

**Desegregation Woes in Los Angeles County Public Schools**

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Our nation has succeeded in racially integrating public facilities such as libraries, theaters, department stores and public transportation systems.<sup>1</sup> Yet, public schools have remained largely segregated. Since the 1954 *Brown v. Board Supreme Court* decision declaring segregated schools unconstitutional<sup>2</sup>, and since the subsequent second reconstruction of the Civil Rights Movement, merit rather than skin color has become the criterion for acceptance into public facilities more than ever before in our nation's history. It may seem unclear why the integration of the public education system has a record of less success. The goal of desegregation and the urban reality of public schools has remained unaccomplished. The demands of existing desegregation plans-- the plans' inconvenience for both African Americans and whites--continue to limit the effectiveness of the plans.

Thomas Paine aptly warned that "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must...undergo the fatigue of supporting it."<sup>3</sup> Unlike desegregating public facilities such as theaters and department stores, public school systems are vast and complex entities that must not only be desegregated, but integrated. The problem of dismantling a segregated system is one of disagreement over the appropriate means. Could Americans' impatience with finding a desirable, successful plan to achieve integration of public schools be inhibiting progress toward the complete abolishment of our country's caste system?

In a 1974 conference that reflected upon progress made since the *Brown* decision, Ruby G. Martin, a former director of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's Office for Civil Rights<sup>4</sup>, stated that "No school desegregation case should ever be filed unless the relief sought has been thought out and analyzed in the most minute detail."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sitkoff, Harvard. *The Struggle for Black Equality*. 61-87.

<sup>2</sup> United States Supreme Court Reports. vol 98. 873-882.

<sup>3</sup> Bailyn. *Thomas Paine*. 282.

<sup>4</sup> United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

<sup>5</sup> Klein, Larry. *Continuing Challenge: The Past and Future of Brown v. Board of Education*. 58.

Accordingly, policy makers from all levels of government must take into account the public response to past and present desegregation plans. The ideal of school integration has faltered in the minds of many families who maintain that education, as distinguished from other goals, should be the sole concern of public schools. This public discontent is the result of the inadequacies of the desegregation policies. As illustrated in a recent *Time* magazine article, "The End of Integration"<sup>6</sup>, a move toward the abandonment of the integration ideal is a national trend.

As a result of conservative federal court rulings and de facto residential segregation, the scope of school-desegregation remedies has been steadily contracting. Gary Orfield, the director of the Harvard Project on School Desegregation and outspoken authority on desegregation policies, argues that "By the early 1990s the process of desegregation had stopped. Now it's beginning to move backward...We're in danger of losing it without even thinking about it."<sup>7</sup>

This nationwide trend has been played out in the Los Angeles School District for nearly twenty years.<sup>8</sup> The effort to desegregate the nation's public schools since the 1954 watershed Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, has been difficult and incomplete. The struggle to achieve school desegregation within the city of Los Angeles has been no exception. The education system in the sprawling city of Los Angeles is defined by the Los Angeles Unified School District, the largest in physical size--seven hundred and eight square miles--and second largest in student population--approximately

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<sup>6</sup> Kunen, James S. *Time*. "The End of Integration". vol. 142, no. 18. April 29, 1996. P. 39-46.

<sup>7</sup> Innis, Leslie. *School Desegregation: Too High a Price?* *Social Policy*. vol. 24. Winter 1993. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Miller, Steven Davis. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 151.

six hundred thousand-among all school districts nationally. Within the city boundaries are numerous independent cities and unincorporated areas, which serve to block easy solutions to the problems of segregated schools.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the city of Los Angeles, the Unified District serves the cities of Bell Carson, Cudahy, Gardena, Huntington Park, Lomita, Maywood, San Fernando, South Gate, Vernon, and West Hollywood.<sup>10</sup> The Los Angeles populace's general mood of apathy, indifference, and even antipathy toward current desegregation policy has fueled campaigns designed to carve out school districts along municipal boundaries in the Unified District. The result would be a multitude of small school districts defined by their immediate neighborhood only, excluding the possibility that students from suburban and urban neighborhoods would attend the same school. The rate of progress, or lack thereof, toward school integration seems partially linked to the public's responses to desegregation plans. Therefore, a study of citizens' concerns provides much needed insight into the desegregation dilemma within the Los Angeles County public school system.

*Desegregation Woes in Los Angeles County Public Schools* studies the public response to the past and present desegregation policies and practices in the Los Angeles County School District from the demise of the mandatory busing plan in the late 1970s to the present. Public responses to such issues, provide insight into the reception, workings, and effects of the two major proposals employed by Los wazzu Angeles: mandatory desegregation, entailing a busing system or the rezoning of attendance boundaries, and a voluntary plan, a system in which parents may choose which school their children will

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<sup>9</sup> Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 133-135.

<sup>10</sup> *Office of Communications, Los Angeles Unified School District*. 1



attend. The effort at desegregating these public schools has not helped to counter racial tensions between African Americans and whites within the Los Angeles Unified School District. Perhaps, contemporary opinions on the beneficial and detrimental effects of desegregation have intensified racial discrimination. Each Los Angeles desegregation policy has successively faced resistance and opposition, and those opposing desegregation have been reasserting political power in the early 1990s to end the current policies by ending the Unified District. In essence, the Los Angeles populace's responses to the perceived inadequacies of the Unified District's desegregation policies have partially contributed to their ineffectiveness and the consequent need for alternate plans. The district has endured a move away from a predominantly mandatory busing plan coupled with a voluntary busing program to the reliance on a voluntary busing program as the major desegregation plan, and the later implementation of schools that offered incentives to achieve integration. This chronology of ineffective and/or insufficient plans has led the board and the Los Angeles populace to reexamine the merits of desegregation policies, exemplified by the current proposals to breakup the district.

Metropolitan neighborhoods, such as those found in post-World-War-II Los Angeles, were typically segregated by race and class.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, these neighborhoods have produced well-defined political opinions as they relate to the immediate community. Right or wrong, public opinion on this highly politicized issue has been the result of interaction among policy, populace, and personal experience. In essence an unambiguous response is

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<sup>11</sup>For a detailed analysis of de facto desegregation in Los Angeles see: Caughey, John. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. chapters 1 and 6. Miller, Steven Davis. *Contemporary Racial Conflict: The Nature of White Opposition to Mandatory Busing*. chapter 5.

created from a continuum of individual responses, neighborhood responses, and community responses. Stephen Weatherford has argued that "Implementation of a busing desegregation plan produces a highly charged community environment of which virtually all residents are aware. Neighborhood-based communication networks then result from the conflict that such an issue produces."<sup>12</sup> Los Angelinos' responses to school desegregation policies had an important part in determining the degree to which these policies have been effective. The populace's move away from the current desegregation policies, and toward an affirmation of 'quality education' has fit that pattern.

Although there have been no works published on public responses toward desegregation policies of the Los Angeles Unified district, Alan Lupo's *Liberty's Chosen Home: The Politics of Violence in Boston* and Ronald P. Formisano's *Boston Against Busing* document public response to a mandatory busing desegregation policy in perhaps the nation's most acute case of a city ravished by violent, anti-busing protests.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, the Boston desegregation issue seems relevant to a study of desegregation policies in Los Angeles public schools. In June 1974, District Court Judge Wendell A. Garrity Jr. found Boston's school system guilty of *de jure, or intentional*, segregation.<sup>14</sup> Judge Garrity remained in control of the Boston school system until June 1985 when he returned power to the Boston school board, deeming the potential for violence sparked by the busing issue to have subsided.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Weatherford, Steven. 759-760.

<sup>13</sup> Scholars have addressed the issue of desegregation policies in the city of Boston more than any U.S. city aside from Little Rock, Arkansas. MELVYL.

<sup>14</sup> Formisano, Ronald. *Boston Against Busing*. 1-2.

<sup>15</sup> Lupo, Alan. *Liberty's Chosen Home*. 350.

Boston's anti-busing coalition, Restore Our Alienated Rights or ROAR, and the METCO voluntary busing program are similar to the Los Angeles community's anti-busing coalition and a Los Angeles Unified voluntary busing program respectively.<sup>16</sup> Yet, Formisano and Lupo fail to argue that popular Bostonian responses effectively altered the Boston school system's primary desegregation policy, evident by the lasting power of mandatory busing in Boston. As Lupo argued that "the prevailing sentiment among Boston voters was against busing"<sup>17</sup>, it may be concluded that the Boston populace played a lesser role in influencing Boston's desegregation policies than the Los Angeles popular response played in altering desegregation policies in Los Angeles.

