

Equity Team: Motivations and Opportunities

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON PTA GENERAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 9, 2021

Presenters: Dr. Scott-Clayton, Ms. Johnson, & Ms. Zipkin (Equity Steering Committee)

Segregation in NYC Schools

New York state has the most racially segregated schools in the nation, led by high levels of segregation in NYC, according to analyses by [UCLA's Civil Rights Project](#)

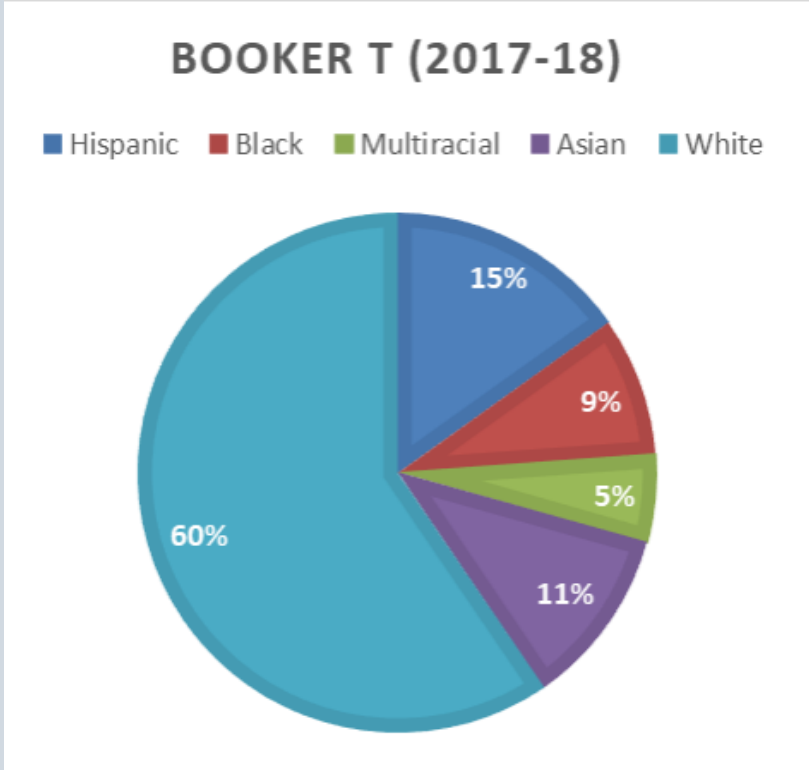
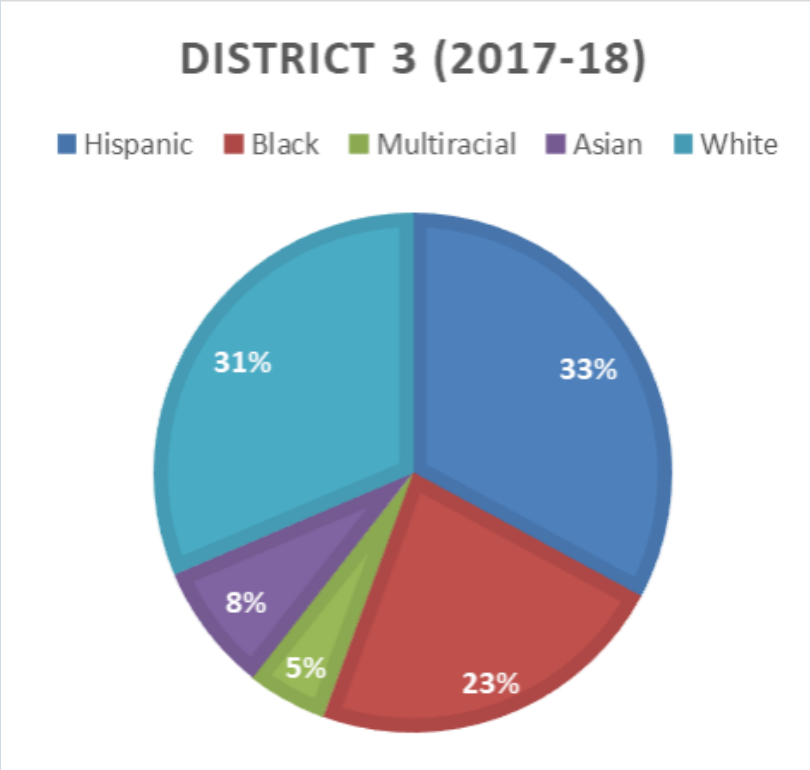
Unlike the South, where segregation has been decreasing over time, in the Northeast including in NYC racial segregation [has actually increased](#) over the past 30 years

- In 1990 approximately 1 in 4 NYC schools were considered “heavily segregated” (90-100% racial minority population); today that number is nearly 1 in 2 NYC schools.
- Schools are increasingly segregated by income as well as by race

Legal cases – including Brown v. Board – and decades of research have documented the deleterious consequences of segregation. There is no such thing as “separate but equal.”

