

The Fifth Annual Symposium
on the Social Determinants of Health

Race, Racism, and Baltimore's Future: A Focus on Structural and Institutional Racism

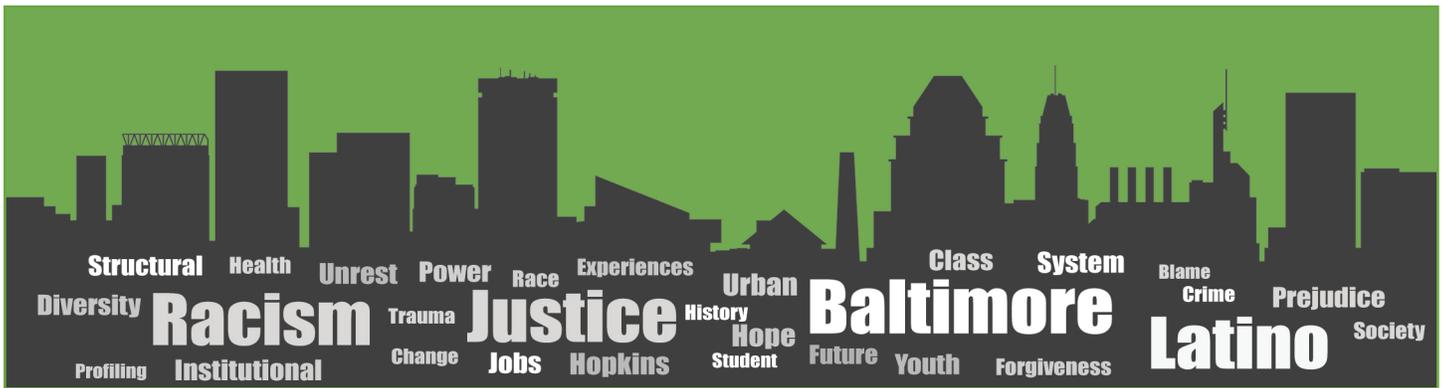


Panel 3: Racism, Racial Segregation, and Education

#SDH2016



Engaging communities, Improving health



Introduction

After the death of Freddie Gray on April 12, 2015, and the protests and demonstrations that shook the city soon after, Baltimore became a symbol of racial strife and inequity and gained the media attention of not just the United States but the entire world. This was not news for the people of Baltimore or for many of the organizations that work tirelessly toward positive change in this city. To many, the death of Freddie Gray did not come as a surprise. To them, inequitable treatment of young, black men was nothing new; and it certainly was nothing that they had not heard, witnessed, or personally experienced. With the whole world watching, this tragedy brought determination; a determination that his death was not in vain, that the spotlight would not go away, and that together, through galvanized momentum, something would be done.

On April 25, 2016, over 700 people came together to attend the 5th annual Social Determinants of Health Symposium on **Race, Racism, and Baltimore's Future: A Focus on Structural and Institutional Racism**. The symposium was hosted by the Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute and the Office of Provost. Attendees were a diverse group from the Baltimore area and beyond. Twenty-one invited speakers ranging from research and legal experts to leaders from non-profit community organizations spent the day in an intense discussion of race and racism in Baltimore. They participated in four panels, sharing poignant anecdotes about their personal experiences and presenting their research, all offering suggestions for ways forward.

This year, for the first time, the symposium also facilitated small breakout sessions in an effort to turn discussion into action, as tangible goals are necessary for making progress in Baltimore.

Speakers participated in four panels sharing expertise on:

1. overcoming structural racism,
2. how racism affects health,
3. how racism, racial segregation, and the education system are connected, and
4. racism and policing.

The goals of this symposium were to:

1. reiterate how salient structural racism is in the lives of people in Baltimore City,
2. acknowledge structural racism as a critical public health concern, and
3. critically assess the changes that we can make to reduce structural racism in our personal lives and in the institutions where we work.

Freddie Gray's death and the events that followed brought determination to the event—a determination that his death was not in vain, that the spotlight would not go away, and that together, through galvanized momentum, positive change would be made.

This report summarizes key lessons learned and challenges as discussed by the symposium speakers. Additionally, successful Baltimore City organizations are highlighted throughout.