Similar to the state of affairs in Los Angeles, the Boston public's response to an eleven-year court-ordered busing program was to flee from the district and, therefore, exceed the scope of the policy's enforcement.<sup>18</sup> As it may be argued that this is a public response in and of itself, Boston's desegregation-policy episode--an episode that resulted in a decrease of participatory white students for desegregation--may parallel that of Los Angeles, as do episodes in Memphis Tennessee, Savannah Georgia and other cities across the nation. Unfortunately, recounts of these cities' desegregation episodes are nonexistent and authors who have documented Boston's desegregation policies have tended to conclude their analysis of public response immediately following Garrity's 1985 decision. In this sense, the study of Los Angeles' desegregation policies is relevant to the city of Los Angeles, but also significant to the unfolding events in cities of similar design.

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<sup>16</sup> Formisano, Ronald. *Boston Against Busing*. 2-7. Lupo, Alan. *Liberty's Chosen Home*. 308-314.

<sup>17</sup> Lupo, Alan. *Liberty's Chosen Home*. 160.

<sup>18</sup> Lupo, Alan. *Liberty's Chosen Home*. 155-162.

## **A Struggle Through the Years: School Desegregation Across the United States.**

The 1954 Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, declared existing state school-segregation laws unconstitutional. Chief Justice Earl Warren declared that the segregation by race in our nation's schools affected African American children by "generating a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone." Denouncing the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision, Warren concluded "that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."<sup>19</sup> The Court revoked the legitimacy of school systems that imposed laws excluding African Americans solely on the basis of race. The required corrective action was merely the repeal of segregation laws. The methods by which desegregation was attempted in public schools was, inevitably, the result of local school board decisions, state court precedents, and political action within localities.<sup>20</sup> Opposing views within this political arena and periodic shifts in the courts' philosophies on balancing racially segregated school systems produced two predominant methods across the nation to desegregate public schools: mandatory plans and voluntary plans.<sup>21</sup>

The fallout from the momentous *Brown* decision was dramatic. Though there was general support for the decision nationally, Americans expressed a division of opinion

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<sup>19</sup> Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. 147.

<sup>20</sup> Rossell, Christine H. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. 32.

<sup>21</sup> Rossell has numerous books on school desegregation. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy* is an in-depth study of both desegregation plans nationally.

across the country. Vehement opposition was most notable in the South, where an air of demagoguery swept the region. An atmosphere of uncertainty and fear of the racial tensions that would follow the Brown decision permeated the nation, exemplified by the 1957 resistance to federally-mandated school desegregation by Governor Orval B. Faubus in Little Rock, Arkansas.<sup>22</sup> Such blatant racist opposition focused the nation on the South as it struggled to integrate public schools.

### **A Southern and Northern Response**

Northern cities of the United States implemented mandatory desegregation policies, then shifted to voluntary programs, while southern cities commenced their history of desegregation policies with voluntary plans, followed by mandatory plans and finally, voluntary plans independent of the first. Southern states began responding to the Court's ruling by initiating voluntary plans, plans which relied upon the desire of families to transfer their child to another school. The United States Supreme Court ruled Pupil Placement Laws constitutional in 1958. They were implemented by the southern states from 1959-1964. Under this plan, southern states enacted laws that allowed students to apply to a school of their choice but added 'red tape' devices, such as grade requirements and other exclusionary policies.<sup>23</sup> The net result was little desegregation. Following the 1964 Health, Education and Welfare's threat to withhold federal funds from school districts that were failing to comply with its law, southern legislatures erected a new

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<sup>22</sup> Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. 166-167.

<sup>23</sup> Sitkoff, Harvard. *The Struggle for Black Equality*. 26-28.

barricade, the Freedom of Choice plan. It allowed school transfers of choice to all students but failed to provide busing that would enable students in African American neighborhoods to attend schools in predominantly white neighborhoods.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, southern whites refused to voluntarily attend predominantly African American schools.<sup>25</sup> Since urban and rural neighborhoods were largely segregated, African American parents who wished to send their children to a white majority school were forced to provide transportation themselves. The burdens of these plans were placed solely upon the African American families. The southern Freedom of Choice desegregation plan was dismantled by 1970.<sup>26</sup>

In the 1960s, demonstrations, such as civil rights leaders' protests for more effective action, lawsuits, and parents' insistence on local action, demanded that schools play a larger role in the nationwide movement toward integration.<sup>27</sup> Yet, many school administrators resisted, arguing that the role of public school systems was to educate and not to remedy social ills. As a result of this debate concerning the role of public schools in segregation and desegregation, the northern policy during this period was also wholly voluntary. Northern policy relied upon some students attending a school in which their race was a majority to transfer to a school where they would be in a minority. This majority-to-minority plan was aided by a busing system but, like the southern plans, offered no incentives for white students to transfer from white majority schools.<sup>28</sup> The

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<sup>24</sup> Henretta, Brownlee, Brody, Ware. *America's History: second edition*. 946-947.

<sup>25</sup> Miller, Steven Davis. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 131.

<sup>26</sup> Sitkoff, Harvard. *The Struggle for Black Equality*. 36.

<sup>27</sup> Rossell, Christine H. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. 220-223.

<sup>28</sup> Rossell, Christine H. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. 75-81.

result was a sharply segregated urban school system in the North. Yet, as the northern states had never enacted state laws that legitimized segregation, the nation focused on school segregation as a 'southern dilemma', perceiving it as a regional rather than national problem.<sup>29</sup> Because the *Brown* decision was interpreted by the nation to be primarily directed towards the South, the northern plan was more conservative than the southern plan, in an attempt to allay fears. The northern conservative approach achieved its goal of minimizing racial tension in the North, in contrast with the South, but failed to substantially integrate the school systems. Thus, these initial voluntary plans of the South and the North produced very little integration from 1954-1970.<sup>30</sup> Only additional action by the Supreme Court could bring progress.

The 1968 Supreme Court decision, *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County* in North Carolina, resulted from the ineffectiveness of the 1960s Choice plans. The Court decreed that eliminating racial discrimination, the intent of the *Brown v. Board* decision, was not, by itself, effective in creating unitary school systems for African Americans and whites. The Courts desired a larger degree of racial mixture in schools than resulted from merely declaring an end to discrimination. The *Green v. New Kent County* decision effectively revised the Court's previous non-discrimination policy in that it required an additional remedy to the problem of school desegregation--a policy of affirmative action.<sup>31</sup> As a result of the *Green* decision, northern and southern district courts and public policy makers widely launched mandatory school desegregation plans,

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<sup>29</sup> Caughey, John. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. 14.

<sup>30</sup> Sitkoff, Harvard. *The Struggle for Black Equality*. 36.

<sup>31</sup> United States Supreme Court Reports. vol. 98,. 873-882.



plans that required African American and white students to transfer from their formerly 'one-race schools' to 'opposite-race schools' as the only effective way to counter discrimination.<sup>32</sup>

In the wake of the failure of the 1960s voluntary choice model, social scientists and policy experts believed a mandatory plan would be both more effective and morally superior, for it was believed that only government intervention and regulation that required integration would significantly alter racial balances in schools. The *Green* decision was followed by the 1971 *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, which addressed feasible actions to accelerate the rate of desegregation in schools.<sup>33</sup> The Court ruled that the pairing of schools and altering of attendance zones to counter neighborhood racial segregation was permissible in an attempt to desegregate school systems. The *Swann* decision set the precedent that legitimized the mandatory reassignment plan.<sup>34</sup>

The 1973 *Keyes v. School District No. 1*, Denver Colorado was the first northern case to reach the Supreme Court.<sup>35</sup> The principal question in the *Keyes* case regarded *de facto* segregation--segregation caused by any means other than explicit state law. The *Keyes* decision stated that "The failure to desegregate a segregated school, even when that segregation results from neighborhood segregation and private acts of discrimination, is then seen as intentional segregation unless the school district can prove otherwise."<sup>36</sup> This

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<sup>32</sup> Rossell, Christine H. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. 62-66.

<sup>33</sup> United States Supreme Court Reports. vol. 403. 620.

<sup>34</sup> Caughey, John. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. 17-21.

<sup>35</sup> United States Supreme Court Report. vol 369. 1215.

<sup>36</sup> Rossell, Christine H. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. 10.



presumption equated "inadvertent" school segregation with deliberate segregation in the South, making it more ethically objectionable, and its remedy immediately necessary. Following the *Swann* decision, the Court wished to find a means to accelerate integration in the North, a place that had accomplished less reduction in segregation than the South. As a result of these court cases, mandatory reassignment, or 'forced busing' to its opponents, was enacted throughout the United States from 1970-1976.<sup>37</sup>

### Opposition / White Flight

A 1959 poll discovered that the number of whites who would refuse to allow their child to attend a school with a "few" black children was 72 percent in the South and 7 percent in the North. By 1975 the southern figure fell to 15 percent and the northern figure fell to 3 percent.<sup>38</sup> In the Civil Rights era, people's fears of integration fell off sharply. Yet, the success of racial integration in public school systems nationwide was dependent on more than mere symbolic support.<sup>39</sup> The national shift in policy from voluntary to mandatory desegregation required the restructuring of attendance zones and a busing system to transfer students to their mandated school. Lack of tangible white support for participation in mandatory plans foreshadowed the loss of momentum that would surface in later decades.

