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School Choice as a Method of Reducing the Achievement Gap: Comparing the Effectiveness of Desegregation Programs and Charter Schools

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Leading education scholars believe that the racial achievement gap is due to unequal access to quality schools and are attempting to solve this problem through increasing school choice. Many studies have examined the effectiveness of individual methods of school choice, yet there is little research comparing different methods of school choice against each other directly. This article compares the effectiveness of two highly contested methods of school choice: desegregation programs and charter schools, by applying school report card data to four case studies. The comparison indicates that while desegregation programs and charter schools both increase student achievement as compared with traditional public schools, desegregation programs do more to positively impact this achievement. The comparison further indicates that desegregation programs are able to reach more students than charter schools and lead to longer-lasting perpetuation effects.

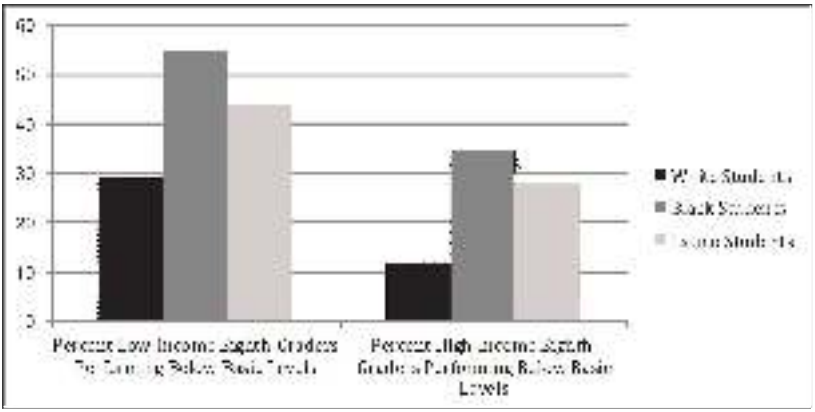
In 1954, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that segregated schools were inherently unequal in *Brown v. Board of Education* (Orfield, Eaton, & the Harvard Project on School Desegregation, 1996), striking down the "separate but equal" doctrine that had previously structured U.S. education. The ruling was "hailed by many Americans as a firm judicial statement of the nation's commitment to racial equality" (Irons, 2004, p. x). Subsequent court rulings in 1968 and 1969 stated that segregated school systems must be dismantled "root and branch" and that new integrated systems be achieved "at once." However it was not until 1971, with the sanctioning of busing in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenberg Board of Education* that the desegregation process sped up considerably (Orfield et al., 1996). Despite this, American schools today still operate largely under a dual school system, one for white students and another for students of color.

In 2012, 80% of Latino students and 74% of black students attended majority nonwhite schools. Forty-three percent of Latino students and 38% of black students attended schools where less than 10% of the student body was white, and 14% of Latinos and 15% of blacks attended schools where less than 1% of the student body was white, also known as "apartheid schools" (Kozol, 2005, p. 19; Orfield, Kucsera, & Siegel-Hawley, 2012). In large cities, the lev-

els of segregation were even higher. Half of the black students in Chicago and 1/3 in New York City attended apartheid schools. And although white students made up just 49% of public school enrollment this past year, the typical white student in 2012 attended a school that was 75% white. These schools are not only segregated by race; they are also segregated by income. The typical black or Latino student attends school with almost double the share of low-income students than does the average white or Asian student (Orfield et al., 2012).

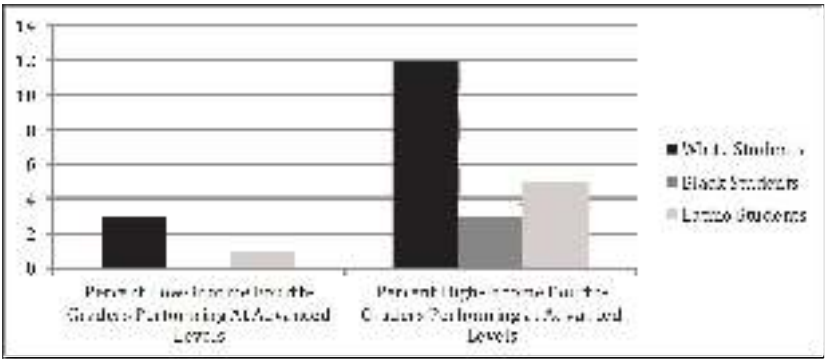
This double segregation by race and income has detrimental effects on low-income and minority student achievement. Segregated high schools account for most of the "dropout factories" in the United States (Orfield et al., 2012), and a public school that enrolls mostly middle and upper-income white students has a one in four chance of earning consistently high test scores while a school with mostly poor students of color has a one in 300 chance (Tough, 2006). In 2011, 9% of white fourth-graders reached advanced levels in math, and 9% performed below the basic proficiency level. Among black students, only 1% reached the advanced level, and 34% performed below the basic level. When income is factored in, the test score gap widens, as can be seen in Figures 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1: 2011 Eighth-Grade Test-Score Gap



Data from Bromberg and Theokas, 2013. Figure constructed by author.

Figure 2: 2011 Fourth-Grade Test-Score Gap



Data from Bromberg and Theokas, 2013. Figure constructed by author.

Taken together, these charts show exceptionally wide gaps between subgroups of students. White students receive the highest test scores and black students receive the lowest at each income bracket. Almost twice as many low-income black students perform at basic levels than do low-income white students, and over double the number of high-income black and Latino students perform below basic levels than do high-income white students. Among students performing at advanced levels, the patterns are similar. More than double the number of white students receive advanced math scores than do black and Latino students for both low-income and high-income student populations (Bromberg & Theokas, 2013).

Because of these discrepancies, recent educational reforms, especially since 2001's *No Child Left Behind Act*, have focused on finding ways to close the achievement gap. Reformers have hypothesized that most of the test-score gap is likely due to inequities surrounding students' access to quality schools. Thus, many recent reforms have centered around equalizing access to quality education, be that through school finance litigation, increasing school and teacher accountability, or different methods of school choice. This paper will focus on two highly contested methods of school choice: desegregation programs and charter schools.

Court-ordered and voluntary desegregation programs were utilized frequently in the 1970s and 80s, but began to be terminated in the 1990s due to court decisions limiting their feasibility, despite the success they had in improving overall student achievement. Reforms involving charter schools are more recent as the first charter school was opened in 1992, but there is significant disagreement about their effectiveness and worth as a reform measure (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). This paper will compare the effectiveness of charter schools and desegregation programs by looking at quantitative data such as test scores and graduation rates, and qualitative data such as life outcomes and views on the experience of students in charter schools and desegregated schools as compared with traditional neighborhood schools. I will focus on the academic achievement of black students, since black students have been

the primary focus of civil rights education. If the goal of education reform aimed at the achievement gap is to positively impact the achievement of black students, without detrimental effects on white students, then the data shows that desegregation programs are the best public policy option.

In order to compare the programs, I will begin with a review of the relevant literature focused on school choice, charter schools, and desegregation programs. Next I will explain the methodology I used to evaluate and compare the education reforms. I will then present an exemplary model of a desegregation program in Jefferson County, Kentucky, and an exemplary model of a charter school network: the Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP). In order to see the effects of these competing theories in a more controlled environment, I will next compare desegregated schools, segregated neighborhood schools, and charter schools in two metropolitan areas that contain all three types of schools: St. Louis, Missouri and Boston, Massachusetts. Finally, I will tie together all of the information from the different case studies to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of each type of program.

Scholarship on School Choice Theories

As the study of education reform has become more prevalent, theories behind different reform efforts have emerged as central points of research and debate. Scholarly literature as relates to the topic of this paper has focused on the idea of school choice as a civil right, theories supporting and critiquing charter schools, and theories supporting and critiquing desegregation. The literature has not, however, compared the effectiveness of these programs against each other, which will be one of the major contributions of this paper.

