



## REVIEW OF *OUR IMMENSE ACHIEVEMENT GAP*

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### Summary of Review

This report misrepresents and then criticizes recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Education, a think tank and two independent study groups, each of which recently encouraged particular voluntary efforts to reduce concentrated poverty and achieve racial and socioeconomic integration in schools and housing in Minnesota. In building its case against the recommendations of these bodies, this report sets up and attacks two straw men—“busing” and “lawsuits”—neither of which was recommended by the organizations. The author relies heavily on selected research literature to make the report’s arguments but ignores dozens of the most important peer-reviewed research studies that suggest strong relationships between racial, ethnic, and economic diversity and desegregation and academic gains. It also relies heavily on anecdotes about desegregation policies and funding-equalization efforts in several states. While endorsing accountability-based reforms of the sort implemented in Florida, it fails to fully explore what is actually known about the results of such policies. Investigations into the programs in Florida strongly suggest that claims of success about the state’s accountability measures and teacher-accreditation practices are often unsubstantiated or exaggerated. In attacking the wrong targets, the report distracts rather than focuses the attention of policymakers seeking to close the achievement gap.

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# REVIEW OF *OUR IMMENSE ACHIEVEMENT GAP*

*Susan Eaton, Harvard Law School*

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## I. Introduction

Since the 1980s, states and school districts have generally moved away from conscious efforts to desegregate public education. Concomitant with this trend, federal policy required state and local district officials to adopt “accountability-based” measures that use high-stakes testing and include sanctions for “low-performing” schools, teachers, or both. Though targeted interventions for children from families with low incomes have been in place in public schools since the 1960s, the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act led state and local educators to intensify efforts to narrow the “achievement gap” between white students and African American or Latino students. The majority of such efforts leave conditions of concentrated poverty and racial segregation intact while focusing instead on improving the performance of African-American and Latino students while those students are still typically attending high-poverty schools. Minnesota diverges modestly from this national pattern. In part because of a 1999 court settlement, Minnesota educators focus efforts on assisting low-performing students in high-poverty schools while also implementing measures designed to reduce socioeconomic isolation and concentrated poverty in public schools.

Recently, the Minnesota Department of Education, the Institute on Race and Poverty at the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota School Integration Council, and the Education Equity Organizing Collaborative expressed support for integration measures, recommended a continuation of pro-diversity measures, and suggested an expansion of voluntary measures to achieve diversity and combat racial segregation and concentrated poverty. For example, in a May 2011 report to the state legislature,<sup>1</sup> the Minnesota Department of Education asked elected officials to consider a series of questions as they make decisions about school funding. One suggested question is: “Does the state have a compelling interest to integrate schools?” In a 2009 report,<sup>2</sup> the University of Minnesota-based Institute on Race and Poverty (IRP), a think tank, recommends the use of funds already appropriated for integration to open diverse magnet schools near job centers. The IRP report also urges greater enforcement of existing fair housing rules to promote racial integration in suburban communities. In June 2011, the Organizing Apprenticeship Project released a policy brief<sup>3</sup> that, among several other recommendations, suggests that existing revenue used to encourage integration be “realigned” to focus on “boosting” educational attainment within diverse schools.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the Minnesota Integration Council’s 2011 report, *Every Child, Every Day*, offers 19 recommendations.<sup>5</sup> Most significantly, the group

suggests that state officials develop clear goals so that educators can know when “equity” or “integration” has been achieved. The group also recommends that districts submit plans for achieving “equity” and integration to the Minnesota Department of Education.

*Our Immense Achievement Gap*<sup>6</sup> attempts to discredit these and other recommendations offered by the four groups.

## II. Findings and Conclusions of the Report

This report begins by laying out the contours of the “racial and ethnic academic achievement gap” and states that Minnesota registers one of the largest such gaps in the nation (p. 9). It names the “cause “of this gap as “socioeconomic or family risk factors,” including “poor parental nurturance behavior” (p. vii). It declares “racially balanced schools” a failure at boosting test scores among “minority” students (p. vii). The report concludes that desegregation has “resoundingly failed . . . across the nation” (p. 5). The report charges that education-adequacy lawsuits that have won more money for school districts in New Jersey, New York and elsewhere have been ineffective and wasteful (p. viii). The report concludes that if Minnesota were to act on recent recommendations from the four groups, 1) “minority” students would be “harmed” (p. 46), and 2) such actions would lay the foundation for litigation, which would incur “staggering” costs (p. 89). Such lawsuits, the report suggests, would be secretly supported by state officials in “collusion” with the very study groups and think tanks that recently offered the recommendations (p. 94).

