



CULtivate.

100 Years and Counting:

**The Enduring Legacy of Racial Residential Segregation in
Chicago in the Post-Civil Rights Era**

PART TWO:

The Impact of Segregation on Education in a “No
Excuses” Environment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The CULTivate Series

The mission of the Chicago Urban League is to work for economic, educational and social progress for African Americans and promote strong, sustainable communities through advocacy, collaboration and innovation. Our work is guided by a strategic plan that outlines four key organizational goals, one of which is as follows: “Be a leader on issues impacting African Americans.” Strategies under this goal include identifying and prioritizing key focal issues, conducting research and gathering information, building collaborative partnerships and advocating for social change.


Beginning in early 2015, the Chicago Urban League began developing the **CULTivate Series** to ensure that our organization was actively pursuing a thought leadership role on behalf of the African American community in Chicago. We wanted to commit our time and resources to examining a key issue or set of issues, disseminating our findings and recommendations and committing to action steps to begin addressing these issues.

Series 1: 100 Years and Counting - The Enduring Legacy of Racial Residential Segregation in Chicago in the Post-Civil Rights Era

Over the past decades, in what we refer to as the post-Civil rights era, community advocates, community-based organizations, researchers and others have drawn attention to the challenges faced by many Chicago neighborhoods, particularly those in predominantly African American community areas. More recently, attention has been paid to issues such as neighborhood “food deserts” or “employment deserts” or “transportation deserts,” suggesting that residents must travel far outside of their community to access basic needs for food, income or transportation options.

National and local programs and policies developed to address the demands of the Civil Rights movement were occurring during the same period of deindustrialization in the 1970s. Declines in Chicago’s manufacturing and industry base, coupled with changes in neighborhood small business economies, harmed many African American communities. The more recent closing of schools and health clinics and the slow or nonexistent development of new neighborhood economies in many African American areas of the city points to a larger issue than any one type of desert. In keeping with the desert theme, it might be more appropriate to say that there are community areas in Chicago that are best characterized as “urban deserts” – areas in which economic disinvestment, resident displacement, population losses and the loss of community anchor institutions have, in part, resulted in community areas characterized by significant need. When people think of a desert, they think of a place that is inhospitable to life. On the contrary, a desert is a place of extreme conditions, where life must resiliently adapt and find ways to survive in a harsh, resource-poor environment. This is why we must not say that these community areas lack strengths. From the families to the organizations to the schools and businesses that serve them, these neighborhoods are the homes, institutions, organizing centers and workplaces of many people.

We cannot ignore, however, that there are many community areas in Chicago that face significant challenges, and by extension, so do its residents. Further, these community areas do not face these challenges by simple misfortune or bad luck. Chicago is a city of contrasts: a city that offers unending



challenges and limitless triumphs, both large and small. It is the home of the very poor and the very well-to-do. Within a simple, geographic grid lay richly nuanced neighborhoods with sometimes impenetrable borders. Where you grew up has potentially everything to do with your success. And where you grew up in Chicago has a lot to do with the explicit and implicit policies and practices that segregated residents according to the color of their skin. In Chicago, in 2017, race still matters, just as it has for the past hundred years.

In this inaugural series, we examine some of the current impacts of enduring racial residential segregation on the lives of African Americans in Chicago in the post-Civil Rights era. Segregation impacts neighborhoods in many ways. It impacts a neighborhood's housing, both at the community and individual levels. Distressed and undervalued properties, high rates of foreclosure and a loss of rental units reduce housing stock and foster residential instability. Resident unemployment or underemployment, reductions in the purchasing power of incomes earned, higher ratios of housing expenses to income and the loss of affordable housing makes it difficult for families to remain stably housed. It impacts a neighborhood's educational outcomes, both at the community and individual levels. Schools are deprived of the resources they need to adequately serve students and sometimes shutter due to neighborhood population loss. Young residents have increased rates of dropout and lower grades and educational attainment than peers in more resource-rich communities. It impacts a neighborhood's economy, both at the community and individual levels. Businesses have a harder time developing and thriving. Residents have a harder time finding employment and earning a sustainable, living wage income.