The initial emergence of schools of choice is strongly tied to the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 60s. Choice was meant to disrupt the status quo, and provide individuals who previously did not have options of where to send their children to school with a variety of better choices. This idea of the choices being *better* than the status quo is central to literature on choice theory, because improvements to the current educational system are necessary to remedy racial inequities in society. Thus, since choice aims to improve educational outcomes for students of color without those options, debates about school choice today are often still framed as debates over civil rights (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). Conservative supporters of schools of choice argue that choice is a right that every individual should have, and they argue for market-based choice arrangements. Liberal supporters of schools of choice frame their argument in terms of equal distribution of resources and access. Each of these narratives is important in discussing school choice as a civil right, and in discussing theories behind specific methods of school choice (Frankenberg & Debray, 2011).

Charter School Theories

Many conservative and politically moderate supporters of school choice have turned to charter schools based on their belief in individual freedom. They argue that well-off white families are able to choose where to send their children to school by choosing where to live. Poor families of color tend to be clustered in urban areas with limited educational options. Thus, charter schools purportedly provide low-income and racial minority families with the same array of options well-off white families already have by circumventing traditional school attendance zones, holding schools to high standards through accountability and competition, making schools accountable to the populations they are serving, and providing options in terms of curriculum (Fryer, 2012).

Charter schools circumvent traditional attendance zones by accepting students from broader geographic areas than most traditional public schools, although district boundaries are often unable to be overridden (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). Supporters of charter schools argue that overriding school attendance boundaries allows schools to serve those students that need the school the most, rather than the students who happen to live closest to it. In this way, charter schools are able to reach students who are not succeeding in their neighborhood school and provide them with a different learning environment. The learning environment is held to high standards, since charter schools theoretically accept greater accountability in exchange for greater freedom (Nathan, 1999). If charter schools do not perform to certain standards, they are closed. Charter school advocates argue, however, that the increased competition that will result from school choice will cause all schools to improve, and will raise performance levels both in charter schools and traditional neighborhood schools in order to draw students.

In addition to being accountable to the school district and the state, charter schools are forced to be accountable to their consumers in the educational marketplace (Lubienski, 2003). Charter schools are not beholden to unions or traditional Boards of Education and are able to break the monopoly of local school districts (Nathan, 1999). Thus, they are able to be more flexible and meet the needs of the community in which they are based quickly and efficiently (Fryer, 2012). Finally, charter schools allow for greater curricular exploration than traditional public schools. Charter schools serve as laboratories for innovation, in which new ideas can be tested out and if successful, implemented in schools across the country (Nathan, 1999). Charters are intended to challenge standardized, uniform practices in order to create innovative and improved schools (Lubienski, 2003).

While some scholars believe charter schools are "one of the most important innovations in the past half century," other scholars take issue with arguments that claim charter schools are a valid method of school choice (Fryer, 2012, p. 2). Opponents of charter schools argue that the comparison between choosing charter schools for poor families of color and choosing schools based on residence for well-off white families is an invalid comparison, because urban neighborhood schools and charter schools do not provide a

real variety of options. It is a minimal choice between all segregated impoverished schools under different systems of management. Further, assumptions of market theory, such as that all potential consumers have equal and accurate information, that there is broad competition and thus a strong incentive for schools to try to improve, and that all consumers have an equal chance to buy, may not hold true for education (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). Not all people receive the same information, as data about successful and less successful schools is not readily accessible. Evidence that charter schools cause student achievement to increase is not conclusive, and thus it is unlikely that the competition will spur all schools to improve. And finally, not all consumers are able to attend every school at equal rates. Jurisdictional boundaries and lack of affordable transportation curtail choice, as does lack of support in many charter schools for students that require special education or English Language Learner (ELL) services (Frankenberg & Lee, 2003).

Critics of the charter movement worry that the charter model is not sustainable. Leading charter networks and charter management organizations (CMOs) receive most of their financial backing from large foundations, such as the Gates, Fisher, Dell, and Walton foundations (Di Carlo, 2011; Education Sector, 2009). This reliance on money outside of the public domain is a barrier to growth, expansion, and replication. Additionally, charter schools have exceptionally high levels of teacher turnover as compared to traditional public schools. Many charters hire young, inexperienced teachers, who end up working long hours and weeks, and leave after a couple years (Di Carlo, 2011). Charter school teachers are 130% more likely to leave the teaching profession than teachers in traditional public schools. Additionally, charter school teachers are 76% more likely to move to another school than traditional public school teachers. This turnover is often voluntary, and charter teachers choose to move on to less strenuous school environments or other professions (Rich, 2013). However, involuntary attrition is also higher in charter schools than in traditional public schools. This turnover often is due to the fact that charter teachers are not unionized and thus have fewer protections and that charter schools close more frequently due to high-stakes accountability (Stuit & Smith, 2010).

Other critics of charter schools believe that charter schools segregate students at higher levels than do neighborhood schools. The proportion of black students in charter schools is 32%, which is double the proportion of black students in traditional public schools (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). These black students tend to be clustered in different charter schools than the other 68% of charter students, as most charter schools are fairly racially homogenous (Frankenberg & Debray, 2011). Not only are charter schools segregated by race, but they are also segregated by academic ability. The lack of accessible information about school options often leads to the most underresourced students being isolated in the worst schools (Cullen, Jacob, & Levitt, 2000). A study of charter schools in Texas showed that although over 60% of parents pick test scores as one of the three most important factors in choosing a charter school, the vast majority transfer their children into schools with worse

performance on state achievement tests than the schools they left (Weiher & Tedin, 2002).

The performance of charter schools in the above study is fairly representative of the performance of charter schools in general. While some charter schools, especially No Excuses charter networks, perform at exceptionally high levels and dramatically raise student achievement, the vast majority of charter schools have test results no better and no worse than traditional public schools (Di Carlo, 2011; Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). In the East-Coast based No Excuses charter network Uncommon Schools, 75% of students outperform the state in reading by the sixth grade, and the Uncommon Schools' class of 2013 outperformed white students nationally in all SAT subject areas (Uncommon Schools, 2013). Similarly, Texas-based YES Prep charter schools consistently score higher than Texas as a whole in reading, math, writing, science and social studies (YES Prep, 2013). However, while some charter schools have managed to close the achievement gap for their students, average national scores for charter school students are the same or lower than scores of students at traditional public schools (Tough, 2006).

The principles of choice, competition, and improvement are prevalent in much of the rhetoric on charter schools, as well as much of the rhetoric of American history. Thus, it is not surprising that charter schools are the most rapidly growing sector of schools of choice today, even though data about the success of charters has been inconclusive (Fryer, 2012). The first charter school was opened in 1992 in St. Paul, Minnesota, and as of the 2011-2012 school year there were 5600 charter schools serving approximately two million students in 40 states and D.C. (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013; Di Carlo, 2011). This accounts for 4% of all students in the United States (Fryer, 2012). The proliferation of these schools is likely due to significant support from politicians. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, charter schools were offered as a remedy to failing schools, and significant amounts of money were offered to states that implemented charter policies (Frankenberg & Debray, 2011). The current administration strongly supports charter schools as well. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan specifically cited leading CMOs in describing plans to improve the nation's schools, and CMOs are eligible for significant amounts of federal money under Race to the Top, a grants program under the Department of Education that gives money to states to pursue innovative educational reforms (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Desegregation Theories

Proponents of desegregation programs argue that the primary goal of school choice is "to overcome through voluntary means the systemic inequality embedded in segregated neighborhood schools" (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). There are three main reasons segregated schools are seen as unequal to integrated schools: segregation is inherently unequal because it causes members of minority groups to feel inferior, diverse student bodies in schools are

necessary to equalize access to resources, and integrated schools are the best means of perpetuating lasting equality.

In its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Supreme Court ruled that segregated schools were inherently unequal because they led to segregated students of color feeling inferior to white students (Brown v. Board of Education, 1954). This decision built on rhetoric the civil rights movement had been espousing for years—that segregation inevitably led to inequality due to psychological factors. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, segregation "gives the segregated a false sense of inferiority and gives the segregator a false sense of superiority" (Orfield & Lee, 2004, p. 5). If one group is conditioned to feel inferior to the other, and one group believes they deserve better than the other, true equality will never be achieved.

