

Trends in Maryland Public School Enrollment: Racial Composition

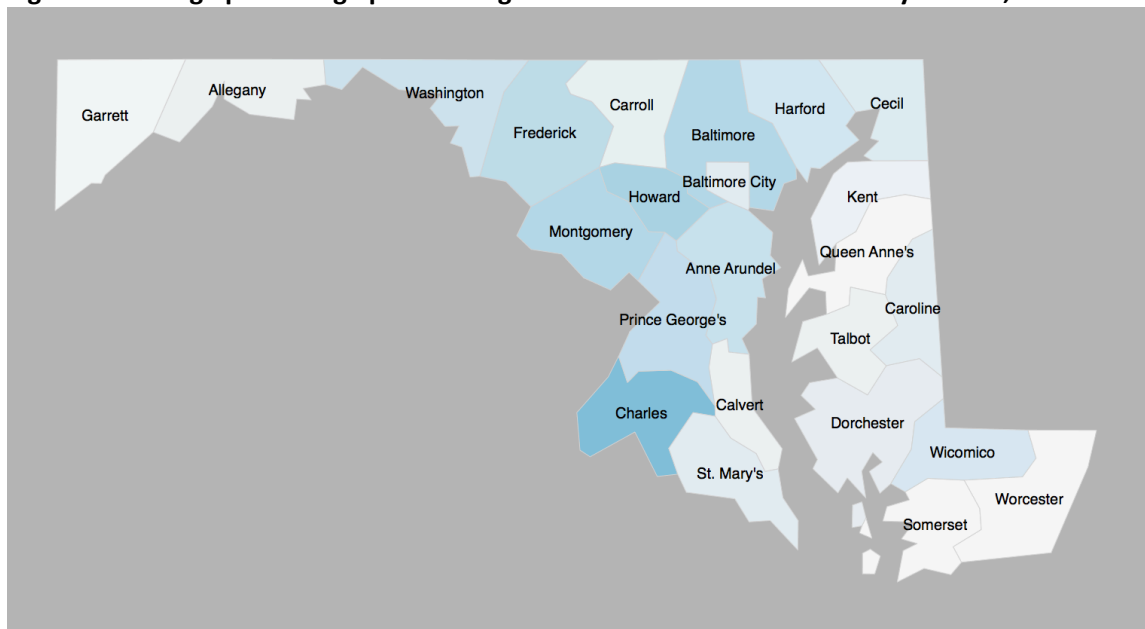
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Public school enrollment in Maryland is becoming more racially diverse. Minority student enrollment now exceeds White student enrollment. As of 2010, 56.4% of Maryland's public school students were minorities. In this brief, we examine trends in the racial composition of districts and schools in Maryland.

Trends in the Racial Composition at the District Level

Between 1990 and 2010, changes in the racial composition of schools varied by district. We used the relative decline in White student enrollment to measure this change because it is an indicator of a school system transitioning from a homogeneous to a diverse student population. Districts in the central portion of the state showed the greatest decline in the proportion of White students, while the districts in eastern and western Maryland showed the least (see Figure 1 below). For the most part, districts with the largest enrollment growth had declining White student enrollment and increasing minority enrollment (see also, data brief on enrollment).

Figure 1. Average percentage point change in white student enrollment by district, 1990-2010.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Common Core of Data*

As table 1 suggests, the extent to which growth in the minority share of enrollment is attributed to Black, Latino, or Asian student enrollment growth differs across the state. The largest increase in the proportion of Black student enrollment was in two districts—Charles and Baltimore counties while the largest increases of Latino enrollment were in Prince George's, Montgomery, and Frederick counties. Asian student enrollment, on the other hand, increased 10.3% in Howard County.

DATA BRIEF

Table 1. Average Percentage Point Change in the Racial Composition of Schools by District, 1990-2010

District	White	Black	Latino	Asian
Charles	-40.6	29.5	4.3	1.7
Howard	-30.6	6.6	7.2	10.3
Montgomery	-26.9	4.1	16.3	2.3
Baltimore	-26.4	16.5	4.6	2.5
Frederick	-24.3	5.0	10.1	3.5
Prince George's	-22.1	3.6	17.4	-1.2
Anne Arundel	-20.3	5.7	7.9	1.7
Washington	-19.4	7.2	5.3	0.9
Harford	-16.8	6.9	3.8	1.4
Wicomico	-15.8	2.9	5.7	1.7
Cecil	-12.7	3.7	3.9	0.4
Baltimore City	-10.3	5.8	3.6	0.5
Caroline	-9.6	-3.2	7.8	0.2
St. Mary's	-9.6	2.1	3.5	1.4
Dorchester	-8.1	-2.0	4.6	0.6
Carroll	-7.6	1.6	2.9	1.2
Allegany	-5.7	1.6	1.1	0.2
Calvert	-5.7	-3.7	3.6	1.1
Talbot	-4.9	-8.4	8.2	1.1
Kent	-4.3	-4.0	3.7	-0.4
Garrett	-1.4	0.2	0.4	0.3
Queen Anne's	0.7	-7.8	3.3	0.9
Somerset	1.0	-13.2	6.1	0.6
Worcester	2.3	-11.1	4.3	0.8
State Total	-17.4	2.5	9.1	2.2

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Common Core of Data*.