Panel 3: Racism, Racial Segregation, and Education

Disparities in education are a symptom of structural racism

Keynote Speaker: **Richard Rothstein**, Research Associate, Economic Policy Institute

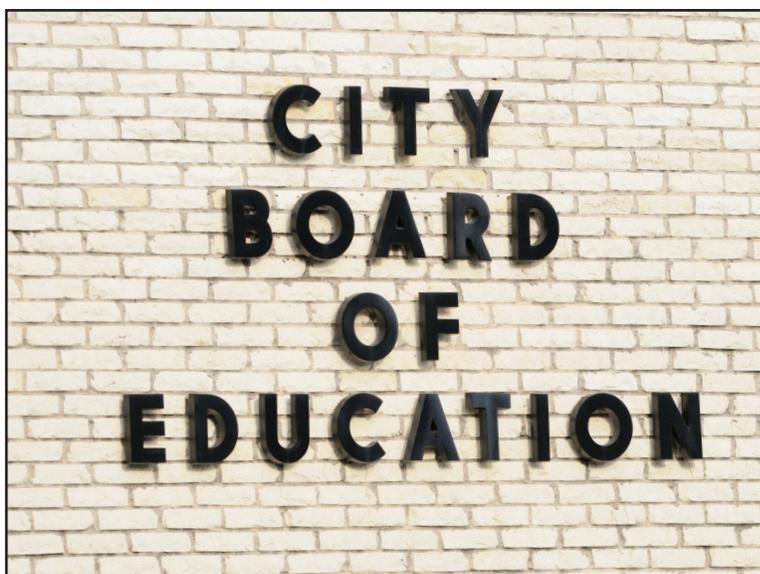
Discussants: **David W. Andrews**, PhD, President, National University, La Jolla, CA

Lisa N. Williams, EdD, Director of Equity and Cultural Proficiency, Baltimore County Public Schools

Verlando Brown, MS, Advocate for health and education

Moderator: **Mariale Hardiman**, EdD, Interim Dean, Johns Hopkins University School of Education

In the 60 plus years since *Brown vs. Board of Education*, Baltimore City has followed freedom of choice. According to Baum,²⁴ this meant that officials avoided talking about race and officially remained silent on whatever racial composition resulted. “Black community leaders encouraged and supported this approach. In the end, unregulated family choice of schools, compounded by white withdrawal from city public schools, produced only modest, temporary desegregation, followed by resegregation and the steady growth of the black student majority.”²⁴ School segregation racially and socioeconomically limits educational opportunities and outcomes.



“There is something deeply hypocritical about a society that holds an eight-year-old inner-city child “accountable” for her performance on a high-stakes standardized exam but does not hold the high officials of our government accountable for robbing her of what they gave their own kids six or seven years earlier.”

Jonathan Kozol

*Still Separate, Still Unequal: America's Educational Apartheid, 2005*²³

Historical Context for Racism and Education*

1826

In 1826, the Maryland General Assembly created public elementary schools for white children under the age of ten. Black families paid school taxes to support white schools, but were unable to attend.

1850

In 1850, 90 blacks and 126 whites petitioned for public funding for schools for free black children, but it was rejected.

1856

In 1856, black churches and white Methodist, Presbyterian, and Quaker congregations opened additional schools for blacks, and 1,200 children attended these schools which were all staffed by white teachers.

1859-1867

Between 1859 and 1867, Black leaders formed the Colored Sabbath School Union of Baltimore to improve black education, which included fifteen black schools. The Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of the Colored People promoted an additional seven schools in 1864, and by 1867 it had established more than a hundred schools, mostly in Baltimore but some on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Additionally, this organization established a training school for black teachers.

1867

In 1867, the Baltimore Association turned its schools over to the government, who assumed responsibility for hiring staff and funding. Black schools had inferior buildings and lower teachers' salaries than white schools, and the board spent money differentially by class and race. The board reserved its greatest investments for building high schools for children in elite white families.

1896

It wasn't until 1896 that a new high school, the Colored High and Grammar Schools moved into their own building, hired its first black teachers, and enrolled about 90 black students.

1897-1906

Enrollment in black schools grew from 901 in 1867 to 9,383 in 1900, yet no black schools were built between 1889-1915. If a building were judged as unfit for white students, it would be transformed into a black school. Due to overcrowding in black schools in 1905, most black children attended school half time.

1906

By 1906, all teachers in black schools were black and had no formal salary or promotion schedule, in contrast to white teachers who were civil servants.