In its final section, the report recommends adoption of policies such as those implemented in Florida under then-Governor Jeb Bush, including grading schools, basing school funding on student performance, and allowing people to become teachers more quickly through alternative routes to certification (p. 125).

## III. The Report’s Rationale for Its Findings and Conclusions

The report’s rationale rests on faulty foundations.

First, the report distorts the recommendations offered by the four Minnesota organizations in order to make them more assailable. The report’s mischaracterization of the views of the Institute on Race and Poverty (IRP) at the University of Minnesota is illustrative. IRP recommends the use of monetary *incentives* to *voluntarily* increase racial integration and reduce segregation in housing and schools. The report, however, declares, without a citation, that IRP’s voluntary plan would fail and “inevitably” require “mandatory school assignment” (p. 83) and describes the IRP proposal with hot-button rhetoric such as “race-based movement of students” (p. 73).

Similarly, IRP recommends a more proactive use of existing federal fair housing policy to promote integration in suburbs. For example, it suggests that the state better ensure that the dominant federal low-income housing programs—the low-income housing tax credit

(LIHTC) and HUD Section 8 programs—operate according to provisions of the Federal Fair Housing Act. Yet, *Our Immense Achievement Gap* declares that IRP’s plan requires “massive housing relocation” (p. 75).

Second, the report adopts the false assumption that supporters of desegregation view it as a panacea for improving the test scores of African-American and Latino children from low-income families. (pp. vi, 2). The report fails to take into account other important variables contributing to test scores, such as demographic changes, differences among school or neighborhood sites, family factors, district-level conditions such as

### *Our Immense Achievement Gap relies heavily on research literature, yet mischaracterizes many research findings.*

funding levels or leadership continuity, and the form or effectiveness of implementation. It also seems to assume that unless desegregation cures all inequalities in educational outcomes, it should be judged a failure. More accurately, integration advocates have long understood integration and the breaking up of areas of concentrated poverty as important pre-conditions for fostering constructive educational practices, attracting high-quality teachers, and providing a smoothly functioning educational environment.

The report uses similar logic to argue against educational adequacy lawsuits, arguing that since achievement gaps often persist even after funding increases, then the practice of providing more money to challenged or property-poor school districts is ineffective.

Third, to make its arguments, the report distorts or omits important research studies (as illustrated below) and ignores the vast body of research on desegregation, while adopting the form, but not the substance and rigor, of a comprehensive research review.

Fourth, *Our Immense Achievement Gap* gives a distorted picture of desegregation efforts in particular communities. For example, the report mischaracterizes the magnet-school-based voluntary desegregation program in Hartford, Connecticut, as a “busing scheme” (p. viii). Without citing any evidence, the report declares that the Hartford programs have not led to “achievement gains” (p. 114). However, a 2009 peer-reviewed study concludes that, on average, the racially diverse magnet high schools in Hartford have “positive effects on both math and reading achievement, interdistrict magnet middle schools have positive effects on reading achievement,” and that the schools are also associated with students having positive “multicultural attitudes and inclinations.”<sup>7</sup> *Our Immense Achievement Gap* fails to mention this directly relevant and well-known study from a prominent peer-reviewed journal. In any case, it is unclear which students *Our Achievement Gap* refers to when stating that there have been no “achievement gains.” It would, for example, be nonsensical to think that scores would rise in the city of Hartford as a whole, since the voluntary desegregation programs reach only a small portion of students in the metropolitan region and come in a variety of forms, including magnet schools and a voluntary choice program. In another example, the report introduces Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, as an example of a district that instituted a failed

desegregation plan. The report charges that there was “no net” narrowing of the achievement gap between 1978 and 1998 (p. 18), while omitting that Charlotte-Mecklenburg’s desegregation plan ended in 1992.<sup>8</sup>

## IV. The Report’s Use of Research Literature

*Our Immense Achievement Gap* relies heavily on research literature, yet mischaracterizes many research findings. It also relies disproportionately on older studies. Most egregiously, the report cherry-picks studies favorable to its interpretation, while omitting a vast body of peer-reviewed research and widely known research reviews.