Inequities are also found in the distribution of resources in schools. Wealthy white schools have disproportionate access to resources that give those schools significant advantages over segregated racial minority schools. Schools with higher percentages of students of color have fewer library volumes per student, fewer advanced course options, larger class sizes, higher student to teacher ratios, and harsher discipline policies (Condron, Tope, Steidl, & Freeman, 2012; Orfield et al., 2012). Schools that enroll substantial proportions of students of color and low-income students also have greater difficulty attracting and keeping quality teachers, as evidenced by the lower numbers of teachers with credentials, lower scores on teacher exams, lower number of teachers with graduate degrees, and higher rates of teacher turnover (Frankenberg & Debray, 2011). In contrast, majority middle-income schools have more honors and AP courses, strong principals, talented and engaged teachers, high expectations for student performance, adequate facilities, and actively involved parents (Frankenberg & Debray, 2011; Banks, 1995). These disparities are particularly problematic in the era of high-stakes accountability, where all schools are held equally accountable even though as a society we provide "the most experienced teachers, the highest level of classroom competition, and the richest curriculum to the most privileged communities—and the opposite of that to the most segregated and impoverished communities" (Orfield et al., 2012, p. xiv).

Another benefit of desegregation programs is linked to perpetuation theory. Perpetuation theory states that inequalities are reproduced across generations. If someone grows up in a segregated neighborhood, attends segregated schools, and lacks access to resources and capital, not just the individual is affected. Some of these disadvantages are transmitted to the next generation. Similarly, if an individual accumulates advantages over the course of his or her life, those advantages are passed on through generations (Sharkey, 2013). Desegregation programs can lead to perpetuation effects, since students attending integrated schools are more likely to attend desegregated colleges, work in desegregated environments, and live in desegregated neighborhoods later in life. Since these adults will live in integrated neighborhoods, their children will grow up surrounded by a diverse peer group, and the effects of the desegrega-

tion program will be perpetuated across generations (Orfield & Lee, 2004; Orfield et al., 2012; Smrekar & Goldring, 2009).

Opponents of desegregation programs include some suburbanites, some urban families, and some black political leaders. Suburban opponents argue that they made the choice to live in the suburbs because of the schools, and it violates their individual freedoms to force their children to attend schools outside of those suburbs, or to introduce new student populations to the suburban schools. These suburban parents, who are predominantly white, cite concerns about their children's safety, time wasted on buses, and diminished property values as reasons for not wanting to participate in desegregation programs (Green & Cowden, 1992).

Urban parents whose children participate in desegregation programs, who are predominantly parents of color, are some of the strongest supporters of desegregation programs (Eaton, 2001; Wells & Crain, 1997). However, there are some urban parents of color opposed to desegregation programs. These opponents worry that black and Latino students will face discrimination in suburban schools, will always be in the minority, and will be negatively impacted by long bus rides, and city schools that had traditionally been important community centers will be closed (K'Meyer, 2013). Urban families and black political leaders also oppose desegregation plans because they place the burden of busing and school desegregation "largely on the shoulders of those students who had been victims of state-sponsored segregation and educational inequality" (Frankenberg & Debray, 2011). Since black students had been discriminated against in the past in the educational system, some parents think it is unfair that the inconvenience of busing and threat of going into potentially hostile environments be placed on the black students once again. Some black political leaders also oppose desegregation because it dismantles local school boards, which are often centers of black political power in cities. They believe that children would be better served in schools controlled by the black community, since black representatives from the city have little influence on the suburban boards of education (Gadsden, 2010; K'Meyer, 2012).

Desegregation first began as a response to *Brown v. Board of Education*, but then slowed after the ruling in *Milliken v. Bradley* that made interdistrict busing more difficult. Since most residential segregation occurs between districts rather than within districts, interdistrict or metropolitan remedies tend to be necessary in order to achieve real integration (Orfield et al., 2012). Despite the ruling in *Milliken*, some of these programs are still in place today, and currently enroll about 480,000 youth, or 1% of all students (Ryan, 2010). Desegregation programs can be court-ordered or voluntary, and they can involve two-way or one-way busing. Two-way busing programs involve students from impoverished segregated schools being bused to suburban schools for a certain number of years, and students from the well-off suburban schools being bused to city schools for a certain number of years. Through this process, students attend school with a more racially balanced peer group, and there is incentive to improve the disadvantaged city schools because students from the suburbs

with politically and economically powerful parents will demand improvements (Century Foundation, 2002).

One-way busing programs provide students from segregated urban schools with the option of transferring to majority-white suburban schools for the entirety of their schooling. In some one-way busing programs, in order to open up spaces for these students in the suburban schools, magnet schools are created in cities. Magnet schools are often based around themes or specialized curricula. They can use factors such as students' grades and test scores in admission decisions, although they are public schools. Most of these magnet schools have policies that try to guarantee a stable level of integration by both enrolling students from the city and recruiting students from the suburbs (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013).

Desegregation programs have been largely successful in raising racial minority student achievement and closing the achievement gap while having no negative effects on the achievement of white students (Jaynes & Williams, 1989). Scholars have found that as black-white segregation between schools decreases, the black-white achievement gap narrows. In the decades following *Brown*, racial segregation declined steadily, as did the black-white test-score gap. In the early 1990s, the Supreme Court began dismantling desegregation programs, and at the same time, the progress in closing the test-score gap stalled (Condron et al., 2012). This suggests that desegregation programs were having significant positive effects on student achievement at the national level.

Desegregation programs positively affect students at an individual level as well. Black students who attended desegregated schools had higher test scores, were significantly more likely to graduate high school and college, and were more likely to attend desegregated colleges, and work and live in desegregated workplaces and neighborhoods later in life than their peers who attended segregated schools. Additionally, black students who attended desegregated schools for at least five years earned 25% more in their future jobs than their peers who attended segregated schools (Orfield & Lee, 2004; Orfield et al., 2012). All students who graduated from integrated high schools, regardless of race, were more prepared to work with people of different backgrounds, had increased levels of racial tolerance and interracial friendships, had more highly developed critical thinking skills, were less likely to hold stereotypes, and were more likely to live in diverse neighborhoods as adults (Orfield & Lee, 2004; Smrekar & Goldring, 2009).

Methodology

While the literature has discussed theories behind school choice as well as the historical performance of charter schools and desegregation programs, scholars have not compared these two methods of school reform against each other, since they have rarely occurred in the same time frame or in the same cities. In the remainder of this paper I will compare desegregation programs and charter schools using two distinct methods of analysis in order to achieve the most valid comparison possible. Initially, I will provide data on

one exemplary desegregation program in Jefferson County, Kentucky, and one exemplary charter network, KIPP. By looking at the best examples of each type of school choice, it is possible to compare the programs when they are implemented to their fullest potential. I will draw conclusions about the effectiveness of each of these programs from school report card data.

My second method of analysis involves a comparison of school desegregation and charter schools within the same metropolitan areas in order to control for the effects of different locations. I will compare the test scores of black students in desegregated suburban schools, charter schools, and segregated urban schools in metropolitan St. Louis and metropolitan Boston by using school report card data and independent scholarly reports on student achievement. Comparing the two types of school choice within the same cities acts as a control, and shows which program is most effective when they are implemented side by side. This duality of methods is an important contribution of this paper, since it shows what both approaches to school choice can achieve when they are implemented at their best, and what they can achieve when they are aimed at the same population of students, in the same city, held to the same standards, and measured by the same tests. In the end, I will tie all of the information from the four case studies together in order to draw conclusions about which method of school choice is the most effective in raising black student achievement.

Case Study: Desegregation in Jefferson County, Kentucky

In 1973, the case *Newberg Area Council v. Louisville Board of Education* resulted in a court-ordered merger of the Louisville Public School District with the County district (K'Meyer, 2013). Before 1973, the county had 96,000 students, 4% of whom were black, and the city of Louisville had 45,000 students, 50% of whom were black (Sedler, 1975). After the merger, the newly combined Jefferson County Public School District was 80% white and 20% black, and the settled-upon desegregation plan required each elementary school to have a black student population between 12 and 40%, and each secondary school to have a black student population between 12.5 and 35% in order to achieve racial balance. This reassignment was accomplished through two-way busing based on student race and the first letter of students' last names. Black students were bused for 10 years and white students for two years, since there were more available classrooms in the county than in Louisville (Smrekar & Goldring, 2009).