* Unless noted otherwise, this information was obtained from Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism by Howel S. Baum.²⁴

1920

In **1920**, Columbia University Teachers College professor George Strayer assessed Baltimore City schools and recommended renovating, closing, and replacing 34% of white schools and 43% of black schools. Strayer noted that Baltimore spent nearly half as much on nearly all government activities than 14 other major American cities including New York, Newark, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Boston.

1940s

In the **1940s** there were sufficient classrooms and seats for all children, but there was overcrowding in black schools, and children were not allowed to school together. In addition to overcrowding, many black schools did not have toilets with running water, were infested with rats, and lacked adequate lighting.

1954

In **1954**, the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* case took place. It was determined that 'separate but equal' no longer had a place, as separated schools were inherently unequal and legally it was no longer allowed to differentiate white and black schools.

Baltimore decided that students would be allowed to transfer to any school, subject to space availability and administrative approval, which became known as "freedom of choice."

Although *de jure* (ordained by law) segregation was no longer allowed, segregation prevailed.

This condition is known as *de facto segregation*, which implies that it is a result of private preferences and actions.

Choice of schools was seen as freedom from coercion, as such that no child would be required to attend any particular school, which was in stark contrast to policies in Washington, D.C., which began assigning students to schools in racially mixed zones.

This decision meant that now "race was now invisible with regard to public policy, the board would not be interested in any ensuring inequalities between racial groups."²⁴

This plan did not provide transportation, which made transferring an unrealistic option to many families.²⁵

mid-1930s

In the **mid-1930s**, the *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper and the Baltimore Branch of the NAACP, which was revitalized in 1935 by Lillie May Jackson and Carl Murphy, led a national campaign to end school segregation.

In **1935**, Thurgood Marshall joined the fight and sued Baltimore County to build a black high school. Although the NAACP lost this case, Murphy and Marshall organized a statewide campaign to equalize black and white teacher salaries.

They won in April **1941**. The *Afro* played a crucial role in reporting about inequities and publicizing black school conditions.

1943

In **1943**, Baltimore elected a new mayor, Theodore Roosevelt McKeldin, a liberal Republican, who appointed George W. F. McMechen as the first black man to fill one of the three educational board openings.

1950

In **1950**, the school board sought a loan of \$40 million for new construction and to accommodate an anticipated increase of thirty thousand students by **1958**. Plans included 29 new schools, including one new senior high, and one new junior high for black students. Plans would not improve run-down black schools, and they allocated less than a third of the money to improving black schools.

1968

In **1968**, in *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that freedom of choice plans were insufficient to eliminate segregation.²⁶

1971

In **1971**, the U.S. Supreme Court and *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* ruled that school buses could be used in bussing efforts to correct racial imbalances, where black children could be bused to white schools and white children to the black schools.²⁷

1973

In **1973**, in the *Adams v. Richardson* decision, 85 districts across the United States, including Baltimore were named as being in violation of *Swann*²⁵ which meant that the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare was required to take action to actively desegregate Baltimore's public schools.²⁵

1976

In **1976**, Baltimore City filed a suit in which the city achieved an injunction to *Adams v. Richardson* so there was little incentive to cooperate.²⁵ Additionally, according to Baum, Baltimore City has a limited amount of white students and the Reagan administration strongly opposed desegregation efforts, which meant that Baltimore City schools continue to be racially segregated.²⁴

Current Status in United States, Maryland, and Baltimore City

In understanding racial segregation in our school systems in Baltimore, it is important for us to be grounded in the facts, and in the reality of the problem here in Maryland. These data reflect how students in Maryland are often separated by race.

Segregated Schools

- In the **last two decades**, the white proportion of students in Baltimore City Public Schools has dropped from 18.5% to 11.7% to 8% in 1989, 1999, and 2010, respectively.²⁸
- In **2010-2011**, the most segregated schools in Maryland (99-100% minority), termed apartheid schools, also had the highest level (72.8%) of low-income students.²⁵
- In **2010-2011**, 12.5% of the Baltimore-Washington Consolidated-Metropolitan* areas were apartheid schools (99-100% black, Latino, American Indian, and Asian students).²⁵
- Although there has been an increase in multiracial** schools in Maryland (from 7.8% (1989-1990) to 24.0% (2010-2011)) multiracial schools have drawn a much larger share of Asian (49.8%) and Latino (45.9%) than white (20.9%) and black (21.0%) students between **2010-2011**.²⁵
- Both black and Latino students in the state of Maryland are underexposed to white

* In the report *Settle for Segregation or Strive for Diversity* by Ayscue et al.,²⁵ the Baltimore-Washington D.C. metropolitan area includes Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Calvert County, Carroll County, Charles County, Frederick County, Harford County, Howard County, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Queen Anne's County, and Washington County.