To examine these issues more thoroughly, we will be splitting the research findings and recommendations into three parts:

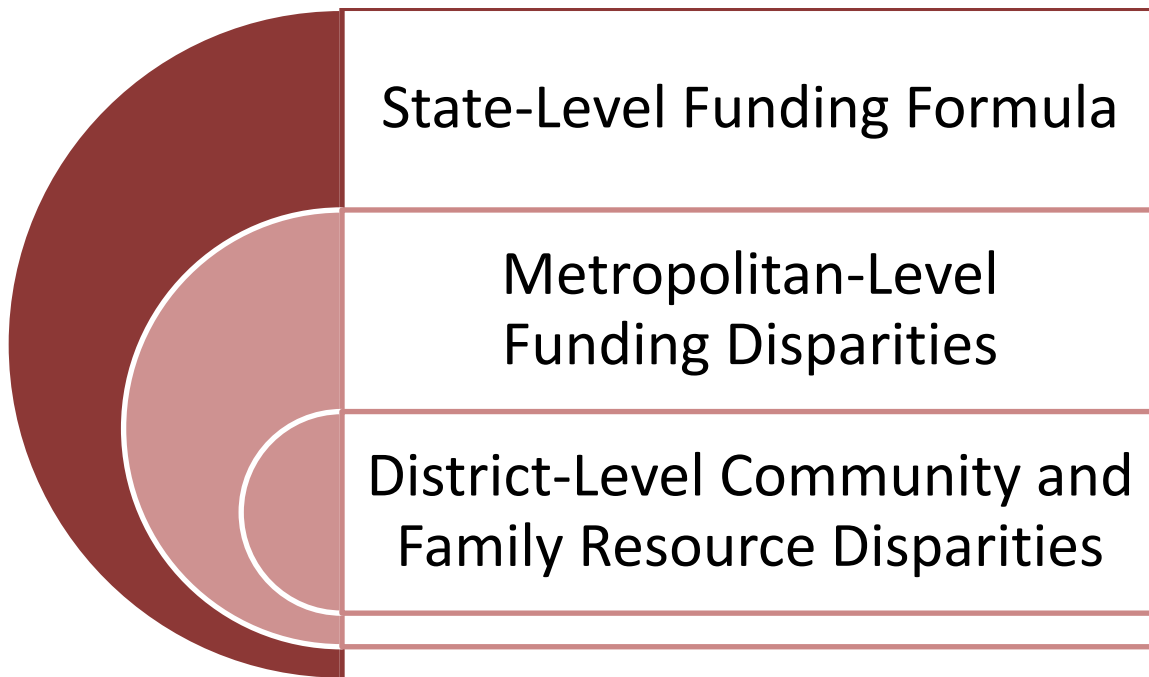
- **Part One:** The Impact of Chicago's Racial Residential Segregation on Residence, Housing and Transportation
- **Part Two:** The Impact of Segregation on Education
- **Part Three:** The Impact of Segregation on Neighborhood Economies

An Introduction to Part Two of the Series

In this second report in the series, we examine the myriad ways in which our current educational system significantly disadvantages African American students living in poverty. Even the brightest and most motivated students must struggle to address the many challenges facing them: attendance in under-resourced schools, located in under-resourced communities, with minimal resources in the home to overcome deficits in both the school and community.

The report provides context around why inequities exist at multiple levels – from an inequitable funding model at the state level, to inequitable distribution of funds at the metropolitan level, to disparate community and family resources at the district level that result in very different schooling experiences for wealthy and poor students. At every point in the system, African American students living in poverty bear the brunt of an inequitable system.