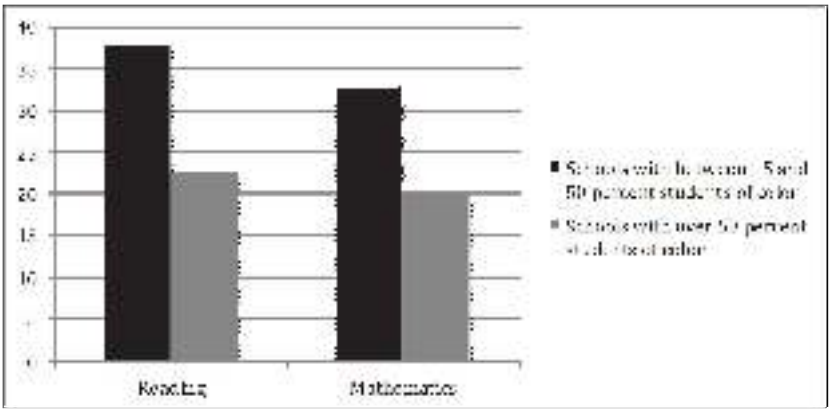
When the plan was first implemented there was widespread protesting and violent riots. However, after a few weeks the riots ceased, and the desegregation plan was smoothly implemented (Smrekar & Goldring, 2009). The schools within the city improved due to demands from suburban parents, who had more political and economic power than most of the urban parents. Because of the desegregation plan, the city schools gained an expanded curriculum, new equipment, improved resources, and city teachers received a pay raise (K'Meyer, 2012). At the same time, throughout the 1970s and 1980s,

students of color in integrated schools had higher academic achievement, their tests scores improved, and Jefferson County became one of the most successfully desegregated districts in the country (Kurlaender & Yun, 2001; Smrekar & Goldring, 2009).

In 1984 the plan was altered so that students could attend the same schools for both middle and high school and the racial balance requirements were changed slightly to represent the range from 10% below to 10% above the countywide averages for each grade level. The plan was redesigned more significantly in 1991 with Project Renaissance (Smrekar & Goldring, 2009). This plan arranged elementary schools into clusters and assigned students to clusters based on both proximity and diversity. Parents could choose among the schools in the cluster to which they were assigned or apply to magnet schools, but schools had to maintain student bodies that were between 15 and 50% black (K'Meyer, 2012). The court-ordered desegregation was dissolved in 2000, but the Jefferson County School Board chose to continue the program voluntarily. Students continued to be assigned to attendance zones, and schools maintained 15 to 50% black enrollment until the 2007 Supreme Court decision in *Meredith v. Jefferson County Board of Education* that concluded that using race as a primary factor in determining school attendance was unconstitutional (Liu, 2007; K'Meyer, 2012).

In light of the Supreme Court decision, Jefferson County implemented a new school assignment plan that assigned students to one of two groups, A and B. The groups were defined by income level and parental educational attainment as well as race (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013). The district's goal was to keep a balance in the schools similar to what they had under the desegregation program, but segregation quickly increased after the implementation of the new plan due to difficulties of achieving racial balance with a socio-economic based strategy (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2011). This resegregation allows for a comparison between the schools that still enroll the goal number of students of color and the schools that do not. This permits assessment of the effectiveness of Jefferson County's desegregated schools and the resegregated schools within the same time period, to control for any changing in test scores over time. Figure 3 below shows this comparison.

Figure 3: Percent Black High School Students Proficient in 2011



Data from Jefferson County Public Schools, 2012; Kentucky School Report Card, 2014. Figure constructed by author.

As can be seen in Figure 3 above, black students in schools that still meet the goal enrollment for students of color achieve at significantly higher levels than black students in schools that do not meet the goal enrollment of between 15 and 50%. The schools meeting the goal enrollment had 15.2% more students reaching proficiency levels in reading and 12.8% more reaching proficiency levels in math than did the more segregated schools. This discrepancy shows the impressive results of school desegregation on black student achievement, and demonstrates that these programs have positive effects. Given these results, it is distressing that there has been a high level of resegregation in Jefferson County since 2007's Supreme Court decision. Already by 2011, eight of the 21 high schools in Jefferson County had above 50% enrollment of students of color. Since these schools are not serving black students as well as are the desegregated schools, it is clear that the desegregation program in Jefferson County is something that should have been preserved and strengthened.

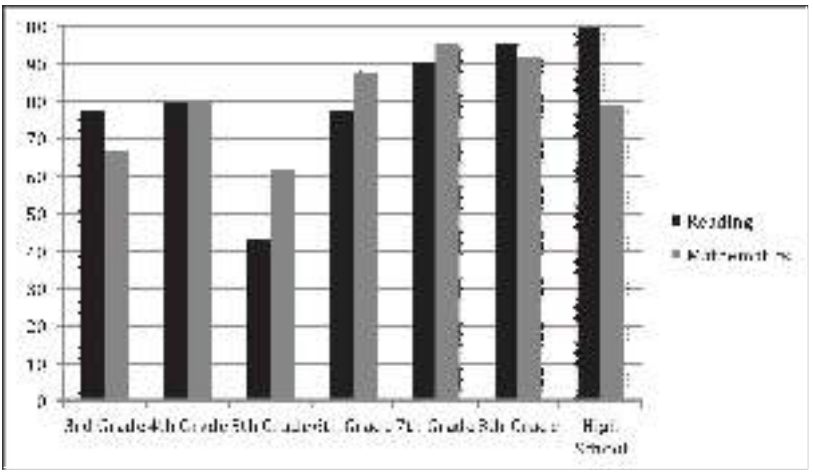
Case Study: KIPP Charter Schools

One of the most prominent examples of a charter school network is the Knowledge is Power Program, or KIPP. The first two KIPP schools were founded in 1994 by Mike Feinberg and Dave Levin (KIPP Foundation, 2014a). KIPP follows the "No Excuses" charter model. Features of this model include an extended school day and year, college visits, support after graduation, high expectations, and a school culture of support, discipline, and achievement (Education Sector, 2009). Currently 141 KIPP schools across the country serve 50,000 students in 20 states and D.C (KIPP Foundation, 2014a). KIPP is based on five main pillars: high expectations, choice and commitment, more time, power to lead, and focus on results (Tuttle, The, Nichols-Barrer, Gill &

Gleason, 2010). Administrators have high expectations for teachers, teachers have high expectations for students, and students are expected to have high expectations for themselves. Commitment is required from students and parents, more school time is mandatory with extended school days and Saturday school, school leaders have the power to make and implement school-level decisions quickly without interference from school boards or teachers' unions, and there is a strong focus on measurable outcomes such as test scores.

KIPP schools' student bodies tend to have higher concentrations of poverty and students of color, but lower concentrations of ELL and special education students than the public schools from which they draw. Ninety-six percent of KIPP students are black or Latino, and 83% receive free or reduced price lunch. However, only 9%, as compared with 13% in the districts from which they draw, receive special education services, and only 10% as compared with 15% are classified as ELL students (Henig, 2008). However, besides the lower proportion of ELL and special education students, KIPP schools seem to be serving those most in need of their services. The typical KIPP student scored in the 45th percentile within their district prior to entering KIPP—lower than the average in their own elementary schools (Tuttle et al., 2013). This indicates that there is no systematic student selection bias. What is selective, however, is student attrition. Students leave KIPP schools at higher levels than traditional public schools, and those who leave tend to be performing at lower levels than those who stay (Henig, 2008). Among the students who do stay, significant test score gains are achieved, as can be seen below in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Percent of KIPP Classes Outperforming Their Local Districts



Data from KIPP Foundation, 2014b. Figure compiled by author.