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<sup>37</sup> Rossell, Christine H. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. 10-26.

<sup>38</sup> Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 75.

<sup>39</sup> *Harper's Monthly*. "The Resegregation of a Southern School". September, 1992. 14-21.

Although the majority of the white population supported the principle of integration, many refused to accept the remedy of mandatory busing. This white opposition to "forced busing" became evident in the increased rate of 'white flight', the failure of white students to attend their mandated schools.<sup>40</sup> In that way, the *Swann* decision's mandatory reassignment plan heightened racial friction by requiring the creation of policies deemed outrageous and impractical by the public.<sup>41</sup> For example, the 1977 Los Angeles County School District enacted a plan that included mandatory reassignment school busing transfers to schools up to one hour away from a student's neighborhood. African American families protested the plan, as much of the white population expressed their discontent with mandatory reassignment by fleeing to suburban neighborhoods or enrolling their children in alternative, all-white private schools.<sup>42</sup>

Changes in the racial composition of students in the 1970s and 1980s, as a result of 'white flight', were produced by an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty among white middle-class families; such factors were the reassignment of whites to minority schools, longer busing distances, alternatives to public schools, desegregation plans that are city-wide rather than state-wide, mandatory reassignment plans that were phased in over a number of years rather than one year, and mandatory reassignment in elementary rather than secondary levels.<sup>43</sup> Christine Rossell's study, *White Flight: Pros and Cons*, found

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<sup>40</sup> The issue of white flight is directly related to race relations and, therefore can go beyond the scope of desegregation issues. See: Miller's *Contemporary Racial Conflict*, Rossell's *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*, Jennifer Hochschild's *The New American Dilemma*, and Richard Kluger's *Simple Justice*.

<sup>41</sup> Hogan, John C. *The Schools, The Courts, and the Public Interests*. 30-31.

<sup>42</sup> Hochschild, Jennifer L. *The New American Dilemma :Liberal Democracy and School Desegregation*.

<sup>43</sup> Rossell. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. 80.

that half of the white students assigned to mandatory schools failed to enroll nationally. As a result, minorities were forced to assume the brunt of the busing burden in order to reduce the number of schools with racial imbalance, the percentage of whites in relation to the percentage of minorities, within school districts.<sup>44</sup>

Two major theses have been proposed in an attempt to explain the diminished attendance of whites in public schools as a result of the implementation of mandatory plans. Donald Kinder and David Sear, in their *Prejudice and Politics: Symbolic Racism vs. Racial Threats to the 'Good Life'*, argue that the foundation for 'white flight' lay in the widely-spread attitudes learned from childhood. In essence, Kinder and Sears believe racism was the major cause of white flight. The second thesis, supported by various historians such as Benjamin Page, Richard Salem and Robert Stover, contend that the major cause of white flight was not racist. Page, Salem, and Stover contend that whites refused to participate in the mandatory reassignment plans because it was a burden for the families' well-being. They defied the change because of self-interest for psychological and economic causes, but not racial issues.<sup>45</sup> Yet, two studies of the Los Angeles County school district, in addition to numerous southern studies, have found racial discrimination as a primary cause for 'white flight'. Debate regarding the past and present causes of 'white flight' continue and, consequently, affect desegregation policies.

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<sup>44</sup> Rossell. *White Flight: Pros and Cons*.

<sup>45</sup> Rossell. *The Carrot or the Stick for Desegregation Policy*. 221.

### **The Magnet-Voluntary Debate**

In response to white flight and a consequent decrease in overall potential of racial balance within many public school districts, school boards across the nation created magnet-school voluntary programs in the late 1970s. Magnet-school programs, located in schools that were previously predominantly African American, were designed to offer a specialized school curriculum. These curricula were designed to provide whites with an incentive to transfer to African American schools voluntarily. Yet, in most cases the magnet voluntary plan was not completely voluntary. Negative incentives such as the redrawing of attendance zones and a requiring a small number of minority transfers were also included in the plans' design.

By the 1980s, authorities on desegregation plans deemed magnet voluntary plans to be a cut above the 'token integration' of the 1960s voluntary "choice" plans.<sup>46</sup> This predecessor of the magnet voluntary plans had no incentives to prompt action from morally supportive white citizens. Oklahoma City, for example, has relied only on the Majority-to-Minority transfer plan. As a result, it has experienced a larger decline in interracial exposure in its schools than a town such as Buffalo, New York, which has a magnet voluntary plan.<sup>47</sup>

The moral and economic debate continues regarding the merits of the magnet-voluntary plan. As many parents have tended to choose the most cost-efficient way around the mandatory plans, so parents have tended to choose superior magnet schools over neighborhood schools. Proponents of the magnet-voluntary model argued that the

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<sup>46</sup> Rossell. *The Carrot or the Stick for Desegregation Policy*. chapters 6-8.

<sup>47</sup> Fuerst, J.S. "Time to Get Off the Bus?". *Commonweal*. vol.118 no. 12. June 14, 1991. 403-405.

Achilles' heel of the mandatory plans lay in the inability of parents to choose the educational surroundings of their children. Others view mandatory plans as an illegitimate use of government power to force social equality. They have argued that the alienation from and mistrust of government that is produced by forcing social equality is inconsistent with a policy of non-discrimination.

Opponents of the magnet voluntary plan, such as Michael Alves and Charles Willie, have argued that magnet schools are elitist by nature of their superior resources. Furthermore, they suggest that the white families would willingly choose minority-dominated schools within their respective district if students were prevented from attending their neighborhood schools.<sup>48</sup> Conversely, Jennifer Hochschild, in her study, *The New American Dilemma*, suggests that the magnet voluntary plan is reliant upon irrational and faulty decision-making. Hochschild concludes that the plan has been flawed because such programs must be accomplished solely by the general populace. Hochschild is skeptical that market incentives, by themselves, will consistently persuade families to choose magnet schools.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, opponents attack the merits of the magnet plan by questioning the psychological effects of such a plan on students attending the school who are not enrolled in the magnet program.<sup>50</sup> Debates regarding these various desegregation policies have been played out in Los Angeles across the 1960s, '70s, '80s and '90s.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 113.

<sup>49</sup> Hochschild, Jennifer. *The New American Dilemma*. 37.

<sup>50</sup> Rossell. *The Carrot or the Stick for School Desegregation Policy*. chapter 6.

## **A City of Northern Design Below the Mason-Dixon Line**

Los Angeles is a unique city in that it is geographically southern, but more characteristic of a northern than southern region. This may be attributed to its isolation from what is referred to as the Old South. Los Angeles may be defined by a culture unique to the Southwest United States, but like typical northern metropolitan areas, such as Denver, New York, and Chicago, it did not experience prescribed segregation or the token integration of true southern cities such as Little Rock and Memphis.<sup>51</sup> Compared to many southern states' aggressive resistance to desegregation policies, the Los Angeles resistance was relatively benign. Unlike the major southern cities that were guilty of de jure segregation, Los Angeles was accountable only for de facto school segregation, the product of segregated neighborhoods. Los Angeles, in fact, remained inattentive to the segregation issue until more than a decade after the hostile southern cities were addressed by the courts. Los Angeles school authorities largely disregarded the 1954 Supreme Court mandate to end segregation, understanding that the scope of *Brown*, during this period, focused on southern states such as Mississippi, Virginia, and South Carolina.<sup>52</sup> Los Angeles possessed a pattern of segregation and a mood of racial tension that was more similar to that of a northern than a southern city.

Like other non-southern cities, Los Angeles has had its own long history of racial discrimination and social segregation. Past public and private policies such as restrictive home mortgages, occupational barriers, racially inspired school boundary lines and attendance zones were designed to exclude minorities from the mainstream of society. In

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<sup>51</sup> Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. 166-167.

<sup>52</sup> Caughey, John. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. 14.

fact, according to a 1965 standard measure of relative residential segregation, Los Angeles ranked among the highest in the nation.<sup>53</sup>

In 1920, among five hundred and seventy-seven thousand Los Angeles residents, only fifteen thousand and six hundred were African American. Los Angeles experienced a period of unprecedented growth during the roaring 1920s and the depression era of the 1930s, though less for the African Americans who comprised 3 percent of the population. By the 1940s military supply industries and training camps drew a large number of African Americans and other minorities into the state. The limitations on new housing opportunities relegated these newcomers to predominantly African American neighborhoods. Following the end of World War Two Los Angeles experienced a twenty-five-year surge of population growth, characterized by further residential segregation and its byproduct, de facto school segregation. Given the degree of neighborhood segregation and the ever expanding size of the Unified city school district, segregated schools became common.<sup>54</sup> This institutional outcome of the developing Los Angeles urban expanse was made possible by the application of the "neighborhood school concept" as the United States Civil Rights Commission discovered:

Although the formula for segregation in Los Angeles was not as apparent as in the south, its effects were nonetheless invidious. By having a history of court-enforced restrictive covenants and, resulting in the ghettos and barrios of today, it simply had to enforce the enrollment restrictions associated with its 'neighborhood school' concept to produce segregated schooling.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Tauber and Tauber. *Negroes in Cities*. 1965. From Miller's *Contemporary Racial Conflict*.