** Multiracial is defined as schools that have any three races representing at least one-tenth of the total student enrollment.

students, but the situation is more extreme for the typical black student in Maryland.²⁵ For example, a typical black student attends a school with mostly black classmates (62.5%), but a smaller number of white (19.6%), Latino (10.7%), or Asian classmates (4.3%). This is compared to a typical Latino student who attends schools that are somewhat racially balanced among black classmates (32.1%), white students (27.6%), and other Latino classmates (29.0%).

- In **2011-2012**, Maryland ranked as fourth most segregated state in the nation on two measures of racial segregation, and third most segregated in the nation for another. These measures include the number of black students in majority white schools (14.0%; ranked fourth most segregated), the percentage of black students in 90-100% minority schools (53.1%; ranked third most segregated), and the percentage of black students exposed to white students (19.5%; ranked fourth most segregated).²⁹

Graduation from High School

Based on a report by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicator Alliance (BNIA) and 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 18.9% of Baltimore City residents over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma. The largest percentage of residents without a diploma reside in Orangeville/East Highlandtown (38.8%), Madison/East End (38.0%), Brooklyn/Curtis Bay/Hawkins Point (34.6%), and Poppleton/The Terraces/Hollinas Market (34.6%).^{3b}

Additionally, according to Joseph Popovich from the Maryland Equity Project,³⁰ since 2009, despite the relatively stable rate of black high school graduates across the state (-3% decline), there has been a sharp decline (from 2009 to 2014) in black Maryland residents enrolling as new freshman (-22%). It is hypothesized that this decline is predominantly among students from lower income families.³⁰ Between these years, Baltimore City accounted for 28% of the decline in freshman enrollment despite being the source of only 10% of the in-state freshman in 2009.³⁰

Quality of Schools

Research suggests that highly segregated schools are systematically unequal. Why? Because quality of educational success is fundamentally related to poverty, low parent education, isolation from higher achieving fellow students, and less knowledgeable teachers.²⁵ Children's educational success and the success at the school are intricately linked to the education and resources of homes and communities, the quality and range of the curriculum, the nature of the peer group in the school, and the skills of the teachers.²⁵ All of these things tend to be better in middle class and upper class schools, than those in concentrated poverty (which are typically the schools that are predominantly minority).

Poor Educational Attainment and Poor Health are Closely Related

In Baltimore City, poor educational outcomes are related to poor health. According to research conducted by Virginia Commonwealth University Center on Society and Health, "the average life expectancy in Community Statistical Areas (CSAs) that were in the highest quintile for educational opportunity was 8.5 years longer than in CSAs in the lowest quintile." In addition, drug induced mortality, homicide mortality, and HIV and AIDS mortality all were higher in CSAs with lower educational attainment.^{31a}

"You can have schools where all or most of the children are suffering from these, or similar disadvantages and it is inconceivable that even the best teachers can raise the achievement of these children to anything close to middle class achievement."

Richard Rothstein

Lessons Learned

Given this information, four main themes emerged in the discussions that were held by the symposium panelists. Specifically, in understanding racial segregation in our Baltimore City schools, it was noted that:

- **Educational segregation occurs typically BOTH by race and poverty status.**

Panelists discussed this concept, which has become known as *double segregation*. Residential segregation is a major contributor to school segregation. Orfield and colleagues discuss this problem of double segregation by explaining that “in schools that are 81-100% black and Latino, over three-quarters of the students are also enrolled in schools where more than 70% of students live in poverty. In fact, half of students in 91%-100% black and Latino schools are in schools that also have more than 90% low-income students.”²⁵ Panelists discussed the need to desegregate neighborhoods before racially integrated schools can become a reality.