As can be seen in Figure 4, a majority of KIPP classes outperform their local districts in every subject in every year except for fifth grade math. The highest

reading scores are in seventh grade, eighth grade, and high school, when 91, 96, and 100% of students outperformed their local districts respectively. The highest math scores took place in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade, when 88, 96, and 92% of students outperformed their local districts. KIPP students also go on to graduate from high school, start college, and graduate from four-year colleges at higher rates than the average students from a low-income community (KIPP Foundation, 2014b). These results show that students that enroll in and graduate from KIPP schools see impressive results and have better academic outcomes than do their public school counterparts. However, since KIPP schools that are not performing at these high levels are often closed and thus are not included in the data, and lower-performing students within KIPP schools are often the ones that leave the system, these results must be taken with some reservations.

Case Study: St Louis, Missouri

After the 1954 *Brown* decision, de jure segregation ended in St. Louis, but de facto segregation continued. Even by 1974, of the ten high schools in the Saint Louis Public School district, three were 100% black, two were 90% black, and three were 90% white. Furthermore, 82% of the students that were bused from their neighborhood schools due to overcrowding were black (Heaney & Uchitelle, 2004). Because of the lack of desegregation that occurred after *Brown*, and the continued racial discrimination that played into school zoning and assignment policies, a group of black parents sued the St. Louis Public School District Board of Education in 1972. The NAACP and the U.S. Justice Department later joined the suit as plaintiffs, as did the state of Missouri and the city of St. Louis as defendants. In 1980 the Eighth Circuit Court ruled that the defendants were liable for failing to eliminate segregation, and in 1983 the Federal Court approved a three-pronged settlement agreement (Wells & Crain, 1997).

The first aspect of the plan was a city-to-county transfer option for black students in the city to attend school in one of the 16 suburban districts where black students made up less than 25% of the student body. Each suburban school was required to accept transfer students until the schools' total black enrollment was between 15 and 25%. The second aspect of the plan was a magnet program for the Saint Louis Public Schools. The magnets were intended to offer St. Louis public school students an alternative educational option, and to draw in students from the suburbs in order to open up space in suburban schools for city transfer students. Twenty-four racially balanced magnet schools were opened in St. Louis after the settlement. The third aspect of the plan was a commitment to a quality education and improvement of the traditional neighborhood schools in St. Louis. The school district renovated facilities, reduced class sizes, hired additional nurses, counselors, and social workers, and provided funds for the founding of "schools of emphasis" programs, where each public school could be centered around a certain theme. The court placed the cost burden for these reforms on those found most responsible for

the continued segregation: the St. Louis Board of Education and the state of Missouri (Heaney & Uchitelle, 2004; Wells & Crain, 1997).

The plan was implemented fairly successfully. The only suburban form of opposition to the desegregation plan was absenteeism, but students largely had all returned to school by the end of the first week. The plan continued to be implemented with little opposition until 1993, when St. Louis elected their first black mayor, Freeman Bosely, Jr., who believed the time for busing had passed, and blacks needed to focus on improving schools in their own community. He resented the notion that black students needed to be bused to predominantly white schools in order to learn, and did not want the schools that had long been important centers of the black urban community to be closed. Some black and some white community members agreed with his reservations, but civil rights groups quickly rose up in opposition to his suggestion of ending the desegregation program and it remained intact (Wells & Crain, 1997). The civil rights groups argued that the purpose of desegregation programs is not simply to place black students next to white students in classrooms; rather the purpose is to give students of color access to the resources linked to predominantly white schools that consistently give the students that attend desegregated schools serious educational advantages over students in segregated city schools (Orfield et al., 2012).

In 1999, the settlement was revisited, and federal supervision of the program ended. However, the program was continued voluntarily and run by a newly created nonprofit: The Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC). The Board of Directors of VICC is comprised of the superintendents of participating school districts, and each board member's vote is weighted by the number of transfer students his or her district serves. Every year VICC sends out information about the program to every student in the city of St. Louis. Students can be denied admittance to a suburban school based on a poor discipline record, but not based on previous academic achievement. Certain areas of the city are matched with certain suburbs to decrease transportation times and costs, and the majority of VICC's funding comes from the state of Missouri with no additional cost to taxpayers (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013; Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC), 2013). VICC recruits students, places them in suburban schools, counsels students and parents, and organizes workshops and curriculum training for receiving districts. Every time a black student transfers from a city school to a suburban school, the suburban district receives an incentive payment from the state, but the St. Louis public schools continue to receive one-half of the state aid for the student who left, to help increase educational quality in the city schools (Wells & Crain, 1997).

The 1999 settlement that ended judicial oversight of the desegregation program also allowed for the opening of charter schools in St. Louis, and the first charter school opened in St. Louis in 2000 (Heaney & Uchitelle, 2004). Charter schools are only open to Missouri students living in St. Louis or Kansas City, and some of these charter schools give attendance priorities to students living in the neighborhood in which the school is based. If more students

are interested in attending a charter school than there are spaces available, a lottery is used to determine who is admitted; charter schools may not use student academic performance in enrollment decisions.

In Missouri, the only eligible sponsors for a charter school are the district school board, the state school board, a four-year public university located in or adjacent to St. Louis City with an accredited teacher education program, a community college within the St. Louis Public School District, or a private four-year college located in St. Louis City with an approved teacher education program. The approved sponsor must also receive authorization from the State Board of Education in order to open a charter school. Once sponsored, charter schools should be operated by a nonprofit organization and can receive financial support from a variety of state and Federal resources, as well as from private foundations (City of St. Louis, 2011).

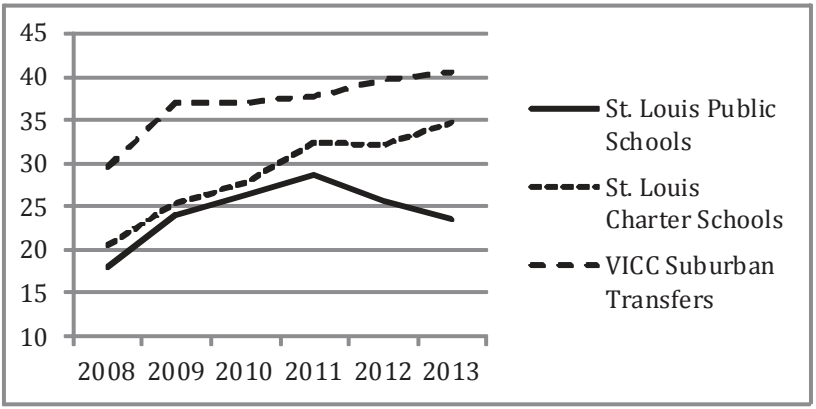
Charters are politically supported in St. Louis through the Missouri Charter Public School Association (MCPSA), which was formed in 2005 by member schools and charter school supporters. Their mission is to "improve student achievement by increasing access to high quality charter public education options throughout Missouri" (MCPSA, 2014). Charter schools are also highly supported by the current mayor of St. Louis, Francis G. Slay (2001-present). The mayor is not currently authorized to sponsor charter schools himself, or authorize charter sponsors, but Slay helps connect aspiring schools with potential sponsors, assists with technical issues related to charter start-up and operation, and helps sponsors gain authorization from the Missouri Board of Education (City of St. Louis, 2011).

In the 2007-2008 school year, VICC enrolled 7555 students, down from its peak of 14000 students in the 1999-2000 school year (VICC, 2013). This number represents 12.5% of the school-aged population in St. Louis. Charter schools enrolled 7692 students, representing 12.7% of the school-aged population (National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), 2009). The desegregation program is currently only authorized to continue through the 2018-2019 school year, and whether it will be extended past then is yet to be determined (VICC, 2013). With the political support charter schools receive from the Mayor and city of St. Louis, it seems likely they will continue to expand. Since these programs currently enroll fairly equivalent numbers of students, and one plan is likely to continue to decrease in size while the other is likely to grow in size, it is important to compare the effects of both school choice policies on student achievement.

In order to compare the effects, I compared the percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency levels on the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) in St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis Charter Schools, and VICC. Since test scores are not reported specifically for transfer students, the average score for all black students in each currently participating suburban district was used. This should still be representative of VICC student performance because in all of the districts except Kirkwood and Webster Grove (which were excluded), the vast majority of black students are transfer students (VICC, 2010).