Inequity at Every Level of the Educational System



Selected Findings from the Report

Funding Disparities in the National Context

Illinois has the dubious distinction of being one of the worst states in the nation for equitable and fair funding of its schools by most national measures. For example, Illinois ranked:

- Worst in the nation (50th out of 50) for the percentage of education funding provided by the state;
- Second to worst (49th out of 50) in the nation for reliance on local funding , second only to Washington D.C.;
- Worst state in the nation (50th of 50) for the equitable funding of low-income students;
- Third worst in the nation for the equitable distribution of funds between districts serving high numbers of students of color and those with few students of color. Only Nebraska and North Dakota ranked worse than Illinois;
- Comparatively, Illinois districts serving the greatest number of students of color receive nearly one-fifth fewer state and local funds per student than districts with small percentages of students of color. To put this in perspective, in Ohio, districts serving the most students of color receive 26% more in funds than districts serving the fewest students of color.

Hypersegregation and the “Achievement Gap” Nationally

Significant achievement gaps exist between Black and White students. Overall, the achievement gap between Black and White students on math in 12th grade is a 27point difference; in reading the gap is a 26 point difference. But these gaps are based more on segregation and socioeconomic disparities than the student’s race. For example:

- Data from the National Center for Education Statistics demonstrated that Black students attending predominantly Black schools (60%-100% of students) performed considerably worse than Black students at predominantly White schools;
- Students who attended a hypersegregated school were less likely to complete high school, enroll in college, or to earn an undergraduate degree;
- Research demonstrates that socioeconomic conditions are the cause of these gaps, rather than the student’s race.

Inequities in Chicago Metropolitan Area Funding by District

Per pupil funding for schools in the Chicago Metropolitan area varies considerably by school district. Analyses of Public School System Finances (from the U.S. Census) demonstrated:

- The average per pupil funding in the Chicago Metro area was just over \$14,000;
- The difference between the highest and lowest per pupil spending among Chicago Metropolitan area districts was staggeringly disparate, at more than \$25,000 per student;

- Districts in the top 20% in per pupil spending averaged nearly \$20,000 per student; districts in the lowest 20% in per pupil spending averaged just half of this amount (\$10,000 per student);
- Wealthy students in areas like Chicago's North suburbs attend schools where funding per-pupil is *almost triple* that of Chicago's schools, with considerably fewer low-income and English Language Learner students.

As one parent stated:

"I was just at high school [X], a Chicago Public Neighborhood School in South Chicago that has lost 2/3 of its enrollment over the past decade or so. The difference between that school's condition and my kids' high school to-be in the suburbs could not be more stark."

Analyses of funding by type demonstrates how funding cuts at the state level disproportionately impact schools with lower property tax revenues, making these districts more reliant on state funding to educate their students and exacerbating existing funding inequities. For example:

- Chicago Metropolitan Area districts in the top 20% in per pupil spending, funded their schools from a mix of 75% local funding, 23% state funding and just 2% federal funds;
- Chicago Metropolitan Area districts in the lowest 20% in per pupil spending relied much more heavily on state funding to offset lower local revenues: 56% local funding, 39% state funding and 5% federal funding.

Taken together, lack of adequate funding and budget cuts have a disparate impact on districts with lower per pupil spending than districts that spend more per pupil.

Chicago Metropolitan Area and Title 1 Spending for Low-Income Students

Analysis of Title 1 spending – money allocated to the states by the U.S. Government for low-income students – reveals that:

- Ninety-four percent of schools within the Chicago Metropolitan Area received Title 1 funds for low income children;
- Ninety percent of the Chicago Metropolitan Area's highest funded districts – those in the top one-fifth in per pupil funding, also received Title 1 dollars.

Analysis of Title 1 spending by the percentage of low-income children in Illinois school districts revealed overwhelming disparities in funds per-pupil and receipt of poverty alleviation funds by extremely affluent districts with very few or no children in poverty. For example:

- Glencoe School District 35 with an extremely low percentage (1%) of low-income students received \$122,000 in Title 1 funds, resulting in per-pupil Title 1 support of approximately \$10,000 in per pupil spending;
- Chicago District 299, with 86% low-income children, only received \$1,100 per student in Title 1 funds;

- Kenilworth District 38 received \$41,000 and Oak Grove District 68 received \$82,000 in Title 1 funds for arguably no low-income students, at least none that were listed in the U.S. Census or the Illinois State Board of Education Report Card.

