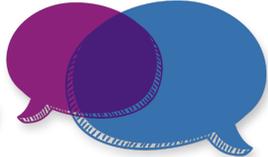


RAISING A BRAVE GENERATION



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Want to support school integration? Here's how.

by Courtney Everts Mykytyn y Mindy Wilson of *Integrated Schools*

By many measures, our public schools are just as racially segregated today as they were during the Civil Rights Movement. More than six decades after the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that separate schools are inherently unequal, segregation remains a huge challenge.

The need to “fix policy” to create sustainable and meaningful integration is real. The research is clear that racially diverse classrooms benefit all kids. But even without policy change, there are things that we can do as parents to support a more just, humane, and better integrated educational system and society for all children and families.

#1

Research and Reflect.

Educate yourself about how segregation plays out in your district – and neighboring districts as well. Read the research and reporting on segregation. Envision the world you are creating for your child’s adulthood. Consider how your choices help shape your own community.

Brief No. 5

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Research Brief

School Integration and K-12 Outcomes: An Updated Quick Synthesis of the Social Science Evidence

By Roslyn Arlin Mickelson¹

Some sixty years after the 1954 *Brown* decision declared separate schooling inherently unequal, America's student population is much larger and more demographically diverse. For many decades court mandated desegregation² plans were implemented, but today public schools are again largely segregated by race, ethnicity, and family socioeconomic status

influences short- and long-term outcomes. And segregation is harmful for all students.³

To be sure, teachers, curricula, and pedagogy are essential components of the opportunities to learn we give our students. But they are not the only important ones. The social organization of schools and classrooms also influences the quality of students' education.



#2

Speak Up, Speak Out.

Talk to your friends. Publicly question the “good/bad” school narrative that promotes segregation (we see you, realtor-site-school-ratings folks). Parents choose schools in large part based on what other parents in their networks are saying. Be a voice here. Tell your school board members and district officials that you value integration and that you vote. Then tell them again. Ask what they do about it. Make all this public on your social media. Ask them which schools their kids attend. Vote.

#3

Set Foot.

Before you write off that school – the one with low test scores, the one you’ve heard is “bad,” the one that serves mostly global-majority kids – go see for yourself. Just. Take. A. Look. You might be surprised. You will see a building filled with kids - boisterous and messy and beautiful kids.

#4

Step In.

Enroll your kids in an integrated or integrating school. Send them to a school that mostly serves kids who come from a different racial, socioeconomic and/or linguistic background than yours. And yes, you can even be ‘the only one’ white/privileged family! This isn’t possible everywhere. But if you have the pleasure of living in a diverse area or have the ability to drive your kid past the privilege-segregated neighborhood school to the under-enrolled Title 1 school on the other side of the highway, exercise it.



#5

Step Up (Not On).

If you enroll your kid in an integrated or integrating school, be thoughtful about your impact even when your intentions are good. Your child, your presence and your privilege aren’t magical. Your child is there to attend school; you are not there to “fix” a “broken” school. If you’re the itchin’ to pitch-in, cut-construction-paper-autumn-leaves type, put yourself in service to the community – it was there before you. Listen, be humble.