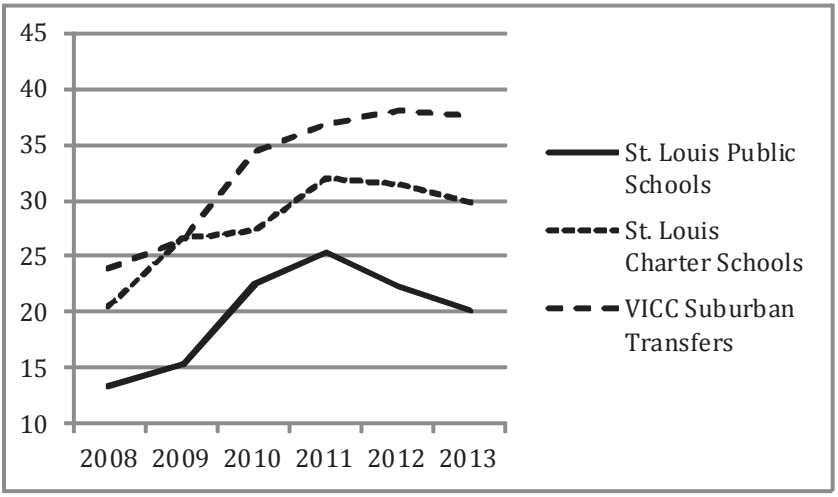
Figures 5 and 6 below show the percentage of black students proficient in Communication Arts and Mathematics by school type from 2008-2013.

Figure 5: Percent Communication Arts Scores At or Above Proficient



Data from Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MDESE), 2014. Figure compiled by author.

Figure 6: Percent Mathematics Scores At or Above Proficient



Data from MDESE, 2014. Figure compiled by author.

As can be seen in Figure 5, black students enrolled in VICC outscored their peers enrolled in charter schools every year by 6 to 11%, and black students enrolled in charter schools outscored their peers in the St. Louis City Public Schools every year in Communication Arts. In Math, black charter students outscored city public school students every year, and black VICC stu-

dents outscored their peers in charter schools by 6 to 7% each year except for 2009, when charter students outscored VICC students by 0.29%. These results clearly show that both reform efforts in St. Louis are making progress, but enrolling students in VICC has increased positive effects over enrolling students in charter schools. This difference makes sense when you look at overall student performance as well. Figures 7 and 8 show the breakdown of scores for each suburban district and each charter school for all students.

Figure 7: Percent Suburban Students At or Above Proficient

Suburban District	Communication Arts	Mathematics
Affton	65.53	61.24
Bayless	45.79	46.2
Brentwood	74.19	82.1
Clayton	75.52	77.43
Hancock Place	50.12	52.69
Mehlville	62.15	56.37
Parkway	72.91	67.95
Rockwood	74.02	70.72
Valley Park	58.24	59.84
State Average	55.67	53.88

Data from MCPSA, 2014; MDESE, 2014; Moskop, 2013. Figure constructed by author.

Figure 8: Percent Charter Students At or Above Proficient

Charter School/Schools	Communication Arts	Mathematics
Better Learning Commu-	7.1	21.4
Carondelet Leadership	31.4	44
City Garden Montessori	71.2	50.7
Confluence Academies	43.7	28.8
Construction Careers	16.2	20
Gateway Science Acade-	57.8	55.1
Grand Center Arts Acad-	52	40.3
Jamaa Learning Center	25.8	31.8
KIPP Inspire Academy	40.6	50.8
Lift for Life Academy	19	26.6
North Side Community	52	54
Preclarus Mastery Acad-	32.3	31.5
South City Preparatory	26.05	38.25
State Average	55.67	53.88

Data from MCPSA, 2014; MDESE, 2014; Moskop, 2013. Figure constructed by author.

As can be seen in the tables above, the lowest scoring suburban district had 45.79% students proficient in Math and 46.2% students proficient in Communication Arts, while the lowest scoring charter school in Communication Arts had 7.1% students proficient, and the lowest scoring charter school in Math had 20% students proficient. On the other hand, the highest suburban scores were 75.52 and 82.1 for Communication Arts and Math, respectively, while the highest charter scores for the same subjects were 71.2 and 55.1. At the same time, only two of the suburban districts have percentages of proficient students lower than the state averages, while all but three of the charter schools perform at levels below the state average.

These benefits of attending desegregated suburban schools continue long after graduation as well. Long-term follow-up with VICC students shows that students who attended desegregated schools were more likely to have

higher educational aspirations, learn about scholarship programs and internships, go on to college, and secure high status jobs than their peers in city schools, where fewer than 20% of students go on to college. Students who attended integrated schools also had more interracial friendships, more professional and academic connections, and increased access to networks (Wells, Crain, & Uchitelle, 1994; Wells & Crain, 1997).

Case Study: Boston, Massachusetts

When most people think about school desegregation in Boston, they think about the rioting and violence that erupted in 1974 when court-ordered busing was implemented. This struggle began in the early 1960s, when the NAACP demanded a solution to the de facto segregation in Boston's schools. Black families were highly concentrated into certain neighborhoods within the city. These neighborhoods were segregated by class as well as race and the schools in the predominantly black neighborhoods were inferior to the schools in predominantly white neighborhoods. Judge Wendell Arthur Garrity, Jr. finally decided the case in June of 1974 and demanded that Boston integrate its school system immediately, leading to the boycotts and racial violence that did not die out until the 1980s (Formisano, 1991).

However, at the same time as this violence was erupting over court-ordered busing in Boston, voluntary integration was occurring peacefully in the Boston metropolitan area. During the NAACP's push for desegregation, a group of Boston parents banded together to look for other solutions to the inferior education black students received in the city. Two mothers, Ellen Jackson and Betty Johnson, organized parents to bus their children from their present, segregated overcrowded schools to underused, predominantly white schools. This group, Operation Exodus, transferred 85 students in 1965. Operation Exodus raised money for buses and carpools from donations, bake sales, and spaghetti suppers, and the program was largely successful despite opposition from some white Boston politicians (Formisano, 1991; Eaton & Chirichigno, 2011).

Operation Exodus laid the groundwork for the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO), a group of black parents who worked with suburban districts to transfer limited numbers of black students out of city schools and into better-resourced and higher-performing suburban schools (Formisano, 1991; Eaton & Chirichigno, 2011). In METCO's first year, 1966, a grant from the Carnegie Foundation covered the costs of the program, and 220 black students traveled to seven suburban communities for school. Since then, the program has been supported and funded by the state of Massachusetts because it helps the state comply with the state 1965 Racial Imbalance Act (RIA). The RIA requires all school districts within Massachusetts to address issues of segregation at any school with more than 50% students of color. Many schools within the city of Boston had over 50% black students at the time METCO was founded, thus the desegregation program fulfilled the district and state's obligation to address the issue of segregation.

The support METCO receives from the district and state for complying with the RIA is likely one of the reasons why there has not been large-scale opposition to the program. Another reason the program is supported is likely because it is still relatively limited. Although METCO is the longest running voluntary school desegregation program in the country, in 2001 it only enrolled 3300 students in 37 suburban communities. Since METCO does not significantly change the racial compositions of the suburban schools to which it sends students, it is easily palatable to suburban residents. While the limit in scope is often cited as a weakness of METCO, the strong support for METCO from the suburbs is cited as one of its biggest strengths. White parents, educators, and METCO parents affirm the importance of the program for both the transfer students and for the suburban students who are otherwise isolated from the increasingly diverse country in which they live (Eaton, 2001; Eaton & Chirichigno, 2011).

Information about METCO travels by word of mouth, and the most well-connected and informed parents often place their children on the METCO waitlist as babies. The 2001 waitlist had nearly 13000 students on it, almost four times the number of students actually enrolled in the program. This discrepancy is due to the number of student transfers the suburban districts are willing to enroll. Once students are accepted off of the waitlist into METCO, the central office in Boston handles policy, placement and transportation decisions. In the suburbs, school directors, counselors, and tutors are placed in each school to work with METCO students, their parents, and school administrators. For additional support, METCO students are assigned suburban host families to act as guides to the community and help provide transportation when needed (Eaton, 2001).