Outcomes for Low-Income Students by Spending Levels

In districts with few low-income students, these students perform worse on standardized tests than their higher income peers. For example:

- There was a 25 point difference between low-income students' achievement and non-low-income students' achievement on the PARCC tests at the state level;
- In North Shore District 112, there was a nearly 40 point gap between low-income students and non-low-income students in meeting or exceeding standards on the PARCC test and Glencoe District 35 had about the same gap in achievement despite having only 1% low-income students;
- Chicago District 299 had about a 30 point difference in meeting or exceeding standards between poor children and children not living in poverty.

Hypersegregation: Illinois and Chicago

Illinois is the 2nd most segregated state for Black students in the U.S., eclipsed only by New York. Approximately 62% of Black students attend highly segregated schools (composition that is 90-100% African American). If you increase the composition to 99-100% African American, Illinois is 1st in the nation – 41% of Black students attend schools where nearly every child is another Black student.

Chicago Public Schools serves approximately 382,000 students, 85% of which are African American and Latino. As compared to the state, for example:

- The City of Chicago District 299 is comprised of significantly more racial and ethnic minorities when compared to the state (90% and 51% respectively);
- Chicago has significantly more low-income children than the state (84% and 49% respectively);
- In 2016 within Chicago's District 299, there were 4 African American students for every 1 White student, while the state's ratio was about 1 African American student to every 3 White students.

Many students within Chicago Public Schools attend schools that are hypersegregated - that is 90% more one race or ethnicity. For example:

- Forty-five percent of CPS students attend schools that are 90% or more African American or Latino;
- Twenty-six percent of CPS students attend a school where 90% or more of students are African American;
- Nineteen percent of students attend schools that are 90% or more Latino;
- African Americans are more likely to attend schools with Latinos than Whites; Latinos attend schools with other Latinos, Whites and African Americans;
- There are no hypersegregated White schools in the Chicago Public Schools;

“Tipping Factors:” A Conceptual Model to Explain Disparities in Chicago Public Schools

Students in racially and economically segregated schools are disproportionately impacted by state, local and district-level funding policies. In an inequitable school system, there are vast differences in the educational experiences of students served within the schools. How could it be that one school in a district can look and operate one way, with one set of services and amenities, while a different school in the same district can look and operate another way, with considerably fewer services and amenities?

The answer lies in “**tipping factors**” – factors that stack for or against a student to either alleviate or exacerbate funding gaps in inadequately funded districts. In wealthier community areas with considerable community assets and economic stability, affluent families with higher incomes and more household resources can offset inadequate school funds. These families can use their own funds to provide needed services at the school, or pay for private services outside of the school. Poor parents have no such luxury. Their children bear the burden of statewide and district funding inequities.

TIPPING THE BALANCE: FACTORS THAT EXACERBATE OR ALLEVIATE FUNDING INEQUITIES





The Built Environment in Segregated Communities

In striking contrast to Chicago's Loop and north side community areas, communities on the south and west sides remain areas of disinvestment. Transportation and commercial business is lacking and vacant parcels of land fill the landscape. For example:

- Transportation Access: Forty-seven percent of people in the highly segregated neighborhood of Fuller Park live in poverty, and 53% lack access to a car. Even though Fuller Park is relatively close to the Loop, more than 60% of the community is not within ½ a mile of transit access. In Beverly, 94% of residents have access to a car, and half of its residents live within a ½ mile from transit;
- Commercial Real Estate: The Near North Side has more than ample commercial real estate – 46% of total parcels are commercial. In contrast, Oakland is comprised of less than 1% commercial parcels, creating a commercial desert that prevents economic growth and stability;
- Vacant Parcels: In South Chicago, a segregated high poverty neighborhood, nearly 1/3 of land parcels are vacant. This compares to low poverty neighborhoods like Albany Park or Mount Greenwood, where less than 1% of land is vacant;
- Increase/Decrease in Housing Units: Segregated community area Douglas has lost one-quarter of its housing units over the last decade, while the affluent Near South Side community areas has seen the number of housing units more than double (158% increase) over the past decade.