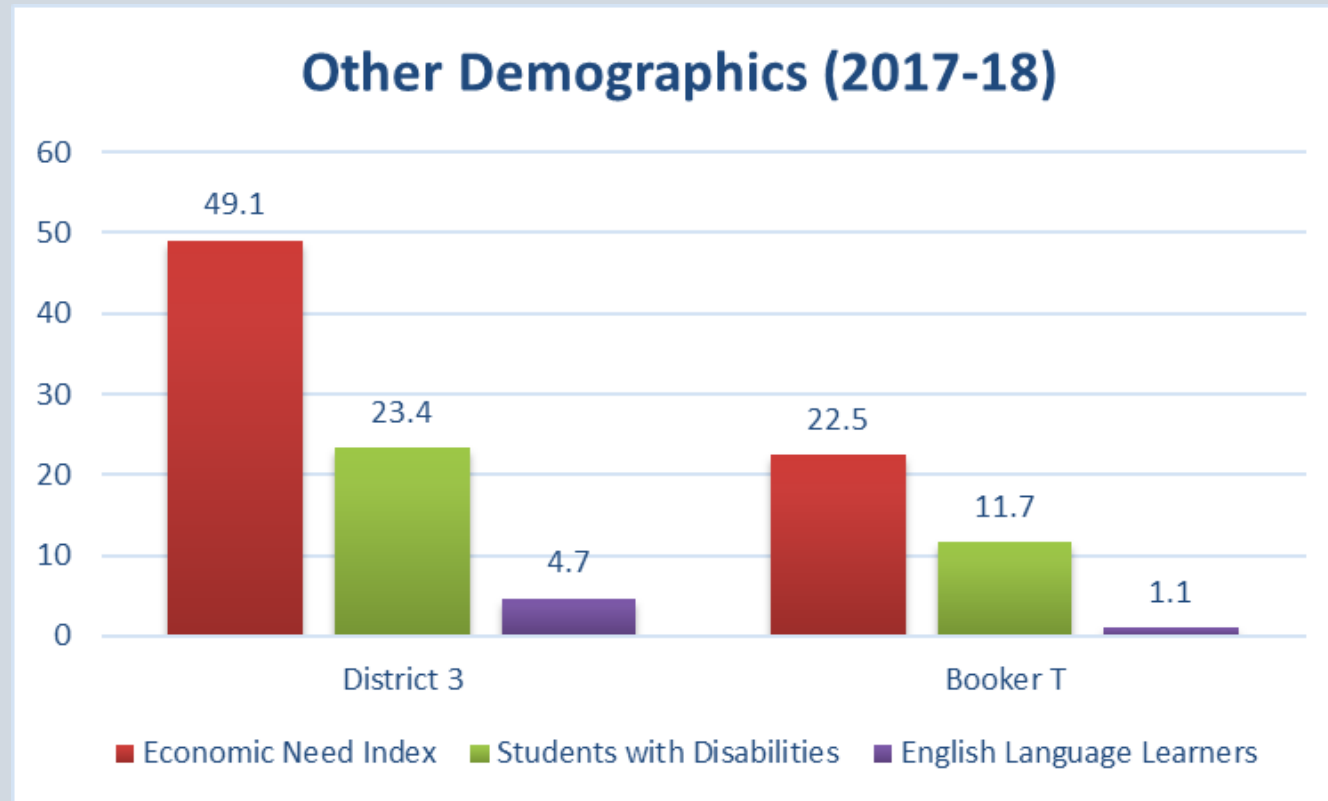
Research also demonstrates that segregated schools harm [all learners](#). The flip side is that diversity generates benefits for all students.