In 1993, while METCO continued to grow, the Education Reform Act (ERA) passed in Massachusetts. This Act affirmed Massachusetts' commitment to the Common Core standards, increased health programs in schools, created school councils in every district, developed a new system of student assessment and accountability, and enhanced professional development and standards. The ERA also authorized the opening of two types of charter schools: commonwealth charter schools are independent of local school districts, while Horace Mann charters must be approved by the local school district and often employ unionized teachers (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MDESE), 1995). Today in Massachusetts, the Office of Charter Schools and School Redesign oversees charter schools once they receive their charters from Massachusetts' Board of Education. Charter schools that pass through the application process receive a five-year charter, and must show good results within that time in order to maintain their charter (MDESE, 2014). The Massachusetts Charter Public School Association (MCPSA) represents 98% of the state's charter schools. MCPSA was founded in 2001 and advocates for charter schools in government and communities, provides technical assistance to charter schools, and documents and shares the success of charter school models and practices (MCPSA).

As of 2013, 3183 students transfer from Boston schools to suburban schools through the METCO program. The demographics of the students participating in the program compared with the greater population of Boston are shown below in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Demographics of METCO and Boston students

	Percent Black	Percent Latino	Percent White	Percent Asian	Percent Multiracial
METCO Students	73	18.6		2.8	5.3
Boston Students	35	40	14	9	

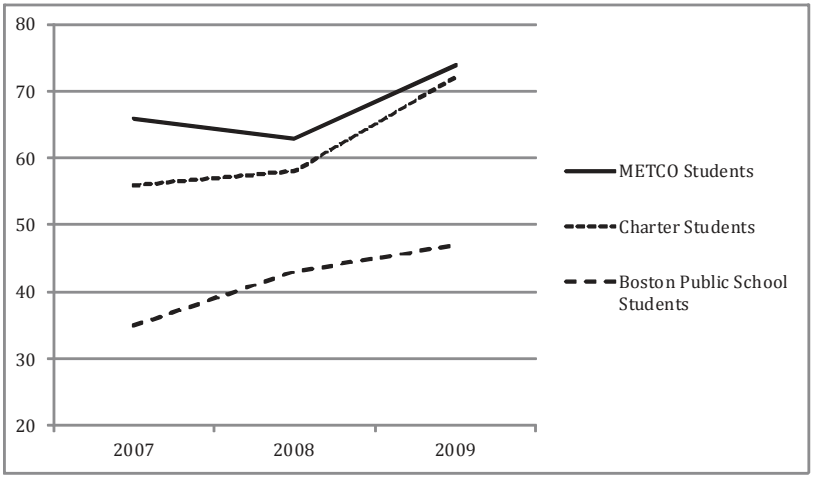
Data from MDESE, 2013. Figure constructed by author.

As can be seen above, the demographics of students that participate in METCO are not representative of the demographics of Boston as a whole, since black students are overrepresented among METCO suburban transfer students. Since nearly 25% of the suburban receiving districts are greater than 90% white, and only five are less than 70% white, black METCO participants experience their education in schools with significantly different racial compositions than their peers in the Boston Public Schools, where the average black student attends a school that is only 11% white (Lee, 2004; MDESE, 2013).

Approximately 6000 Boston students attend charter schools (Boston Municipal Research Bureau, 2011). The enrollment in charter schools is about 54% white and 46% students of color, but the average white student attends a charter school that is 80% white, the average black student attends a charter school that is 22% white, and the average Latino student attends a charter school that is 26% white (Lee, 2004). Since charter schools currently enroll almost double the number of students that participate in METCO, and both programs are pushing to expand, it is important to compare the two programs and see if they have similar effects on student achievement.

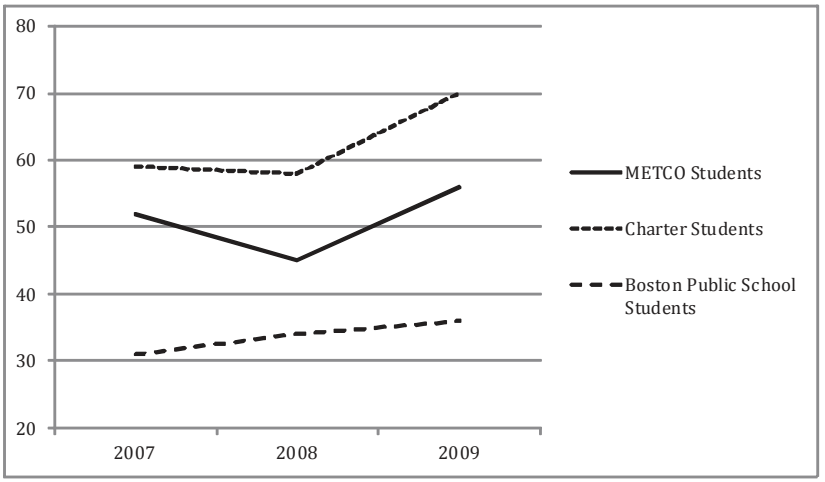
In order to study the effects of each method of school choice, I compared the average of the sixth and tenth grade Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores of METCO students, black students enrolled in charter schools, and black students in Boston Public Schools, since black students make up 75% of METCO's enrollment (Eaton & Chirichigno, 2011, p. 8). Figures 10 and 11 below show the percent of students proficient or above proficient in English/Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics by school type from 2007 to 2009.

Figure 10: Percent English/Language Arts Scores At or Above Proficient



Data from Eaton & Chirichigno, 2011; MCPSA; MDESE, 2011. Figure constructed by author.

Figure 11: Percent Mathematics Scores At or Above Proficient



Data from Eaton & Chirichigno, 2011; MCPSA; MDESE, 2011. Figure constructed by author.

As can be seen in the figures above, METCO students outscored black students enrolled in charter schools in ELA by 2 to 10% every year, but charter students outscored METCO students in mathematics every year by seven to

14%. In both cases, METCO and charter students significantly outscored students enrolled in Boston's traditional public schools. These results indicate that school choice as a method of improving black student achievement is successful in Boston, but they do not decisively show which method of school choice is more effective, since each method seems more equipped to teach different subjects. In order to determine which method is more effective, Figure 12 below shows high school graduation rates and college-going rates for students at the three school types.

Figure 12: Long-term Academic Outcomes

	2007 Graduation Rate	2008 Graduation Rate	2009 Graduation Rate	2010 College Attendance Rate
METCO	92	95	93	90
Black Charter Students	66	66	74	83
Black Boston Public School Students	54	60	61	64

Data from Eaton & Chirichigno, 2011; MDESE, 2011. Figure constructed by author.

On average, from 2007-2010 92.5% of METCO students, 72.25% of black charter students, and 59.75% of black BPS students graduated from high school. Students that attend suburban schools through METCO graduated at significantly higher rates than their peers enrolled in charter schools, who graduated at higher rates than their peers in Boston Public Schools. Additionally, 7% more METCO students go on to enroll in postsecondary educational institutions than do charter students, while both groups enroll at much higher levels than their peers in traditional public schools. Qualitative studies have also found that participation in METCO has lasting benefits over enrolling in other educational options. Students that participated in METCO said that the reputation of the schools they attended as well as the facilitation of connections to academic and professional networks helped them both in their college and career goals. The students that attended METCO felt more comfortable in predominantly white settings, including colleges and workplaces, learned how to navigate a world often dominated by whites, and gained a feeling of entitlement they felt they had previously lacked (Eaton, 2001).

