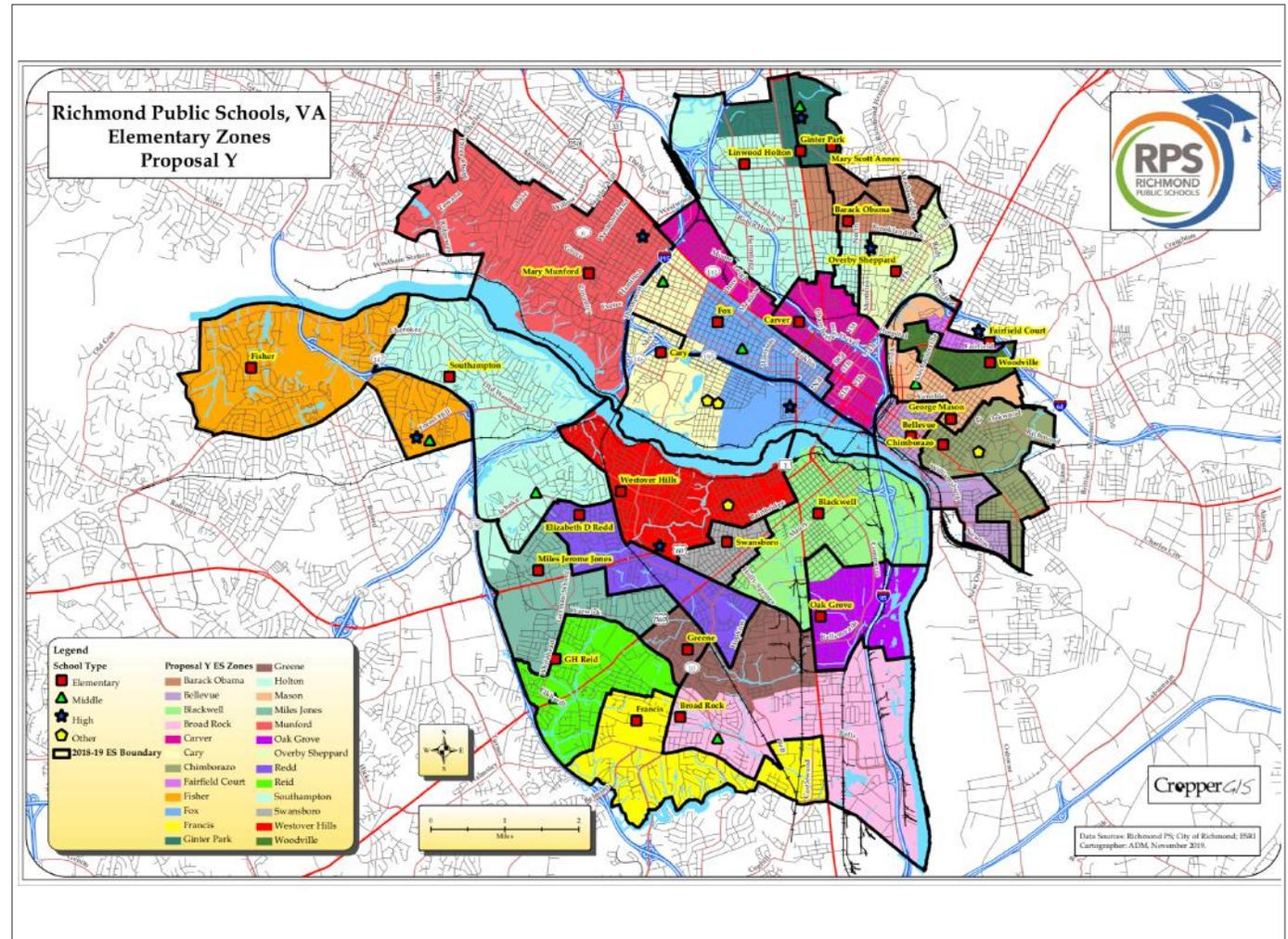
Evidence-based recommendations

- For design of policy
  - Race-conscious policies as part of overall diversity strategy
  - Reconsider need for proximity if neighborhoods are segregated
  - Integrate student assignment into other district decisions (transportation, building/closing schools, locating new programs, etc.)
  - Engage with other sectors and with other districts
  - Critical school-based supports and measuring outcomes
- Political support for diversity policies
  - Continually educating and engaging with community about diversity
  - Assess whether the plan burdens one or more groups unevenly
  - Be transparent about what the plan is and how it affects residents
  - Review and adjust plan as needed as demographics or school preferences shift

  - See: Frankenberg, E. (2018). *Using socioeconomic-based strategies to further racial integration in K-12 schools.* San Antonio, TX: IDRA, Equity Assistance Center-South.

Within schools

◦ Making them ready to provide inclusive, welcoming environments to all students and families, and provide equitable educational opportunity
  ◦ Recruit, train and retain racially/ethnically diverse teachers and leaders
  ◦ Ensure school equity (see ED, 2014 guide)
  ◦ Hire diverse staff members, and provide all district staff with training on equity and inclusion (including cafeteria workers, bus drivers, etc.)
  ◦ Study and address whether tracking segregates students; implement formal and informal policies to recruit diverse students and teachers to advanced or specialized classes
  ◦ Understand and welcome a range of ways families and communities engage with schools
    ◦ Understand the various constraints and resources that families have to engage in school choice and their child's education
  ◦ Assess all policies and practices for barriers to access that they might create
    ◦ Examine school and classroom environment, materials, books, curriculum to ensure that they are representative of all students and expose students to a broad range of diversity

Conclusion

◦ Politics, demographics, and the law complicate diversity efforts

◦ Millions of children attend public schools as a result of an integration plan

◦ How integration is structured matters

◦ Ensure diversity plan implementation is fair and equitable for all

◦ Need more research about and research-based support for what strategies work and under what conditions

◦ State role: ESSA plans, district boundary lines, charter school diversity laws & enforcement, district secession/consolidation

For more information

- Center for Education and Civil Rights website:
  - https://cecr.ed.psu.edu/research/k-12/k-12-school-integration
  - https://cecr.ed.psu.edu/furthering-diversity-k-12-schools-through-student-assignment

- EAC-South materials: https://www.idraeacsouth.org/resources/using-socioeconomic-based-strategies-racial-integration

- NCSD briefs: https://school-diversity.org/pdf/DiversityResearchBrief12.pdf

- Civil Rights Project:
  - https://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/k-12-education/integration-and-diversity/still-looking-to-the-future-voluntary-k-12-school-integration/naacp-still-looking-future-2008.pdf
  - https://cecr.ed.psu.edu/sites/default/files/Student_Assigntment_Options_0.pdf

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