<sup>54</sup> Caughey, John. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. 6-8, 12.

<sup>55</sup> Taken from the *Civil Rights Commission Report*. 48. as documented in Miller's *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 134.



By the 1950s and '60s, Los Angeles joined the majority of the nation in the struggle to elevate the condition of minorities through the vigorous promotion of minority rights. Drawing momentum from Martin Luther King's visit to Los Angeles and the assassination of Medgar Evers in Mississippi, the United Civil Rights Council was created to locally address the problems of housing, employment, police treatment, and education.<sup>56</sup> In the summer of 1962 the nationally-based American Civil Liberties Union joined the UCRC to formally notify the Unified School Board of segregated conditions within the Unified School District. The board appointed an ad hoc committee to address the problem. The board committee expressed support for "equal opportunity" but took no decisive action.<sup>57</sup> Dissatisfied with the board's response and lack of commitment, the ACLU brought suit against the district in July 1963, in *Crawford v. Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles*.<sup>58</sup> The response of the board was simply that segregated public schools did not exist within the district.

In August 1965, public attention within Los Angeles on the issue of school desegregation was sidetracked by the Watts Riot, an incident in the predominantly African American inner-city of Los Angeles. As "A shocked nation viewed the Watts conflagration on its TV sets<sup>59</sup>", Los Angeles and other major cities attempted to quell the larger issue of racial urban tension. The ACLU, for example, focused attention toward assisting those arrested by assuring they were represented legally.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Caughey, John. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. 20.

<sup>57</sup> Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 138.

<sup>58</sup> United States Supreme Court Reports. vol 458. 527. Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 139. from *Crawford v. Los Angeles*.

<sup>59</sup> Sitkoff, Harvard. *The Struggle for Black Equality*. 186-187.

<sup>60</sup> Caughey. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. 26.



In 1968, the ACLU suit became a high-profile trial that was followed locally and also nationally. The plaintiffs claimed that the board had acted intentionally to perpetuate segregated schools and, therefore, unequal school resources between the races. In response, the board argued that segregation was the product of "natural residential patterns" and had nothing to do with any school board actions. The plaintiffs countered with charges of "benign neglect". No one contested the reality of segregation: 1970-1971 data illustrated that ninety-four percent of African American students were assigned to segregated schools.<sup>61</sup> In February, 1970 the presiding judge, Alfred Gitleson, handed down his decision in favor of the plaintiffs. Gitleson found the board culpable for the degree of segregation within the district. Furthermore, Gitleson ruled that affirmative action to desegregate must be taken immediately by the board.<sup>62</sup>

Following the 1970 ruling, the board rejected the ruling for affirmative action, in essence mandatory busing or redistricting, and filed an appeal to the case. The media within Los Angeles highly publicized the white population's reaction to the case by questioning what busing would mean for white students and the predominantly white schools. Possibly a result of white reaction to the issue, Judge Gitleson was voted out of office in late 1970.<sup>63</sup>

In the meantime, natural disaster intervened, and the Unified District's response to it opened an opportunity to rectify the segregation problem. Prior to becoming a major desegregation plan in the late 1970s, the Permit With Transportation program was

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<sup>61</sup> Caughey. *To Kill a Child's Spirit*. 11.

<sup>62</sup> Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 139-140.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. 142.

implemented in 1972 to provide transportation for students displaced from schools that were damaged in a 1971 earthquake. The program relied on voluntary busing by students from their neighborhood schools to receiving schools. The board hoped to counter the effect of residential segregation within the district's schools by allowing students the choice to switch schools. Early in development, the PWT program became a fledgling desegregation plan used almost exclusively by African American students.<sup>64</sup>

BUSTOP, a grass-roots organization that was formed in opposition to the Crawford suit, was created in 1975 at Encino's Lanai Road School. An Encino housewife, Bobbi Fiedler, opposed a Lanai Road decision to simultaneously transfer one of the school's white teachers and replace the position with an African American teacher.<sup>65</sup>

In March 1975, the State Appellate court ruled in favor of the board, overturning Judge Gitleson's decision. The Appellate court found that the board had engaged in no actions that intentionally segregated the district's schools and therefore were not required to take any action to remedy the discrimination. The plaintiffs appealed to the State Supreme Court. In June 1976, the appellate decision was reversed. The State Supreme

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<sup>64</sup> *The Los Angeles Times*. September 12, 1984. B-1.

<sup>65</sup> *The Los Angeles Times*. September 12, 1984. B-1. Fiedler insisted that the agenda of BUSTOP was not racist, but rather one supporting individual freedom. Within months of Bust's creation, Fiedler's position was seconded by thirty thousand members. For Fiedler, the reality of the watershed Crawford case and the ever-present busing issue within the Los Angeles Unified School District dramatically changed her life. "It was funny because I couldn't stand politicians, but I suddenly found myself running for office." In fact, Fiedler's entry into politics as a staunch opponent of the Crawford case carried her a great distance and enhanced her role as a spokesperson on anti-busing desegregation issues. Fiedler defeated pro-busing Board of Education President Robert Docter. In 1980 Fiedler defeated incumbent Democrat James C. Corman to win a congressional seat.

Court found the board responsible for the "undeniable state of segregated conditions" in the Unified District.

Action toward a desegregation plan was once again the responsibility of the local district court; courtroom battles regarding a workable plan resumed. After much debate concerning a court-approved plan, a mandatory busing plan was submitted to the presiding judge, Paul Egly. The plan, entitled Integrated Educational Excellence Through Choice, dissatisfied board officials because it had the potential of reducing the white student enrollment through white flight and dissatisfied the plaintiffs in that the plan served only one half of the minority schools in the district.<sup>66</sup>

Magnet schools began in 1976 as one component of a board-inspired voluntary integration program. At this point, the Unified district's voluntary program was a fledgling, experimental plan. The magnet voluntary program supplemented an early PWT program and encouraged the voluntary enrollment of students to schools with high academic standards. The magnet program provided balance within the district during the court-ordered busing program of 1978-81.<sup>67</sup>

In 1977 and 1978 anger in Los Angeles grew over the plan. White opposition to any mandatory plan peaked with anti-busing rallies. Private schools became the rally cry for white parents, as they envisioned potential problems with the mandatory plan. Anti-busing groups coalesced around the initial anti-busing organization, BUSTOP. Although the majority of African Americans favored the plan, many expressed concern for the long

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<sup>66</sup> Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 142-144.

<sup>67</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. November 3, 1987. A-1.

busing distances and time their children would spend on buses in such a plan.<sup>68</sup> Twice as many African American as non-African American parents favored compliance with a mandatory busing order, should a court issue it.<sup>69</sup>

In 1977, the school-board-appointed a one-hundred-and-sixteen-member Citizens' Advisory Committee on School Integration, which recommended a three-year desegregation plan to the board of education. In September 1977, it would require mandatory and voluntary busing of sixty-two thousand elementary students, half white and half minority. Ten days later, the school board adopted parts of its own plan that differed greatly from that of CACSI. The board's plan proposed that children in fourth, fifth, and sixth grades would be sent to "integrated learning centers" for nine months.

In February, 1978, Superintendent William Johnston released a more detailed plan, based on the board's actions a month earlier. Roughly one-ninth of the elementary students would be bused on a part-time basis to learning centers. One group of twenty-five thousand students (one-twenty-seventh of the students) would be reassigned to other schools on a permanent basis. Most of these students would be minority students attending white schools. The almost entirely one-way busing program, as part of this program, was heavily criticized. In January and February 1978, two white parent boycotts against busing occurred; the first drew nine thousand students from nine schools; the second drew sixty-five thousand students from numerous schools. Meanwhile, approximately one thousand and five hundred Los Angelinos marched in protest against the school board's limited learning centers and called for a more far reaching plan. The

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<sup>68</sup> Miller. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 144-145.

<sup>69</sup> This is according to a 1978 *Los Angeles Times* Poll.

House of Representatives of the United Teachers of Los Angeles endorsed the Citizen's Advisory Committee on School Integration plan as more effective than Superintendent Johnston's less ambitious plan.<sup>70</sup>

In 1978, African Americans representing a broad range of interests in their community urged that the school board's second desegregation plan--Superintendent Johnston's plan--be altered in basic ways before gaining court approval. As a result, Judge Egly compromised by allowing schools that met the required minority percentage of 70 percent through voluntary methods to be exempted from the plan. In addition, Egly praised and encouraged the use of magnet schools.<sup>71</sup>

The plan began in September 1978 and initial boycotts quickly subsided.. At the end of the first semester, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that the white population in the schools had declined by 15 percent during the year, and speculated that one-half to one-third of this percentage possibly indicated white flight as a result of busing. During this period, "the district no longer envisioned any integration plan for the majority of 'racially isolated' schools. Instead, improvements of facilities, problems of overcrowding and poor teacher-student ratios became the target of new administrative goals",<sup>72</sup> foreshadowing debate to divide the Unified District one and one-half decades later.