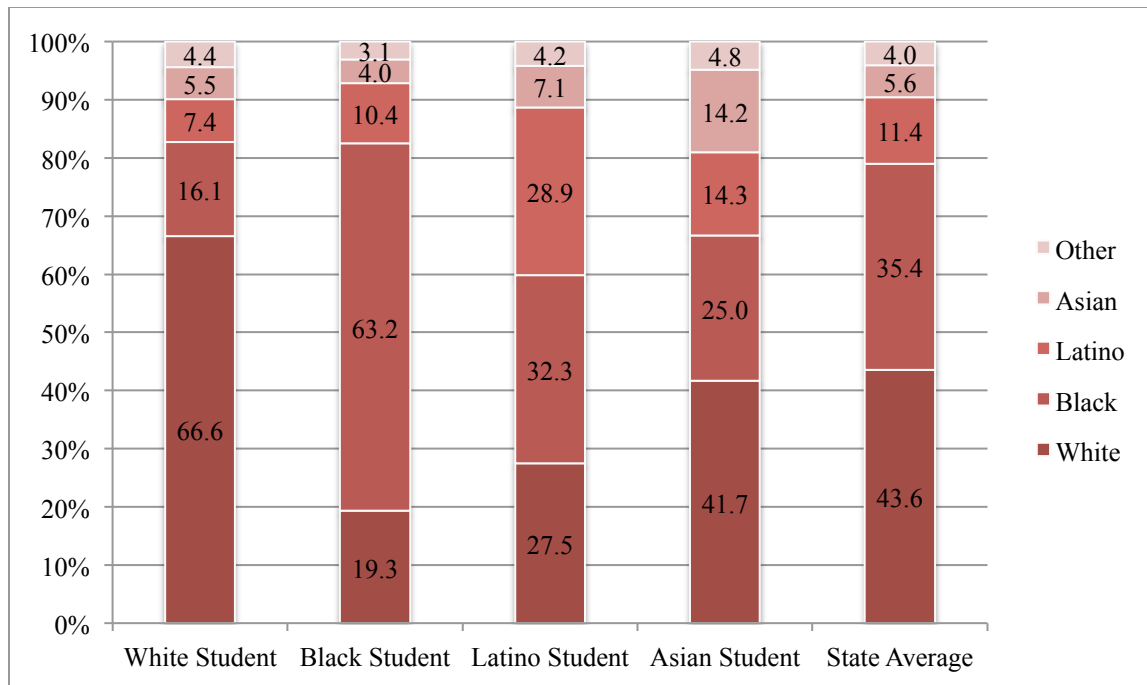
Racial Composition of a School Attended by Typical Student

Similar to the district level, racial composition of students across schools within Maryland changed as school enrollment in Maryland diversified. We used an exposure index to describe the racial composition of schools attended by an average student of a given race.¹ As displayed in Figure 2, the typical White student in Maryland attends a school that is 66.6% White, 16.1% Black, 7.4% Latino, 5.5% Asian, and 4.4% other races. In contrast, a typical Black student in Maryland attends a school that is 19.3% White, 63.2% Black, 10.4% Latino, 4.0% Asian, and 3.1% other races. The last column—state average—indicates what the demographic composition of schools would look like if students were evenly distributed across schools in the state. The typical Asian student attends a school that most closely resembles this expected racial composition of a school.

¹ For more information on the exposure index used to measure racial composition trends in Maryland please visit: <http://www.education.umd.edu/TLPL/centers/MEP/Research/inequities/>

DATA BRIEF

Figure 2. Racial composition of a school attended by typical Maryland public school student, by race, 2010.



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Common Core of Data*.

Policy Implications

Trends at the district and school level show that Maryland schools will continue to become more racially diverse over time. Given the changes in racial composition demonstrated over twenty years at the district level and racial segregation students experience at the school level, Maryland and school districts can be proactive in addressing the growing diversity in student racial composition in the following ways:

- Create student assignment policies and plans that foster diverse schools.
- Use magnet schools to provide opportunities for all students to attend diverse schools.
- Direct resources and school improvement efforts on increasing the capacity of schools and districts to serve diverse students.
- Adopt social, economic, and housing policies that address the challenges facing families.

To read the full report, go to <http://www.mdequity.org/research/inequities>