### Distortion

The report relies primarily upon two sources in claiming the “failure” of desegregation. One of these is a 1995 research review by Janet Schofield.<sup>9</sup> *Our Immense Achievement Gap* states that Schofield’s review shows that “busing for racial balance” is not an effective way to raise “minority” achievement (p. 14). This is not an accurate representation of Schofield’s review, which states, in part, “research suggests that desegregation has had some positive effect on the reading skills of African American youngsters.”<sup>10</sup> The report also fails to acknowledge a caveat offered by Schofield in her conclusion. Noting the varied ways that desegregation has played out across the nation, Schofield states

(T)he preceding discussion of research...should not be read as an assessment of the potential of carefully structured desegregation to effect positive change. . . Seeing racially and ethnically heterogeneous schools as having the potential to improve students outcomes . . . should enhance the likelihood of improving present outcomes.<sup>11</sup>

The report also relies upon a distortion of a 1984 review of the relationship between school desegregation and achievement. This review, conducted on behalf of the National Institute of Education (NIE)<sup>12</sup> comes to three principal conclusions: First, there is no evidence of academic decline for African American students who experience desegregation. Second, it found no evidence of math gains for African American students in desegregated schools. Third, it found evidence that reading gains for African American students were associated with desegregation.<sup>13</sup> Another key finding of the 1984 review was that more research was necessary before any final conclusions about the relationship between academic achievement and desegregation could be responsibly drawn. *Our Immense Achievement Gap* falsely states that both the NIE report and Schofield’s review concluded that “busing” was “not an effective way to improve minority achievement” (p. 14). Nothing approaching such absolutist language exists anywhere in either the Schofield or the NIE review. In fact, the lead author of the NIE report repeatedly and clearly states the limitations of the review. He writes: “Most of the 19 studies were dissertations or local efforts by the staff of a school district. This may explain why the sample sizes are so small, the documentation of desegregation activities so meager, and the measurement plan so sparse.”<sup>14</sup>

*Our Immense Achievement Gap* relies heavily on older studies or reviews, including those just discussed, which do not take advantage of the more rigorous statistical methods employed since the 1980s and the even more rigorous methods used after 2000.<sup>15</sup> Data considered in such studies came from nationally representative samples or statewide populations and assess desegregation over the long term, well after implementation and often with longitudinal data. In such studies, advanced statistics disentangle the effects of racial composition from the effects of the socioeconomic status of a school.<sup>16</sup> Professor Roslyn Mickelson, a respected desegregation expert, spoke about the higher quality of newer studies during testimony before the Minnesota Education Task Force on Integrated Schools. The author of *Our Immense Achievement Gap* is a member of the task force and was present during this testimony.<sup>17</sup> As discussed in the following section, the weight of evidence from more recent, methodologically sound studies suggests a strong relationship between racially and ethnically heterogeneous schools and academic achievement.

## Omission

Research findings about any policy or practice typically vary for several reasons too complex to explore here. This has certainly been true of studies about the effects of “desegregation.” Desegregation-related policy plays out differently across the nation, depending upon location, district size, whether a plan was mandatory or voluntary, and whether the plan covered a single school district or a metropolitan area. Therefore, drawing conclusions about the worth of such policies requires consideration not just of a narrow selection, but of all available sound research. In 2007, the National Academy of Education conducted just such a review.<sup>18</sup> It concluded:

The research evidence supports the conclusion that the overall academic and social effects of increased racial diversity are likely to be positive. Racial diversity does not guarantee such positive outcomes, but it provides the necessary conditions under which other educational policies can facilitate improved academic achievement, improved intergroup relations, and positive long-term outcomes.<sup>19</sup>

The report fails to mention several widely cited studies published in 2010 by the peer-reviewed journal *Teacher’s College Record*.<sup>20</sup> The preponderance of evidence from these studies shows that racially isolated, high-poverty schools tend to negatively influence math and science achievement as measured by test scores. Meanwhile, under certain conditions, according to the *Teacher’s College Record* research, lower-poverty schools tend to be positively associated with reading, math, and science achievement after controlling for student racial and class background.

*Our Immense Achievement Gap* details one amicus brief submitted to the Supreme Court in the 2007 case, *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No.1*.<sup>21</sup> This brief by Abigail Thernstrom, Stephan Thernstrom, and David J. Armor opposes “race-conscious” measures. The report ignores the fact that many more briefs were submitted urging the Court to allow districts to use race as one factor in making school assignments.