In 1979, ruling that the mandatory school board desegregation plan could cause irreparable harm through white flight, the California Second District Court of Appeal froze that part of the plan. In November 1979, the California populace ratified Proposition 1, an

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<sup>70</sup> Weinberg. *A History of Los Angeles Desegregation Policies*. 26-27

<sup>71</sup> Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Conflict Racial*. 145.

<sup>72</sup> Miller, Steven. *Contemporary Racial Conflict*. 149.

amendment to the due process and equal protection clauses of the State Constitution that barred state courts from ordering busing as a remedy for school segregation. The ratification of Proposition 1 and the California Supreme Court's subsequent confirmation of its legality effectively ended the mandate upon the Los Angeles Unified School District.

In 1981, the Permit With Transportation program became a substitute for the Unified District's defunct mandatory plan. The voluntary busing plan, Permit With Transportation program was greatly expanded by the district as a result of Proposition 1. The African American population pronounced the Permit With Transportation program to be a one-sided desegregation plan with limited results.

In 1985, the rezoning of attendance boundaries became an issue again in South Gate, an independent city neighboring the predominantly African American populated Watts. The school board altered the minority-to-majority percentage from 60 percent minority to 70 percent minority in order to qualify schools such as South Gate High as an integrated school. This was in response to overcrowding in the district, an issue of great importance from this point on.<sup>73</sup>

In 1985, the rhetoric of quality education resurfaced. Board members and African American and white parents of students called for well-trained teachers and a safe school environment as the Unified District's first priority, to be put ahead of the demand for the integration of Los Angeles schools. In addition, magnet-voluntary programs had become a highly popular alternative to the overcrowded traditional Los Angeles public schools.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. Oct. 4, 1985. A-1.

<sup>74</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. February 3, 1985. 5-1.

By 1990 the lack of feasibility for a comprehensive busing desegregation plan spurred growing sentiment to divide the Los Angeles Unified School District.<sup>75</sup>

### **The Los Angeles Unified Mandatory Plan**

Faced with the school system's need to accommodate a growing number of students, the Los Angeles Unified School District proposed to redraw district boundaries in 1985. Student population in the Unified school district was increasing by fifteen thousand students per year and growth was not spread effectively throughout the district.<sup>76</sup> Because redistricting necessitated mandatory reallocation of students, the board recognized a chance to promote desegregation. The proposals were designed to integrate students from neighboring communities and, thus, provide a more balanced racial and total enrollment. They were contested immediately. A rezoning debate between South Gate High School and Jordan High School in Watts created a heated dispute.<sup>77</sup> In the case of South Gate and Jordan, the proposal required mandatory transfers of students by busing.

In 1985, Los Angeles Unified School District officials stated the proposal to transfer students was necessary because South Gate High was overcrowded with 3,500 students while nearby Jordan High School, predominantly composed of an African American student population, was about 700 students short of its full enrollment of 1,746. As a result of this enrollment imbalance, South Gate High operated on a year-round schedule in

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<sup>75</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. March 10, 1990. 4-1.

<sup>76</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. December 21, 1995.

<sup>77</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. April 30, 1985. 9-1.

addition to transferring two hundred students to high schools in the San Fernando Valley. The district officials proposed a solution that was geographically simple but politically complicated.

South Gate city officials protested the proposal by taking legal action. Attorney Bruce Boogaard maintained South Gate's primary goal was to ensure a good education for the city's high school students, "We cannot rest until we're assured that South Gate students are going to receive a high-quality, low-risk education."<sup>78</sup> The South Gate law suit sought to overturn the Board of Education's unanimous decision to send students from South Gate to Watts. In the suit, the city charged that, "South Gate students were discriminated against because the school board solved overcrowding problems at similar schools in the San Fernando Valley by installing portable classrooms, instead of resorting to mandatory busing."<sup>79</sup>

The suit claimed that the district should have foreseen overcrowding problems at South Gate High, and that the boundary change would promote gang violence at Jordan High by creating a rivalry between Jordan students and transferred students from South Gate. In addition, a school district policy that would transfer the least-senior teachers at South Gate to Jordan would discriminate against the students transferring to Jordan because they would have the less-experienced teachers. The lawsuit further claimed that before deciding to send South Gate students to Watts, the school district should have filed an environmental impact statement. It was necessary, the lawsuit contended, because the

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<sup>78</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 6, 1985. 5-1.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*



transfer of students would have a substantial effect on the social fabric of the community and would lower property values.<sup>80</sup>

South Gate officials opposed the mandatory busing plan by citing Jordan High's lower quality education and its location in a high crime area. For example, state report cards for the schools have shown South Gate students had an average combined Scholastic Aptitude Test score of 752 while Jordan High students had a combined average SAT score of 589.<sup>81</sup> Instead of transporting South Gate students to Watts, South Gate city officials wanted the Unified School District to create a new high school in South Gate and erect temporary classrooms. The city officials were adamantly opposed to mandatory student transfer to Jordan High.

Parents also expressed their disapproval of the plan. South Gate parent Carmen Cordero stated, "I don't want my boy to go to Jordan. I don't like that area." Many South Gate parents confirmed South Gate officials' position on crime. John Trujillo, for example, whose son would enter the eleventh grade in the fall of the 1985 school year, opposed the transfer of students because he was concerned about "drugs and gangs" in the Jordan High area.<sup>82</sup> "Hell, no, we won't go" was often the cry by South Gate parents following heated city meetings on the Los Angeles school board's proposed solution to the integration problem.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. and *Los Angeles Sentinel*, May 17, 1990, A-8. "Typically African Americans are compared to Whites on grades, i.e. standardized test scores. Usually such studies have found that minorities' academic achievement is consistently lower than that of Whites...Researchers continue to debate the extent to which a 'racially related' deficit is genetic or environmental" or socioeconomic.

<sup>82</sup> *Los Angeles Times*, June 7, 1985, A-1

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

The fears of South Gate parents and students were allayed with a proposal in 1987 and the 1989 construction of a new high school in the city of South Gate.<sup>84</sup> Ted Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of the Unified Districts' Student Integration Office, stated that the South Gate site was one of many regions in need of additional facilities. Alexander suggested that the Board chose South Gate largely in response to the degree of overcrowded classrooms in its functioning high school and partially because of the Board's perceived need to temper the growing disgruntled reactions within the area. "South Gate has always been a hot point in the district and it was feasible to build a magnet school to correct the problem of an overcrowded school."<sup>85</sup> The Unified district's response answered the demands of South Gate citizens. In this sense, the proposals by the District were altered upon the request of a section of the district populace.

Los Angeles had had desegregation conflicts with South Gate before. Twenty-two years prior to the 1985 debate the Los Angeles school board, bowing to pressure from parents in South Gate, had refused to bus Mary Ellen Crawford from her predominantly African American Jordan High School to the mostly white South Gate High. The community's refusal to integrate the two schools formed the basis for the lawsuit, the *Crawford v. Board of Education of the City of Los Angeles Supreme Court* case<sup>86</sup>, a trial that occupied the school board for many years and led to mandatory busing in the late 1970s and early 1980s<sup>87</sup>. Just as it was twenty-five years ago, the district boundary located on Alameda street was, in 1985, perceived as a sort of Mason-Dixon line between

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<sup>84</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. May 2, 1989. 1-1.

<sup>85</sup> Alexander.

<sup>86</sup> A chronology of the Crawford case consequent legal action is documented on p. 18-23.

<sup>87</sup> United States Supreme Court Reports. vol 458. 527.

the African American community in Watts on the west side of the street and a white and then predominantly Latino community on the east side.

The *Crawford* case had been the first case of its kind in the nation, contending that the Los Angeles County school board had a duty to integrate classrooms even though segregation was caused largely by changing neighborhood demographic patterns. Marnesha Tackett, who headed the United Civil Rights Council education committee prior to the launch of the 1963 *Crawford* case, attributed the rationale for creating a case concerning South Gate Jordan High in 1963 to just the opposite pattern of growth than that of 1985:

The education at South Gate was so much better, there was no comparison. We got some of the children special permits to go to South Gate and the white citizens of South Gate threw eggs at them. We noticed that the school board kept expanding Jordan's boundary as more black children moved into it instead of sending them to South Gate. On that basis we felt Jordan was the strategic school to target for the suit.<sup>88</sup>

In 1970, the California Superior Court ruled that the school district was substantially segregated in violation of the federal and state constitutions. Judge Alfred Gitleson ordered the Los Angeles Unified School District to prepare and implement a "reasonably feasible" plan for the desegregation of the schools. The court found *de jure* segregation present and deemed the district to be in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Hogan, John C. *The Schools, the Courts, and the Public Interest*. 31-33.