Demographics of District 3 versus BTW



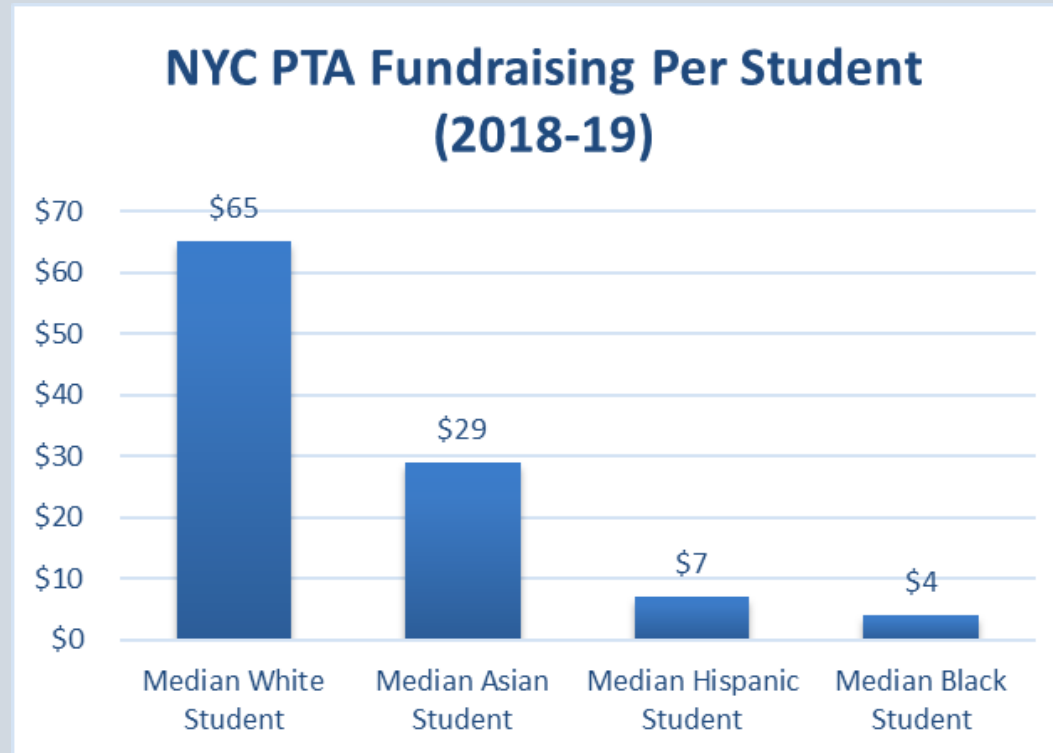
Source: 2019 analysis of NYC DOE statistics by the Equity Team (see <https://www.ms54.org/equity-team.html> "[Data Summary](#)" for full report). Note: These numbers have hardly changed since 2017-18