A total of 553 social scientists signed one such brief.<sup>22</sup> The American Educational Research Association<sup>23</sup> and the American Psychological Association,<sup>24</sup> historically neutral

*This report provides no basis upon which to base its “findings” or “conclusions.”*

organizations, also submitted briefs in favor of racially and economically diverse schools. In its 2007 review of amicus briefs submitted to the Court in this case, the National Academy of Education also noted that desegregation opponents tended to rely upon older, less statistically sophisticated studies.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, in suggesting that Minnesota officials adopt educational reforms implemented in Florida, the report omits findings from thorough investigations that seriously question the effectiveness of those measures in Florida. Reviews find that the claims about the success of the Florida reforms have been exaggerated by proponents and are unsubstantiated by data.<sup>26</sup> *Our Immense Achievement Gap*'s principal source of information about the Florida reforms is a report from the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank. A review of this report by the National Education Policy Center found that that the “report’s key conclusions are unwarranted and insufficiently supported by research.”<sup>27</sup> *Our Immense Achievement Gap* sharply criticizes “advocacy” research released by progressive organizations for their omission of studies not in accordance with those organizations’ arguments (p. 25). The criticism, on its face, seems fair. However, the report undermines its point by doing exactly what it chastises others for doing.

## V. Review of the Report’s Methods

*Our Immense Achievement Gap* does not contain a methods section. The methods employed in this study appear to arise from pre-determined conclusions. The next step appears to have been the collection of anecdotes and literature selected to support these conclusions. *Our Immense Achievement Gap* is not “research” in the conventional sense. It is a lengthy polemic constructed much the way one side of a legal case might be.

The major problem with the methodology is the lack of connection between the problems and the proposed solutions. While rightly acknowledging and dramatizing the size of the achievement gap, the report wrongly leaps to the conclusion that the organizations promoting integration and pro-diversity voluntary measures are calling for forced busing and are legally imperiling the state. The report attacks these latter issues rather than the actions actually proposed.

## VI. Review of Validity of the Findings and Conclusions

This report provides no basis upon which to base its “findings” or “conclusions.” Absent a careful and even-handed review of the causes of the achievement gap, the effects of



desegregation nationally, or of the reforms in Florida, the findings are not grounded in social science research. There is no absence of legitimate research findings on these topics— they were simply not used in this report. Generally, the body of research findings on these issues runs in the opposite direction from the Center’s findings. Since the author has not provided a compelling body of evidence to the contrary, the report’s findings cannot be considered valid.

## VII. Usefulness of the Report for Guidance of Policy and Practice

This report is not a thorough review of the knowledge about outcomes associated with racial, ethnic or socioeconomic integration. Some of the charged expressions this report employs—i.e., “busing schemes” (p. viii), “race-based busing” (p. 14)—have long histories in our national racial lexicon. Using such terms to characterize proposals designed to create or improve or expand *voluntary* desegregation has the potential to play on racial fears. In contrast, a bipartisan commission appointed by the Minnesota State Department of Education voted overwhelmingly in February 2012 to recommend that educators use a mix of measures, including incentives for voluntary desegregation, to narrow the racial achievement gap.<sup>28</sup> The fact-finding process preceding this vote brought forth both supporters and detractors of integration. Such balanced and civil discourse among people with differing views is the foundation for democratic policymaking. Unfortunately, this report offers no sound guidance in or contribution to that important endeavor.

## Notes and References

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1 Minnesota Department of Education. (2011). *Funding education for the future*.

2 Orfield, M. & Luce, T. (2009). *A comprehensive strategy to integrate twin cities schools and neighborhoods*. Minneapolis: Institute on Race and Poverty. Retrieved March 9, 2012, from [http://www.irpumn.org/uls/resources/projects/3\\_Regional\\_Integration\\_-\\_Schools\\_and\\_Housing.pdf](http://www.irpumn.org/uls/resources/projects/3_Regional_Integration_-_Schools_and_Housing.pdf).

3 Toney, J. & Rodgers H. (2011). *16 solutions that deliver equity and excellence in education*, 9. Minneapolis, MN: Organizing Apprenticeship Project. Retrieved March 5, 2012, from [http://www.centrocampesino.net/sites/centrocampesino.net/files/16\\_Solutions\\_OAP.pdf](http://www.centrocampesino.net/sites/centrocampesino.net/files/16_Solutions_OAP.pdf).