Analysis and Discussion of Comparison

Looking at the three comparisons shown in this paper, it is clear that while both school desegregation programs and charter schools raise black stu-

dent achievement, school desegregation programs are a more effective reform measure than charter schools. In the first comparison of the two highly successful reform efforts, desegregation in Jefferson County and the KIPP network nationally, both programs achieved excellent results in terms of increasing student achievement as measured by test scores. Desegregated schools in Jefferson County had 15.2% more black students reaching proficiency in reading and 12.8% more reaching proficiency in math than the schools that were still highly segregated (Jefferson County Public Schools, 2012; Kentucky School Report Card, 2014). KIPP schools nationally outperform their local districts in every grade in math, and every grade except for fifth grade in reading (KIPP Foundation 2014b). Since both of these results are impressive, it is necessary to look at how many students each of these programs affect in positive ways in order to determine which is most effective at raising student achievement levels.

KIPP schools serve predominantly low-income students of color who are achieving at lower levels than the average student in their districts. However, once students enter KIPP schools, attrition is high and selective. In certain KIPP schools, up to 60% of students leave before reaching the highest grade at the school they attend, and the departing students are often the lowest achieving (Henig, 2008, p. 13). Not only does this attrition make it likely that KIPP's impressive gains over traditional public schools would be smaller if these students' test scores were taken into account, but it shows that KIPP does not serve all of its students equally. Further, KIPP schools not meeting the charter network's standards are closed. This high level of accountability is generally cited as a benefit of charter schools, but in reality, school closures negatively impact student achievement. The schools that are closed are often the schools that are not performing at high levels, and thus not best serving their students. Additionally, studies have found that once a school announces it is closing, student performance in math and reading drops significantly (de la Torre & Gwynne, 2009; Henig, 2008).

Alternatively, Jefferson County's desegregation program involves the majority of students in the district. When the program was being implemented at its peak, it involved every student in the district since every student was attending an integrated school. However, today, 13 of the 21 high schools in Jefferson County are still desegregated, and a majority of students are receiving an integrated education (Jefferson County Public Schools, 2012). This method of school desegregation is appreciably more effective at reaching large numbers of students than is the charter school method, since charter schools serve a small proportion of students in their districts, while two-way desegregation programs reach the majority, if not all, of the students in their districts. If school desegregation programs and charter school programs are both able to increase black student performance, but desegregation programs are able to reach a broader subset of that population, then desegregation programs are more effective at raising student achievement.

In the St. Louis comparison, black students enrolled in VICC outscored their peers enrolled in charter schools every year in Communication

Arts and every year except one in Math (MDESE 2014). This comparison shows that within one city where both education reforms have been implemented, desegregation is more effective in decreasing the achievement gap than charter schools are. In the Boston comparison, the difference between the METCO program and charter schools was less pronounced, with METCO students scoring higher in reading and charter students scoring higher in math. However, between 2007 and 2009, an average of 25% more METCO seniors graduated from high school than did charter seniors, and 7% more METCO graduates in 2010 went on to enroll in postsecondary educational institutions than did charter graduates (MDESE, 2011).

From looking at the three comparisons offered in this paper, it is clear that desegregation programs are the most effective method of school choice when it comes to raising black student achievement and narrowing the test-score gap. This is reflective of what has been found in the larger body of literature on school choice as well. Studies of other cases of school desegregation, such as in Wilmington, Delaware and Hartford, Connecticut, have found significant gains in participating students' achievement (Stave, 1995). Studies of charter schools on the other hand, have found that with a few notable exceptions, including KIPP, the vast majority of charter schools perform no better and no worse than traditional public schools (Di Carlo, 2011).

The fact that desegregation programs lead to greater student achievement than do charter schools could be predicted from the theories behind both methods of school choice. The aim of desegregation programs is to offer a better education to anyone who participates in the program. Students of color participating in desegregation programs see improvements in test scores and educational outcomes while white students gain comfort in interracial settings and enhanced critical thinking skills. Charter schools, on the other hand, rely on market theory, and markets inherently produce winners as well as losers. Some charter schools perform at high levels and thrive, but others do not, and trapping students in "losing" schools should not be an inherent aspect of any school reform effort (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013).

Conclusion

In Thurgood Marshall's dissenting opinion in *Milliken* he laid out the reasons why he thought the Supreme Court had made the wrong decision in limiting busing, thus making desegregation plans nearly impossible to implement successfully. He wrote:

> Desegregation is not and was never expected to be an easy task. Racial attitudes ingrained in our Nation's childhood and adolescence are not quickly thrown aside in its middle years. But just as the inconvenience of some cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the rights of others, so public opposition, no matter how strident, cannot be permitted to divert this Court from the enforcement of the constitutional principles in this case…In the short run, it may seem to be the easiest course to allow our greatest metropolitan areas to be divided up each

> into two cities—one white, the other black—but it is a course, I predict, our people will ultimately regret (*Milliken v. Bradley,* 1974).

The results of most education reform efforts since the ruling in *Milliken* have not been as successful at increasing black student achievement as was desegregation. Thus, Marshall's prediction that the decision would lead to a regrettable course of action is supported. Some desegregation programs have managed to be implemented despite the ruling in *Milliken*, but movements towards expanding and strengthening desegregation programs largely ended after 1974. Instead, other types of school choice, including charter schools, have become more prominent. However, charter schools do nothing to stop metropolitan areas from being divided along racial lines. Rather, charter schools allow education reformers to go into poor communities of color and use them as a laboratory to test charter school ideas that are often no better than the schools that already exist in the community (Orfield & Frankenberg, 2013).

In the end, most charter schools have not been shown to significantly raise student achievement, and desegregation programs have. Charter schools have also shown no sign of positive perpetuation effects; they simply perpetuate existing racial hierarchies and systems of de facto segregation (Lewis, 2003). Desegregation programs, on the other hand, do lead to perpetuating integration in the future, as graduates of desegregated schools are more likely to attend desegregated colleges, work in desegregated environments, and live in desegregated neighborhoods, thus passing the benefits of desegregation on to the next generation (Smrekar & Goldring, 2009).

The findings in this paper show that school choice is often an effective tool for raising the achievement of black students. However, within the realm of school choice, desegregation programs increase student achievement more than charter schools, and are more likely to perpetuate long-term benefits. These findings are important for educational policy because they show what paths are most effective when school districts are looking to improve student performance. School districts and states should review cases such as *Newberg Area Council v. Louisville Board of Education* and *Buchanan v. Evans* to see how to enact school desegregation programs despite the ruling in *Milliken*, and should look to Jefferson County and Boston to see how to implement voluntary programs despite the ruling in *Parents Involved.* The Federal government should offer school districts and cities incentives to implement desegregation programs, as opposed to raising caps on charter schools.

Finally, desegregated school districts should ensure integration is happening inside of each individual school. Students are often resegregated within schools through tracked courses, self-segregation, and biased implementation of discipline policies. This resegregation limits the positive effects of desegregation programs on all students within the school and creates an unwelcoming school environment for students of color. In order for desegregation programs to lead to true integration within the schools, administrators should ensure that course assignments and discipline implementation are free of bias, the teaching and administrative staff reflects the diversity of the student body, and the cur-

riculum is multicultural and reflects the experiences and knowledge of all students.

One limitation of this paper is the difficulty of controlling for all variables in a study involving individual students. Since it is impossible to control every factor that may influence a student's performance in school, a completely randomized study is not attainable, and thus causation cannot be fully proven. Another limitation is the use of test scores as a measure of student achievement. Due to racial and cultural biases, standardized tests are often not an accurate measure of student success, although they are one of the few measures (along with graduation and college attendance rates) that can be measured across schools and districts.

It would be important for future research on the effect of school choice on student achievement to look at the effect of different school choice methods on all racial minorities, rather than just black students. I chose to focus on black students in this paper because I was looking at school choice through a civil rights lens, and raising black student achievement is the historical focus of civil rights oriented school choice. However, as other racial minority populations in the United States continue to grow, it is important to ensure that all student groups are being served equitably by the educational system. It would also be important for future research to directly compare the effectiveness of one-way busing programs with two-way busing or district wide school assignment plans, since there is such variance between different types of desegregation programs. In order to see what type of desegregation program is the most effective in eliminating the achievement gap, comparing the programs directly against each other would be necessary. Finally, research should be conducted comparing the effectiveness of busing programs with residential integration programs, in order to try to find the most sustainable method of promoting integration in both neighborhoods and schools for the future.

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