

Racial Segregation Fuels Early Black-White Achievement Gap, Data Suggest

October 1 2009

Racial segregation of schools, and thereby segregated neighborhoods, appears to be a leading source of academic achievement disparities between young black and white children, according to research by sociologist Dennis J. Condrón of Emory University.

Analyzing data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K), Condrón examines the perplexing role of schools in narrowing the [achievement gap](#) among students of varying social classes while widening the gap between black and white students. He finds that between the fall and spring of first grade, black students' reading and [math skills](#) fall almost two months behind those of white students.

The data suggest that school factors—especially racial segregation—primarily fuel this early black-white learning disparity, which stands in contrast to the primary role of non-school circumstances (e.g., family, health, social resources) in fueling achievement gaps by social class.

The research also indicates that regardless of social class, black students are less often taught by certified teachers than are white students, and [black students](#) are far more likely than [white students](#) to attend predominantly minority schools, high-poverty schools and schools located in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Condrón suggests that "real solutions to the black-white achievement gap

lie far beyond schools and require changes to society more broadly," such as reducing residential segregation and income and wealth inequality between blacks and whites. He also highlights the need for more studies with both fall and spring data, which would help researchers better understand when and how achievement gaps emerge.

More information: "Social Class, [School](#) and Non-School Environments, and Black/White Inequalities in Children's Learning," by Dennis J. Condrón, Emory University, in the *American Sociological Review*, October 2009

Provided by American Sociological Association ([news](#) : [web](#))

Citation: Racial Segregation Fuels Early Black-White Achievement Gap, Data Suggest (2009, October 1) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-10-racial-segregation-fuels-early-black-white.html>

| |
|--|
| <p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p> |
|--|