4 Toney, J & Rodgers H. (2011). *16 solutions that deliver equity and excellence in education*, 10. Minneapolis, MN: Organizing Apprenticeship Project. Retrieved March 5, 2012, from [http://www.centrocampesino.net/sites/centrocampesino.net/files/16\\_Solutions\\_OAP.pdf](http://www.centrocampesino.net/sites/centrocampesino.net/files/16_Solutions_OAP.pdf).

5 Minnesota School Integration Council. (2011) Every child, every day: Educational equity through integration. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota School Integration Council. Retrieved March 4, 2012, from [http://www.emid6067.net/Task%20Force%20Report%20and%20Recommendations\\_final.pdf](http://www.emid6067.net/Task%20Force%20Report%20and%20Recommendations_final.pdf)

6 Kersten, K. (2012). *Our Immense Achievement Gap: Embracing proven remedies while avoiding a race-based recipe for disaster*. Minneapolis, MN: Center of the American Experiment. Retrieved March 10, 2012, from [http://www.amexp.org/sites/default/files/article\\_pdf/Our%20Immense%20Achievement%20oGap%20WEB.pdf](http://www.amexp.org/sites/default/files/article_pdf/Our%20Immense%20Achievement%20oGap%20WEB.pdf).

\*When this review was first published, the organization was incorrectly identified as the “Center for the American Experiment.”

7 Bifulco, R., Cobb, C., & Bell, C. (2009). Can interdistrict choice boost student achievement? The case of Connecticut’s interdistrict magnet school program. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 31(4), 323-345.

8 See, for example:

Smith, S.S & Mickelson, R.A. (2000). All that glitters is not gold: Reform in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 22 (2) 101-127.

Doyle, D.P. & Pimentel, S. (1993). A study in change: Transforming the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 74, 534-539.

9 Schofield, J.W. (1995). Review of research on school desegregation’s impact on elementary and secondary school students. In J. A. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (597-617). New York: MacMillan.

10 Schofield, J.W. (1995). Review of research on school desegregation’s impact on elementary and secondary school students. In J. A. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (610). New York: MacMillan.

Schofield, J.W. (1995). Review of research on school desegregation’s impact on elementary and secondary school students. In J. A. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (p. 611). New York: MacMillan.

12 Cook, T.D. (1984). What have Black children gained academically from school integration?: Examination of the meta-analytic evidence. In T. Cook, D. Armor, R. Crain, N. Miller, W. Stephan, H. Walberg, & P. Wortman (Eds.), *School desegregation and Black achievement* (pp. 6-42). Washington, DC: National Institute of Education.

13 Cook, T.D. (1984). What have Black children gained academically from school integration?: Examination of the meta-analytic evidence. In T. Cook, D. Armor, R. Crain, N. Miller, W. Stephan, H. Walberg, & P. Wortman (Eds.), *School desegregation and Black achievement* (p. 41). Washington, DC: National Institute of Education.

The text reads: “Desegregation did not cause any decrease in black achievement. On the average, desegregation did not cause an increase in achievement in mathematics. Desegregation increased mean reading levels.”

14 Cook, T.D. (1984). What have Black children gained academically from school integration?: Examination of the meta-analytic evidence. In T. Cook, D. Armor, R. Crain, N. Miller, W. Stephan, H. Walberg, & P. Wortman (Eds.), *School desegregation and Black achievement* (p. 36). Washington, DC: National Institute of Education.

15 Mickelson, R.A. (2008). Twenty-first century social science research on school diversity and educational outcomes. *Ohio State Law Journal*, 69: 1173-1228.

16 Mickelson, R.A. (2008). Twenty-first century social science research on school diversity and educational outcomes. *Ohio State Law Journal*, 69: 1173-1228.

17 Mickelson, R.A. (2011, Dec. 20). What social science research from the last 20 years says about the effects of integrated education on achievement outcomes. Remarks to the Minnesota Education Commission Task Force on Integrated Schools.

Professor Mickelson offers a database containing detailed abstracts of the 500 studies on which she bases this testimony. The database is available at <http://sociology.uncc.edu/people/rmickelson/spivackFrameset.html>.

18 National Academy of Education, (2007). *Race-Conscious policies for assigning students to schools: social science research and the Supreme Court cases*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Education. Retrieved March 10, 2012, from [http://www.naeducation.org/Meredith\\_Report.pdf](http://www.naeducation.org/Meredith_Report.pdf).