The *Crawford* case ended in March 1989 when a federal judge dismissed the final defendant, the California Department of Education.<sup>90</sup> The high-profile *Crawford* case spanned nearly two decades. The late Superior Court Judge Alfred Gitleson, who in 1970 ordered the Los Angeles Unified School District to integrate, was defeated in the election following his judgment. In this race he was coined the "busing judge."<sup>91</sup>

In the aftermath of the suit and subsequent policy, dissatisfaction remained. Both pro-busing and anti-busing groups lament that neither side was truly victorious. Supporters of the suit said the district remained largely segregated along racial lines, despite voluntary busing programs such as those to magnet schools. Similarly, those against the case found little solace in the fact that mandatory busing didn't last. Opponents of the court decision claimed that the battle wasted public money and led to overcrowded classrooms in largely white, suburban neighborhoods.<sup>92</sup> Dave Traver, an Encino resident and father of a Unified district student, argued that "the Crawford case [and mandatory busing] was little more than a costly experiment that was footed by the taxpayers."<sup>93</sup>

Assistant Superintendent Alexander argued that the efforts of BUSTOP to rally opponents of the district's mandatory plan, along with the state populace's vote to cast down the mandatory busing program significantly altered the school board policy by forcing the board to focus entirely on means other than mandatory plans for future Unified desegregation plans. "As a result, the Permit With Transportation Program became the

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<sup>90</sup> Weinberg. *A History of Los Angeles Desegregation Policies*. 27-28.

<sup>91</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. April 7, 1989. B-1.

<sup>92</sup> Weinberg. *A History of Los Angeles Desegregation Policies*. 28.

<sup>93</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. September 11, 1991. 4 -1.

central focus rather than mandatory busing."<sup>94</sup> The public's response to mandatory busing, thus, influenced the district's shift in policy.

There are similarities between the *Crawford* case and the 1985 problems in South Gate, the most obvious being the mandatory busing issue. Mandatory busing remained a legal possibility following *Crawford* as a facet of the magnet-voluntary plan. However, civil rights lawyers generally acknowledged that with minority students now comprising more than 80 percent of the student population during this period,<sup>95</sup> "forced busing" was no longer an effective way to deal with segregation in the nation's second-largest school system.<sup>96</sup>

A 1990 study by Christine H. Rossell argues that, although mandatory plans provide more interracial exposure in their initial year, "mandatory plans begin to resegregate shortly after the implementation year at a more rapid rate than voluntary plans."<sup>97</sup> This is due largely to shifting demographic patterns. Attorneys for the state Board of Education argued that demographic shifts have rendered the *Crawford* case moot. Fred Okrand, a Pasadena lawyer who was one of five attorneys to file the *Crawford* case testified to the district's inability to provide an effective plan:

The lawsuit focused the board's attention on the evils of segregation. But the board failed to provide the psychological frame of mind that was necessary for successful desegregation. In later years, they [the school board] tried, but then the demographics shifted.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Alexander.

<sup>95</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. October 16, 1995. 9-1.

<sup>96</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. May 22, 1990. B-1.

<sup>97</sup> Rossell. *The Carrot or the Stick for Desegregation Policy*. 108.

<sup>98</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. May 22, 1990. B-1.

In 1990, white students accounted for 15 percent of the Unified District's enrollment, compared to fifty-five percent in 1963.<sup>99</sup> The Los Angeles Unified mandatory desegregation plan proved ineffective on all accounts.

### **A Reliance on the Permit With Transportation Voluntary Program**

Each morning hundreds of school buses traveled the thoroughfares of South and East Los Angeles, carrying nearly twenty-four thousand minority students to predominantly white, suburban neighborhoods in the San Fernando Valley.<sup>100</sup> These students boarded the bus not because the distant public schools offer *specialized* educational programs, but because their parents merely wanted them to attend schools that were racially integrated and more academically challenging than the students' own neighborhood schools.

These students participated in the Los Angeles County Permit With Transportation program. The Los Angeles County School District began a voluntary desegregation busing plan in 1968. Four years later, the Permit With Transportation Program commenced through the merger of this initial busing plan and a plan developed to provide transportation for students displaced from schools that were damaged in a 1971 earthquake. The program expanded in the 1980s and remains in a diminished form currently. The 1981 state constitutional amendment ending mandatory busing contributed greatly to the PWT program. Though the city of Los Angeles remained legally bound by a 1973 mandatory state court ruling, the School District enlarged the PWT program

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<sup>99</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. May 22, 1990. B-1.

<sup>100</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. Feb. 17, 1993. 2-4.

following the end of the Unified District's comprehensive mandatory busing plan in 1981. The Board realized the need for an enlarged voluntary desegregation plan and took the necessary measures to ensure a future for the PWT program amid the rising popularity for alternate desegregation programs by both African Americans and whites.<sup>101</sup> One year after the creation of the program in 1973, one hundred and ten of the San Fernando Valley's one hundred and eighty schools had 80 percent or more white enrollment. Although this suburban region of the Los Angeles County School District remains a largely white residential area, only two of the Valley schools remained so by 1990, even though mandatory busing to achieve desegregation had ended nine years before.<sup>102</sup> In 1990, 87 percent of Northridge residents were white. Yet, Calahan Elementary School in Northridge had a minority enrollment of 48 percent. In Woodland Hills, where the white population constituted 94 percent of the city, nearly one-fourth of Hale Junior High students were African American.<sup>103</sup> Tony Rivas, superintendent of the School District's northern San Fernando Valley, stated that the region "Is not the creamy Valley anymore, at least in terms of public education."<sup>104</sup>

The move towards integration in these heavily de facto-segregated schools was furthered by the PWT program. A 1983 Los Angeles School District survey recorded that approximately sixteen thousand of the one hundred and fifteen thousand African American public school students were enrolled in the PWT program. Yet, while some of Los Angeles' minority students bore the burden of desegregation, the vast majority remained in

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<sup>101</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. September 12, 1984. A-1.

<sup>102</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. January 17, 1990. A-1.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. March 14, 1989. 4.



segregated neighborhood schools.<sup>105</sup> In this sense, the PWT program is not without problems.

The majority of the students who participate in the PWT transfer program are inner-city African Americans, as noted by school board member Rita Walters. Blacks "are enrolling their children in the Valley and West Side schools under the PWT program. However, I doubt if there are 75-100 White students coming into the inner-city schools."<sup>106</sup> Many Los Angeles inner-city principals felt busing had depleted a large number of their brightest students from the neighborhood schools in which they would have normally attended. Seeking to limit PWT enrollment, principals such as George McKenna of Washington Preparatory School have voiced their concern to Board members and administrators.<sup>107</sup> The District's continual response was that the Los Angeles Unified school system is simply operating under a court order to desegregate.<sup>108</sup> The principals further contested that the PWT busing program instilled a belief throughout the Los Angeles area that the urban public schools were inferior to those in the suburbs.<sup>109</sup>

Apparently that view was reflected in the classroom and counseling offices, as well. PWT students at some Valley schools complained that teachers often believed that PWT students were unable to manage advanced academic work. A 1983 District report verified that students were taking fewer college preparatory courses than resident students and had lower grade point averages.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, a nine-year composite of district evaluations

<sup>105</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 2, 1990. 9-1.

<sup>106</sup> *Los Angeles Sentinel*. September 10, 1982. A2.

<sup>107</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. August 8, 1988. 9-1.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 17, 1990. A-1.



from 1981 to 1990 revealed that children bused under the Permit With Transportation voluntary program had lower reading and math scores than the neighborhood students in the same classroom.<sup>111</sup> PWT students also entered colleges and universities at lower rates than traditional students. PWT students are placed in remedial classes more often than resident students and are less likely to take advanced courses or participate in extracurricular and leadership activities. Many of the PWT students suffered low self-esteem, which critics partially attributed to the Los Angeles District teachers who expected less from them.<sup>112</sup> Since the district began evaluating the program in 1981, the achievement gap between PWT students and their suburban counterparts has remained "wide and persistent," according to Winston Doby, who reviews the program for the district each year.<sup>113</sup> District officials were aware of the disparity in treatment and test scores between traditional and PWT students.<sup>114</sup> Yet, little was accomplished by 1990 to improve the academic performance of the minority students bused under the plan.

Leonard Britton, school superintendent, contended:

We said we would provide an integrated experience for the children, not necessarily an improved education. But in the back of some people's minds was the thought that great things would happen if they put their children on the bus.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 17, 1990. A-1. *Los Angeles Sentinel*. May 17, 1990. A-8.

