

***The National Coalition***  
***on***  
***School Diversity***

# NEW FINDINGS ON SCHOOL INTEGRATION

SEPTEMBER 2022

GAO Report

CERD Committee Report

## Social Capital and Economic Mobility Study

Several recent studies and reports further underscore the importance of K-12 school integration. We summarize three of them here.

### GAO REPORT

A June 2022 report issued by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), "*K-12 Education: Student Population Has Significantly Diversified, But Many Schools Remain Divided Along Racial, Ethnic, and Economic Lines*," finds persistent and growing racial and socioeconomic segregation in K-12 public schools.



- "Schools remain divided along racial, ethnic, and economic lines throughout the U.S.—even as the K-12 public school student population grows more diverse.
- During the 2020-21 school year, more than a third of students (about 18.5 million) attended schools where 75% or more students were of a single race or ethnicity.
- Because district boundaries often determine which school a student can attend, [they] can contribute to continued division along racial/ethnic lines.
- School districts that seceded from existing districts usually had higher percentages of white and Asian students than districts they left."

Quote source: <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-22-104737> (Fast Facts)



Read the report here: <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-22-104737.pdf>

Learn more about NCSD's work at [school-diversity.org](http://school-diversity.org)

# CERD COMMITTEE REPORT

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) completed its review of the United States' compliance with the CERD treaty in August 2022, and its *"Concluding observations on the combined tenth to twelfth reports of the [U.S.]"* report offers an overview of U.S. progress – and lack thereof – on racial justice issues. The Senate ratified this important treaty in 1994, committing the U.S. to take affirmative steps to address systemic discrimination and segregation.

The new UN report specifically calls out America's persistent school and housing segregation and recommends the following in order to ensure equal access to education:



- **"Developing and adopting a comprehensive plan to address socio-economic and racial segregation in schools and communities, with concrete goals, timelines and impact assessment mechanisms;**
- Promoting that states analyse and rectify funding disparities to public schools and reduce the disproportionate impact on low-income communities;
- **Expanding federal funding for programmes and policies that promote racial integration in public schools;**
- Adopting appropriate measures to address racial discrimination in the administration of student discipline, including school-based arrests leading to referrals to the juvenile and criminal justice system for minor non-violent offenses."



**Read the full report here: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/USA/CERD\\_C\\_USA\\_CO\\_10-12\\_49769\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/USA/CERD_C_USA_CO_10-12_49769_E.pdf)**

# SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY STUDY

August 2022 research from Raj Chetty and his team at Opportunity Insights at Harvard University provides more evidence that holistic integration strategies that bring children together and help foster meaningful relationships within communities, schools, and institutions can produce positive outcomes. The *"Social Capital and Economic Mobility"* study examined economic connectedness (i.e., degree of interaction between low- and high-income people), cohesiveness (i.e., degree to which social networks are fragmented into cliques), and civic engagement (i.e., rates of volunteering and participation in community organizations) to better understand social capital in communities across America.



- "Social networks are highly stratified by socioeconomic class: people tend to befriend others with similar incomes.
- **Children who grow up in communities with more economic connectedness (cross-class interaction) are much more likely to rise up out of poverty.**
- Other forms of social capital – how tight-knit a community is or levels of civic engagement – are not strongly associated with economic mobility .
- Differences in economic connectedness can explain the relationship between upward mobility and other factors, such as poverty rates and racial segregation.
- The social disconnection by class is due in equal part to segregation by income across social settings and friending bias within settings, the tendency for people to befriend people similar to them.
- **Both segregation and friending bias are shaped by the structure of institutions and can be reduced through targeted changes in local policies."**



**Read the non-technical summary here: [https://opportunityinsights.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/socialcapital\\_nontech.pdf](https://opportunityinsights.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/socialcapital_nontech.pdf)**