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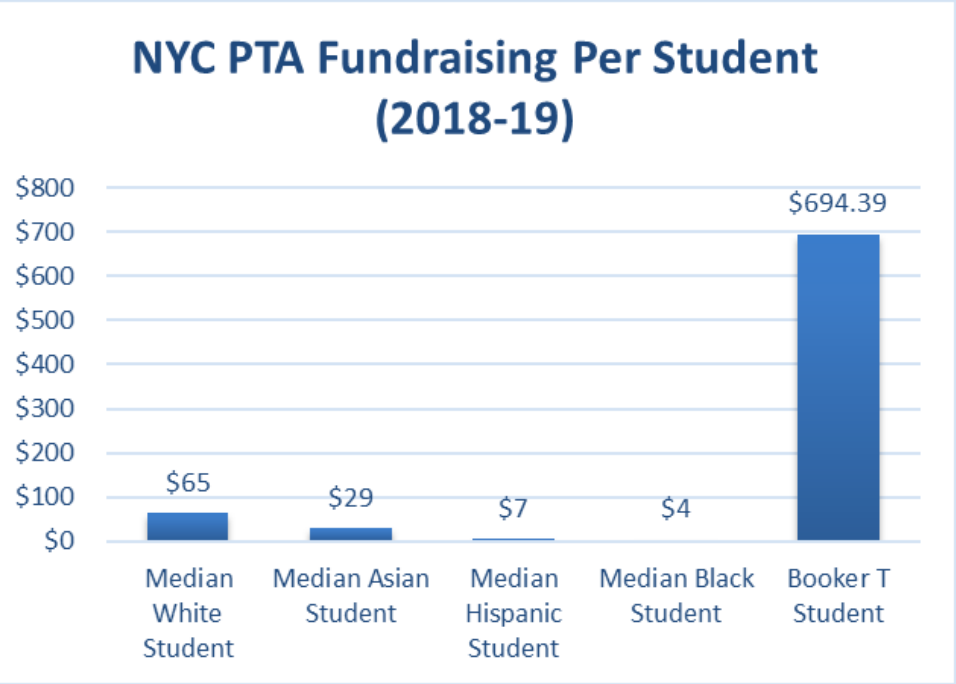
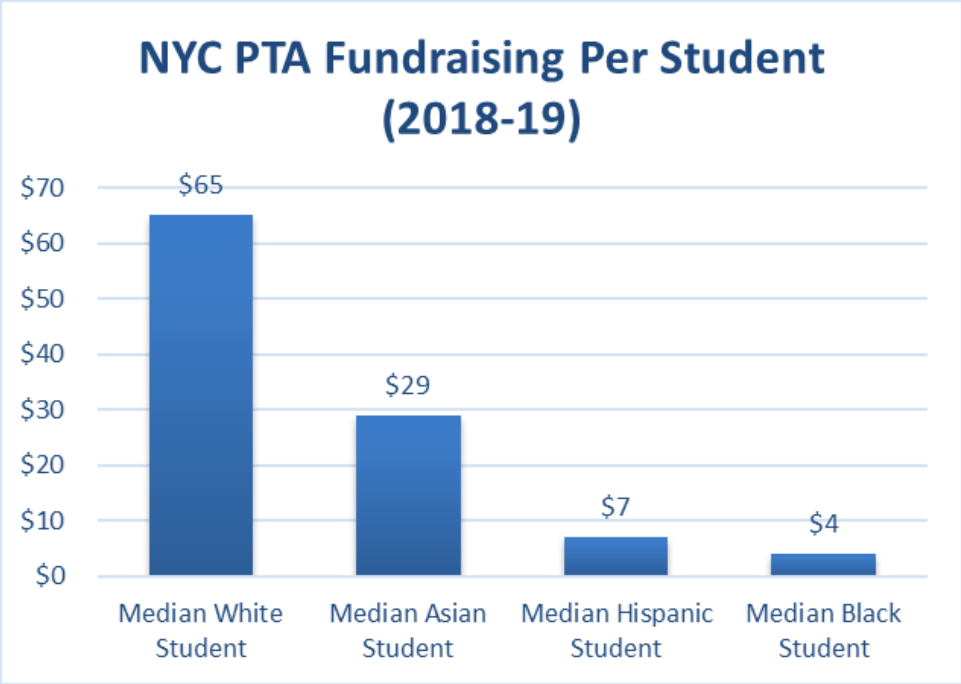
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PTA Resources Are Highly Unequal



Source: <https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/ny-pta-funding-inequities-20191202-zcwa24grcfdjvq2mngvne6sl5i-story.html>;
<https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/government-reports/local-law-171-of-2018>

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The BTW Equity Team

Started meeting in 2018-19

Steering committee currently includes 2 teachers and 1 parent

Our work over past 2.5 years includes organizing workshops and panel discussions, analyzing school data, sharing resources and information with school community (e.g. inclusive reading lists, info about school affinity groups, celebrating cultural heritage months), providing opportunities to meet and share ideas and concerns

This year, “listening tour” with different groups in school community (parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, and students) – to help surface issues and ideas to share with school leadership, and to help provide an equity perspective to school planning decisions

Some of the issues that have surfaced include “cameras-on” policies, how to support struggling readers during the pandemic, and most recently, how to promote a positive, growth-oriented perspective on admissions policy changes.

Admissions changes for next year

Presents an historic opportunity to be part of positive change in NYC

Booker T. Washington has amazing resources in the form of its leadership, teaching staff, parent and student community.

But one thing we are lacking is a truly representative school, and our kids are not immune from the deleterious consequences that result from segregation.

We have heard and seen evidence of racial illiteracy and ignorance in our school community. We have also heard and seen fears expressed about the new admissions policy - fears from some that BTW will change, fears from others that BTW *won't* change.

We would like to voice our enthusiasm for a more diverse and inclusive BTW – in every way – and help support the whole school community to learn from each other, grow, and adapt. But we can't do it alone!

Looking ahead

We are writing up a summary of topics that have surfaced in our “listening tour” this year

We will be working with the PTA to schedule some special presentations on diversity, equity, and inclusion during regularly scheduled PTA meetings

We plan to schedule more regular, open meetings for the remainder of the school year where parents interested in these issues can find each other and share perspectives, or simply learn more about the conversation

We will be working with the SLT to find a way to make equity a more central, integrated focus area within the existing leadership structure of the school

We will continue to post resources and news on the Equity website: <https://www.ms54.org/equity-team.html>

We have a virtual “[suggestion box](#)” you can leave a comment or suggestion anytime

You can also e-mail equity@ms54pta.org