Crime and Victimization

The most racially segregated areas of the south and west sides of Chicago are not only home to disinvestment but to the accompanying higher rates of violent and property crimes. For example:

- West Garfield Park, one of the most segregated neighborhoods in Chicago, had the highest murder rate in the city, with 9.4 people murdered per 10,000 residents. It also has one of the highest violent crime rates (excluding murder): 320 people of out 10,000 were victims of violent crimes;
- Areas like Forest Glen had a murder rate of zero and a violent crime rate of just 7 per 10,000 residents from 2012 to 2016, which was 50 times lower than violent crime rates in West Garfield Park.

Policing, Community Relations, and Incarceration for Drug Offenses

Arrests related to “stop and frisk” like misdemeanor marijuana offenses are much more heavily focused in racially concentrated areas of poverty, as is state spending on incarceration. One youth from a heavily policed neighborhood explained that his community felt “like an open air prison.” For example:

- East Garfield Park had a misdemeanor marijuana arrest rate of 234 arrests per 10,000 residents, while neighborhoods like Montclare had only 2 arrests per 10,000 residents. Arrests in East Garfield Park are more than 100 times higher, despite the fact that African Americans and Whites use marijuana at the same rates.

- In Austin, nearly \$300M was spent on incarcerating individuals for nonviolent drug offenses. Just \$40,000 was spent on incarceration for these offenses in Edison Park, a one hundred fold difference between these two communities;
- According to the recent Department of Justice report on policing in Chicago, excessive force in any form was used 10 times more often against African Americans than against Whites.

Human Capital

Growing up in one of Chicago's racially concentrated areas of poverty (RCAP) means taking a more arduous path through the education system with roadblocks and barriers at every turn. A multitude of factors conspire to challenge, frustrate and limit Chicago's students living in these areas. For example:

- In Riverdale, the median income is just under \$15,000 (24% of Chicago Metro Area Median Income), the poverty rate is 60%, the child poverty rate is 73%, the unemployment rate is 34% and zero percent of the population has advanced degrees;
- In Lincoln Park, the median income is over \$100,000 (161% of Chicago Metro Area Median Income), the poverty rate is 12%, the child poverty rate is 6%, the unemployment rate is just 5% and 40% of residents have advanced degrees.


When parents lack access to adequate income, employment or educational opportunities, it has a real and devastating impact on a child's schooling. Parents often struggle to provide basic educational needs, like school supplies or fees for programs and fieldtrips. One teacher stated, after the latest round of budget cuts to the schools:

"Afterschool programs are cut, fieldtrips are cut, unless the kid's family can pay for it. There are a handful of kids that cannot afford to pay for the dances or fieldtrips because they don't have the money."

Fundraising: a Tale of Two Cities

It's not a secret that affluent parents can afford to spend more on enrichment activities for their children, such as extracurricular, tutoring, summer camps and standardized testing preparation. However, it might be a surprise to learn that many of the most affluent communities also have rigorous fundraising entities for the children's schools, which exacerbates existing inequalities. For example:

- Available CPS records show that 18 full time positions and 5 part time teachers' salaries were paid with fundraising from parents in 2014. Parents paid in part for at least another 15 teachers' salaries through private fundraising ,however these numbers are probably much larger;
- Three of the top fundraising schools, located in Lincoln Park (Alcott, Abraham Lincoln, and Oscar Mayer), had total fundraising amounts of more than \$1.4 million in 2014.



As one parent stated:

“They [Friends of X] would have a ‘build our own teacher’ [campaign]. There would be a picture of a teacher in the school and they would color it in as they raised the money. Like \$30,000 would be the head, and as they raised the money that part would get colored in...The expected donation was above \$1,200 per child per year. It wasn’t stated that it was mandatory because that would be illegal. But there is pressure to give money to the school. Parents with a lot of resources... it’s easy to auction off time at a beach or lake house, trips on sailboats or meals at a restaurant you own.”