"Typically African Americans are compared to Whites on grades, i.e. standardized test scores. Usually such studies have found that minorities' academic achievement is consistently lower than that of Whites...Researchers continue to debate the extent to which a 'racially related' deficit is genetic or environmental" or socioeconomic.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

On the other hand, former school board President Jackie Goldberg stated that the board had not "Shown great leadership. We have to be able to say something more than, 'Oh God, the scores are low again,' which has traditionally been our response."<sup>116</sup>

The decision of parents to enroll their child in the PWT program has been based largely on the opportunity to enroll them in an integrated school away from the violence of the inner-city. Mattie Leon, a mother from southwest Los Angeles, cited history as the most important factor in her decision to place her fourteen-year-old daughter in a suburban junior high school, "Black folks have never been able to depend on the power structure to provide an equal education for our children. Whites have."<sup>117</sup>

Yet, many parents who enrolled their children in the PWT program soon had second thoughts. Patsy Boston, like many parents, expected great things when she signed her daughter into the program; to travel from South-Central Los Angeles to the San Fernando Valley. "I wanted her to experience different cultures and other environments...but mostly, I wanted her to get a better education, and I believed the Valley schools were better." However, after watching her daughter's grades drop, Boston planned to remove her child from the program and return her to their neighborhood school.<sup>118</sup>

Although the PWT program has been noted for its inadequate participation, detrimental effects on schools in poorer districts, and little effect on academic performance on transported students, the lack of alternative voluntary busing programs has provided

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> *Los Angeles Sentinel*. September 12, 1986. D-6.

<sup>118</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. January 27, 1994. 2-1.

the Los Angeles Unified district with few options. This "is the only program that desegregates white schools," explained attorney Peter James, who heads the district's desegregation legal team. However, benefit from the program seems one-sided. Charles V. Wille, a Graduate School of Education Harvard professor, states "What happened in Los Angeles is that blacks won the court case that brought about desegregation [Crawford], but it is the white schools that are receiving the benefits of desegregation."<sup>119</sup> PWT "was intended to reduce segregation within the district, and it's working as well as anything we've got. The achievement results have not been what we've hoped, but it is desegregating."<sup>99</sup> Dolby suggests that while the PWT students are performing at a higher level than they would have in their neighborhood schools, skepticism remains.<sup>120</sup>

Yet, it must be noted that while the district has funded the inner-city schools, the majority of the San Fernando Valley schools that receive PWT students obtain only an additional fifty dollars per year, per bused student--the same amount given to the program since 1981.<sup>121</sup> Although the educational experts who have reviewed the PWT program have recommended several specific support services-- such as evening and weekend tutorials, teacher training, peer counseling and in-class tutoring-- schools that receive PWT students must spend 90 percent of their integration funds to hire classroom aides. Consequently, this program with luke warm appeal generates only modest gains for the district in its struggle to achieve integration. Furthermore, while the district has monitored those schools to make sure each has a comprehensive plan to educate the students, there is

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<sup>119</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 2, 1990. 9-1.

<sup>120</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. January 27, 1994. 2-1.

<sup>121</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 17, 1990. A-1.

currently no monitoring program to evaluate each school's success or failure to adequately perform this task.<sup>122</sup> The difficulty of operating a beneficial desegregation plan remains in light of the public's disapproval.

Attitude adjustment problems were also common for PWT students. "Now a lot of us are wondering whether it's worth it," explained Gloria Jenkins, a Windsor Hills mother whose son was bused to a West side junior high school until he was expelled for disciplinary problems. He then attended an all-African American private school, where he thrived socially and academically, and scored several points higher on standardized tests. Jenkins said, "as a parent, you feel that you constantly have to be on guard to protect them...and make sure they get educated like everyone else, and that's very hard to do when you're forty miles away."<sup>123</sup> Moreover, white students at some schools told district interviewers that although their African American and Latino classmates "are fine as individuals," the minority students were frightening and "intimidating when they congregated in groups."<sup>124</sup>

School Board member Rita Walters argued for the accomplishment of the PWT program's goals:

When they say that PWT in and of itself has made people feel that inner-city schools are inferior, they ignore the reasons it was started in the first place. Schools were overcrowded; there weren't adequate textbooks; there weren't regular teachers; and we really had a dual school system. Parents were looking for an equal educational opportunity and were willing to assume this burden of transporting

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<sup>122</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. January 27, 1994. 2-1.

<sup>123</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. October 7, 1987. 4 -1.

<sup>124</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 17, 1990. A-1.

their kids to schools beyond their neighborhood.<sup>125</sup>

Assistant Superintendent Alexander stated that he agrees with Rita Walter's remarks. Alexander argued that the primary objective of the PWT was to integrate, not to directly and immediately better the test scores of the Unified students. Gloria Jenkins testified to the inconvenience of the plan and to this Ted Alexander sympathized. Alexander argued, however, that the plan *has* been successful in improving integration in participating schools. Though it has not rectified the integration issue in the entire district, Alexander stated that it remains a vital program within the district.

However, public disapproval testifies to the Unified district-populace's belief that the program is not an equal education opportunity, and furthermore, that the burdens of the program--the busing that must be endured by participants in the program--outweigh its benefits. Alexander replied, "This is the fundamental problem with integration. The idea is away with the old and in with the new."<sup>126</sup>

### The Los Angeles Unified Magnet-Voluntary Program

In Los Angeles magnet schools were identified as a partial solution to such students' problems in the mid-1970s. The magnet-voluntary program was another of the Unified district's version of the "choice" concept, one adamantly touted by former United States President George Bush as a means to improve the nation's troubled public schools by fostering competition and providing high-quality facilities.<sup>127</sup> Magnet schools began in

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Alexander.

<sup>127</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. August 3, 1990. 1-1.

1976 as one component of a voluntary integration program. The magnet-voluntary program supplemented an early PWT program and encouraged the busing of students to integrated schools with high academic standards. The program provided the district with an additional but less significant desegregation plan during the court-ordered mandatory busing program of 1979-1981, and emerged in the 1980s as a highly popular alternative to the overcrowded, traditional Los Angeles public schools. While some of the magnet schools were designed for gifted students, others offered specialized classes to students of all levels in such fields as mathematics, computer science or the performing arts.<sup>128</sup> What made them a means for integration was the district's requirement that maintained a ratio of 60 percent minority students and 40 percent white students. African Americans currently comprise the largest number of magnet program students, followed by white students. Though students throughout the district were encouraged to apply to the magnet school of their choice, admittance was difficult from the start because of the program's popularity and the district's lack of adequate classroom space.<sup>129</sup> In 1990, approximately twenty-eight thousand of the district's six hundred and ten thousand students attended magnet schools; approximately twenty thousand were relegated to the waiting lists.<sup>130</sup>

Though the magnet-voluntary program was and remains limited to a small number of select students, the positive academic results warrant its acclaim. The program's students have scored an average of thirty points higher on state achievement tests than students attending traditional district schools. Dan Feger, father of a student previously enrolled at

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<sup>128</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. September 12, 1984. A-1.

<sup>129</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. November 3, 1987. B-1.

<sup>130</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. June 17, 1990. A-1.

Balboa Boulevard Elementary magnet school, stated that "The magnet school concept works. You take kids that want to learn and put them together and challenge them and you see tremendous results."<sup>131</sup>

The program, however, failed to embrace a significant portion of the district's minority students. Former president of the Los Angeles Board of Education, Howard B. Miller reflected upon his discussion with two University of California at Los Angeles freshmen from public schools within the city. According to Miller, these students had graduated from high school with excellent grades but struggled at the university level. In a 1989 *Los Angeles Times* article, Miller reported that the students realized their high school grades were inflated in comparison to those of their college classmates, "Why didn't they tell us our grades weren't really A's? Why didn't they force us to do A work?". Popular opinion suggests that this problem could have been alleviated by the magnet voluntary program. Perhaps these students may have been more rigorously challenged by the curriculum of a magnet school.

The magnet program was designed to encourage parents to become "education consumers", and to force schools with less stringent academic standards to improve in order to compete for the districts' selective students. Yet, the state's tax limit policy and the district's overcrowding crisis hindered the growth of the magnet program. For example, only three of the twenty-four newly proposed magnet schools were constructed due to a lack of funding.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. March 16, 1990. B-1.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*



Los Angeles minority students suffered the most as the magnet schools continued to fall short of fruition. Most of the district's magnet programs have been located in the west San Fernando Valley, South Bay or on the Westside of Los Angeles, predominantly white residential areas. Los Angeles Eastside school board member, Leticia Quezada, stated that the concentration of magnet programs in predominantly white neighborhoods throughout the district, "tells a story of institutional racism".<sup>133</sup> African Americans have been forced to travel farther distances to enroll in a magnet program. Because the Unified District was comprised of a 15 percent white population and an 85 percent minority population by 1990<sup>134</sup>, a large portion of the students on the waiting list have been minority students. Conversely, magnet schools located in minority regions of the district struggle to enroll the required number of white students to meet the racial guidelines. The 60 to 40 percent minority-to-majority racial ratio and the demand for entrance into the program, thus, have not contributed greatly to the magnet program's desired effect, integration.<sup>135</sup>

Assistant Superintendent Alexander argued that the magnet schools within the district have been effective. "We have 132 magnet schools and approximately forty to be completed by the year 2000." Alexander stated that the populace responds more favorably to magnet programs than to the Permit With Transportation program because of the magnet plan's higher achievement test scores and superior facilities. In this sense, the populace is responding to the quality of education. Alexander points to increases in the

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. October 16, 1995. 9-1.