19 National Academy of Education, (2007). *Race-Conscious policies for assigning students to schools: social science research and the Supreme Court cases*, 45. Washington, DC: National Academy of Education. Retrieved March 10, 2012, from [http://www.naeducation.org/Meredith\\_Report.pdf](http://www.naeducation.org/Meredith_Report.pdf).

20 For example:

Hogrebe, M. & Tate IV, W.F. (2010). School composition and context factors that moderate and predict 10th-grade science proficiency. *Teachers College Record*, 112 (1), 1096;

Berends, M & Penaloza R.V. (2010). Increasing racial isolation and test score gaps in mathematics: a 30-year perspective. *Teachers College Record*, 112 (1), 978;

Perry, L.B. & McConney, A. (2010). Does the SES of the school matter? an examination of socioeconomic status and student achievement using PISA 2003, *Teachers College Record*, (112 (1), 1137.

The 2010 studies from *Teachers College Record* are summarized and synthesized in briefs published by the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School. They are available at: <http://www.charleshamiltonhouston.org/Publications/Item.aspx?id=100027>.

21 *Parents Involved in Community Schools vs. Seattle School District No. 1* 551 U.S. 701 (2007).

22 Brief of 553 social scientists as Amici Curiae in support of respondents. *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No.1*. 551 U.S. 701 (2007).

23 Brief of the American Educational Research Association as Amicus Curiae in support of respondents. *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No.1* (2007).

24 Brief for Amici Curiae. The American Psychological Association and the Washington State Psychological Association in support of respondents. *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*. 551 U.S. 701 (2007).

25 National Academy of Education, (2007). *Race-Conscious policies for assigning students to schools: social science research and the Supreme Court cases*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Education, 14-15. Retrieved March 10, 2012, from [http://www.naeducation.org/Meredith\\_Report.pdf](http://www.naeducation.org/Meredith_Report.pdf).

The report states:

The more recent studies also face the challenge of isolating the impacts of racial concentrations on achievement and separating these from other kinds of factors, such as school quality. To address such issues, these studies take advantage of states' detailed, longitudinal, student-level databases (recently created in part to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act), controlling for such factors as student characteristics and different levels of possible effects (e.g., classroom- and school-level effects). (The early studies seldom had available student-level data that would allow the researchers to trace the performance of individual students over time; rather, they had to rely upon "snapshots" of aggregate cohort data. Further, they seldom included any way to convincingly separate other factors—such as school quality or details of peer composition—from the changed level of segregation found in the schools.

26 Mathis, W. (2011). *Review of Florida formula for student achievement: Lessons for the nation*. Boulder, Co: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved March 10, 2012, from <http://nepc.colorado.edu/thinktank/review-florida-formula>;

Chatterji, M. (2010). Review of closing the racial achievement gap. Boulder, Co: National Education Policy Center. Retrieved March 8, 2012, from <http://nepc.colorado.edu/thinktank/learning-from-florida>.

Also, the 2007 book *Education Reform in Florida* examined evidence on the Florida policies, showing, among other things, that poverty concentration is strongly associated with student achievement outcomes in the state. See

Borman, K. & Dorn, S. (2007). *Education Reform in Florida*. Albany: SUNY Press.

Also, Arizona State University's Education Policy Studies Laboratory evaluated early results of the Florida policies and released a series of policy studies in 2004. None are mentioned in *Our Immense Achievement Gap*. See, for example:

Smith, M.L. (2004, April). *Retaining students in grade: consequences for Florida*. Arizona State University. Education Policy Research Unit and Education Policy Studies Laboratory. Available at:  
<http://nepc.colorado.edu/files/EPSSL-0401-114-EPRU.pdf>

The collection of Arizona State University briefs can be found here:

<http://nepc.colorado.edu/publication/reform-florida>.

27 Chatterji, M. (2010). *Review of "Closing The Racial Achievement Gap."* Boulder, Co: National Education Policy Center, p. 1. Retrieved March 8, 2012, from

<http://nepc.colorado.edu/thinktank/learning-from-florida>.

28 McGuire, K. (2012, February 7). State integration task force adopts plan to close achievement gap. *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.

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\*When this review was first published, the organization was incorrectly identified as the "Center for the American Experiment."