It is hard to overstate the significance of human capital on fundraising and how these “Friends of__” fundraising entities exacerbate existing inequalities between poor segregated neighborhood schools and their counterparts in more affluent areas.

Trauma “Zones” and Health

Racially concentrated areas of poverty also have much higher rates of environmental health issues, community violence and hospitalizations for mental health, creating “trauma zones,” where access to services and health outcomes are poor. Adverse child experiences, like exposure to trauma, and chronic, toxic stress make it more difficult for children – and their parents – to succeed. For example:

- Areas like West Garfield Park had behavioral health hospitalization rates that were at least 4 times as high as neighborhoods like Norwood Park. Overall there were twice as many hospitalizations for mental health than for heart disease across the city of Chicago, and these were concentrated in just a few zip codes (all RCAP areas);
- Lead level testing in children in RCAP neighborhoods shows a distressingly high rate of elevated blood levels, which can impact school performance. It is tied directly to the high levels of lead paint within these communities;
- Asthma and pollution conspire to impact racially concentrated areas of poverty. About 1 in 6 African American children suffer from asthma. More schools located in RCAP communities are close to expressways, creating further health risks for children already suffering from chronic breathing conditions.

Policy Recommendations

This report has examined the educational inequities that exist at every level of the system – from statewide funding formula disparities that disadvantage low-income communities, to metropolitan area funding distribution disparities that fail to provide needed funds to the neediest schools, to in-district funding and resource disparities that create very different schools for different students.

In this final section, we will briefly identify recommendations at each of the levels to address the issues identified in the report. Greater detail for each of the recommendations can be found in the full report.

▪ Long-Term, Macro-Level Reforms

Much of what was discussed in this report – community wealth, community assets and anchors, community stressors and family human capital – are directly related to racial residential segregation. Where you live matters, because where you live determines what opportunities, assets and resources you have access to in your community. Although the following recommendations are not education-specific, they bear attention, as efforts to undo the damaging effects of segregation on residence and housing will also help to undo the damaging effects of segregation on education. The full list of recommendations can be found in the first CULTivate report, but they are summarized here:

- Revitalization of disinvested neighborhoods and community areas outside of the central city core
- Development of written revitalization action plans used to monitor progress on stated goals
- Intentional engagement of neighborhood residents in community planning processes and decisions through an independent participatory citizen planning council; accountability to this council
- Thorough assessment of fair housing practices and policies to determine adequacy of housing units and facilitators/barriers to residential mobility
- Transit-oriented development and expansion of transit lines and stops to connect additional neighborhoods into the transit system and remove transit deserts
- Increase number of safe, affordable housing units under Mayor’s Five-Year Housing Plan and the CHA Plan for Transformation rebuilds

▪ State Level Educational Reforms

Recommendations at the state and metro levels aim to address some of the longstanding barriers to equitable funding that prevent schools across the state from receiving needed resources to adequately serve their students.

- Resolve the state budget impasse immediately
- Implement an Evidence-Based Education Funding Model
- ISBE should implement the settlement requirements as outlined in the *Chicago Urban League et. al. v. State of Illinois* (2008) lawsuit



- **Local Educational Reforms**

Recommendations at the local level aim to address greater transparency and accountability, some of the longstanding impacts of segregated schooling, as well as funding issues specific to the Chicago Public Schools.

- Address the Chicago Public Schools teacher pension payment disparity
- Reconsider “principal allocated” budgeting, where all money provided to a school is put into one fund for core subjects, special education and supplies
- Eliminate the creation of new Tax Increment Financing Zones that draw from school revenues
- Create an elected school board for Chicago Public Schools
- Consider innovative public-private partnerships and wrap-around services to deal with underutilized schools
- Create “adopt a school” initiatives for 501(c)(3)s and parents who fundraise