<sup>135</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. March 16, 1990. B-1.



student population within the district as the fundamental reason to continue the district's emphasis on the mandatory plan. "The district is currently 89 percent minority."

Alexander admitted that a lack of sufficient funding is a hindrance to the plan and the populace's complaints of waiting lists partially could be a reason for some to favor a breakup of the district.<sup>136</sup>

The magnet program's inability to substantially desegregate the district has been compounded by its cost. In 1990, the program cost thirty-six million dollars per year to provide bus service for the magnet students. Though the state contributed 80 percent of this cost, the district was forced to contribute seven million dollars. Expansion of the magnet-voluntary program could produce positive results. Yet, as the student demand continues to exceed the classroom supply, the magnet program continues to be a moderately successful desegregation plan that is inhibited by exorbitant costs.

### Quality Education

As early as 1985, the Los Angeles School district debates concerning forced busing and voluntary programs were challenged by a general popular concern, for the quality of education. The integration of the Unified District's students coupled with a sound educational program was a fundamental goal of the voluntary and mandatory desegregation plans of the district. However, parents of students and board members were now calling for a more intensified emphasis on well-trained teachers and a safe

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<sup>136</sup> Alexander.

school environment ahead of and instead of petitioning for the integration of the Los Angeles schools. Tinges of this sentiment for quality education first emerged during the election process for seats on the Board of Education in 1985.<sup>137</sup> The construction of a new high school in the city of South Gate marked a move away from the bitter struggle for classroom space. The new high school would temporarily end transfers out of South Gate and allow students to attend school in their own neighborhood.<sup>138</sup> Parents were beginning to demand education rather than integration.

Because minority students comprised approximately 80 percent of the student population by the close of the 1980s, civil rights lawyers acknowledged that including voluntary or mandatory busing as a facet of integration policies were no longer an effective way to deal with segregation in such a large school district as Los Angeles.<sup>139</sup>

By the 1990s, there was a growing sentiment among anti-integrationists to divide the seven hundred and eight square mile school district. Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools, Stuart E. Gothold, opposed the move, stating that a breakup of the school district would cause some parts of city to end up with too many students, while other areas would have a surplus of classrooms. Gothold also stated that the breakup of the district also would be likely to create districts populated entirely by ethnic minority groups.<sup>140</sup>

Monetary resources have also influenced board thinking about dividing the district because many of the new districts would receive less funding. As state allocations are

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<sup>137</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. February 13, 1985. 2-1.

<sup>138</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. July 31, 1986. 9-1.

<sup>139</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. October 16, 1995. 9-1.

<sup>140</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. February 18, 1990.

based on the number of students enrolled in the district, schools in less crowded areas of the district would suffer the most. For example, the West San Fernando Valley would be required to operate under lower levels of spending because the former PWT students would return to their neighborhood schools. Eastside school board member Leticia Quezada declared, "the frustration of parents and community members is not likely to be relieved simply by creating new districts".<sup>141</sup>

Nevertheless, a portion of the parents who support the plan reside in the San Fernando Valley and other suburban, predominantly white neighborhoods. They wish the district to discontinue the busing of inner-city children to the schools within their neighborhoods. "The schools here are becoming overcrowded also," said Reseda mother Jane Moorepark. "It's better for everyone involved if compensation is made in the student's neighborhood."<sup>142</sup> Whether such discontent in the district's current desegregation plans are a reflection of their ineffective results or a reflection of a darker psychosis, it may represent evidence by the populace that desegregation is no longer a primary concern to Los Angelinos. Growing pressure upon the school system to break up Los Angeles into a number of smaller school districts is increasing among various groups. Los Angeles business leaders such as attorney Richard J. Riordan expressed discontent with the current structure of the district. Riordan believes the Unified school district's slow-moving bureaucracy has rendered it "useless and ineffective".<sup>143</sup> Riordan argued for an end to

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<sup>141</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. February 18, 1990.

<sup>142</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. January 6, 1994. A-1.

<sup>143</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. March 11, 1994. A-1.

central administration and instead, supported bestowing individual school-principals with the power over their respective school budget and curriculum.

Amidst the arguments for dividing the district, the question arises: would smaller districts be superior to the current structure of the school system. Gabriel Cortina, Associate Superintendent, has stated that "there would be fighting over the kids and the property".<sup>144</sup> However, the legal and logistic problems that threaten to spoil the plan have not prevented enthusiasm for the plan by both African Americans and whites. This desire to override the current structure of the school district in the face of such formidable barriers exemplifies the eagerness of those who wish to see the district become more efficient. African American and parent Richard Otis declared "I would much rather have my children going to school a few blocks away than send them on a bus to a magnet school across the city. But education is the first priority."<sup>145</sup>

State and county officials estimate that the breaking up of the Los Angeles school district would take up to five years.<sup>146</sup> Richard K. Mason, an attorney for the district, argued that a breakup could take a great deal longer if the measure was challenged in the courts on the ground that it would create racially segregated districts: "If the primary racial effect of the breakup is to increase segregation, on however a small scale, that would arguably be a significant focal point for potential lawsuits".<sup>147</sup>

By decentralizing the Los Angeles school district, proponents seem to be tacitly renouncing over forty years of national and state desegregation policies. In essence, the

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> *Los Angeles Sentinel*. August 19, 1993. A-8.

<sup>146</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. November 14, 1990. B-2.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

breakup of the Los Angeles Unified school district would stop desegregation plans in their tracks, and therefore turn back the progress toward racial balance that began with the *Brown v. Board* decision. As Los Angeles schools become increasingly crowded, and as the Unified school district's once lofty academic reputation continues to recede, public opinion seems to increasingly favor drastic, possibly futile, measures.

### Conclusion

Advocates of school desegregation expected it to favorably alter race relations in society, while also improving the education and welfare of African Americans and whites. Since the inception of American desegregation policies, the Supreme Court has guided our nation toward the ideal of integration. The Court believed that having African American and white children attend school together would change prejudiced attitudes of whites, which would, in turn, rectify discriminatory behavior in society. State and local government bodies devised desegregation policies that were designed to place both races in an environment of equality, advancement, and opportunity. Over forty years after the first implementation of desegregation policies, parents, students, and policy makers--members of the general populace who have immersed themselves in the arena of education-- are questioning the value of the nation's imperfect mandatory and voluntary policies. A move toward reexamining the merits of desegregation policies is evident in Los Angeles.<sup>148</sup> Each Los Angeles desegregation policy has successively faced resistance

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<sup>148</sup> Kunen, James S. "The End of Integration". *Time*. vol. 147, no. 18. April 29, 1996.

and opposition, and those opposing desegregation have been reasserting political power in the early 1990s to end the current policies by ending the Unified District.

The level of dissatisfaction that has been expressed by Los Angelinos has reflected the populace's perceived inadequacies of the school system's desegregation plans. In terms of integration-- both physical and social --and in terms of academic performance, the public expressed discontent with the ability of past and present policies to dramatically better race relations and education. Parents and activists protested mandatory and voluntary busing programs that inflicted a grueling effort upon the students to merely reach their classrooms. The public demanded that facilities be located in their neighborhoods. In the eyes of these parents and activists, the effort at desegregation in the Los Angeles Unified school district has been ineffective for the most part.

The Unified School Board responded to public demands for academic results rather than integration for integration's sake by advancing magnet-voluntary programs in a further attempt to gain physical and social integration and achieve a higher level of academic performance than was available in the traditional, overcrowded Los Angeles public classrooms. In this sense, the board has adapted to a possible change in the populace's perception of the primary goal of integration. These programs have had limited success, hindered by a minority-to-majority percentage racial balance and a lack of funding. Although the magnet-voluntary program improved pockets within the district, it has been largely insufficient as the primary tool for integration.

Current Los Angeles desegregation policies are unable to solve the problems within the district. Is it possible that current conditions actually are intensifying racial discrimination and producing a polarizing effect that has reduced the moderate view to an uninspired

minority? The Los Angeles Unified school district, a school system that must embrace an increase of fifteen thousand students per year,<sup>149</sup> is unique to the nation. Regardless of monetary problems, integration policies-- and the lofty ideals that the general populace place upon them-- are doomed to fail with the existence of *de facto* segregation. The general populace within the Los Angeles school district has tended to favor the magnet-voluntary program's positive results in combination with a busing plan. Although the plan is far from flawless, the majority of discontent with the magnet-voluntary plan derives from the plan's lack of availability within the district. Unfortunately, monetary limitations of the program do not favor an advancement of the plan. The populace's move away from current desegregation policies, and toward an affirmation of "quality education", is a reactionary demand that has resulted from the perceived inadequacies of past and present Los Angeles County public school desegregation policies.

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<sup>149</sup> *Los Angeles Times*. December 21, 1995.



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