- **Educational segregation is both a result of *de facto* and *de jure* segregation.**

Rothstein discussed the fact that Maryland (one of 17 states) had *de jure* segregation, and thus has an intense history of racial school segregation.²⁵ Distinction between *de facto* and *de jure* segregation is important. *De jure* is the most obvious form of segregation, which is ordained by the law. *De facto* segregation refers to segregation that occurs as a result of choice. Dr. Rothstein argued that *de facto* segregation is not a reality, and cannot be so because educational segregation is a result of both intentional and unintentional acts of racism through policy and white flight. His argument lies mostly in the “choice” aspect of residential segregation. Can it really be “by choice” if the system was set up from inception to be racially segregated, as was discussed and becomes obvious when we look at the history of education in Baltimore City.

- **Segregated schools put children at a disadvantage.**

Speakers discussed how school segregation limits academic development and the social and economic opportunities for black children, thus perpetuating disadvantage.

- **Black, brown, and Native kids are not broken.**

Although self explanatory, the following quote by Lisa Williams most eloquently elaborates: “*We need to make substantive transformation that is not rooted in looking at children and communities as deficits. Black, brown, and Native kids are not broken. We need to transform our policies and ultimately see the value and worth of all young people and when we do those things, line our actions up accordingly.*”

“They [teachers] have had no exposure to know or understand things differently. What we need to do is work with teachers to be transformed. It is not a blame the teacher conversation and it should be a systems discussion. Change the system. This is a systemic problem.”

Lisa N. Williams

Challenges

- **De-segregating students in schools is not enough.**

Although it is known that students in mixed race and mixed income schools will thrive, simply bringing children into the same buildings does not overcome all the obstacles they face in order to be successful. As was noted by the speakers, inequities for students in segregated schools are not all caused by segregation. In order to address unequal educational outcomes, and to make appropriate, affordable education available to all our children, regardless of their race or ethnicity, we have to take a holistic view in our solutions. That means we need to think about equitable policies to improve transportation systems, housing, and employment opportunities for parents.

“We can racially integrate schools... I’m not arguing that residential segregation shouldn’t be a thing that we discuss... but if we don’t talk about racism and systemic white supremacy that is part of our modus operandi, day in and day out, it won’t matter that we integrate our schools.”

Lisa N. Williams

- **Punishing the teachers is counterproductive.**

Imposing impossible standards on failing school systems and then blaming teachers is not productive for making adequate change for our youth. Yes, teachers, just like medical professionals, need to understand their implicit biases and have appropriate cultural competency training. Yes, we do need to combat this interpersonal level

prejudice, discrimination, and bias; however, we must also address the entire educational system and how it systematically advantages some over others. Panelists asserted that we need to move away from structural inequalities – such as SAT scores and rigid test requirements – that disproportionately disadvantage particular groups of children.

- **It is not just about K-12.**

It is also about representation of racial and ethnic groups in higher education institutions and the difficulties that they face. As panelist Verlando Brown discussed, many public school systems in Baltimore City do not adequately prepare students to attend college. Brown discussed how he was able to succeed in college due to a strong support system that encouraged him to overcome his lack of preparation, yet he also candidly acknowledged that not all students in Baltimore City have this. Public school segregation in Baltimore City limits academic development and the social and economic opportunities for black children, thus putting them at a substantial disadvantage when they enter college.

“Not only was it a big culture shock, but also it was a huge adjustment. Academically and socially I was not prepared for college... I felt frustrated, I didn’t know how to time manage. I remember getting bad marks on my papers and I almost dropped out. But what got me through was that I was able to develop a network of support.”

Verlando Brown

Components to Address

Repeatedly, symposium speakers reinforced that in order to make change in Baltimore City, we must apply racial equity to city programs and projects, and inform and educate where necessary. There needs to be deliberate policy and leadership to truly transform the schools to have strong values and equitable treatment of all students, and an understanding of diversity of culture and learning styles from all levels of education, including leadership, administration, and teachers. According to the Civil Rights Project and authors Ayscue et al,²⁵ there are multiple steps that Maryland should take to address school segregation. For a comprehensive list, please see the link that is provided in the resource section. However, several recommendations are highlighted here:

1. Maryland should develop state-level policies for reducing racial isolation and promoting diverse schools including:
 - a. Diversifying teaching staff
 - b. Requiring districts to report on diversity-related matters for both public and charter schools
2. School officials should work to promote diversity and litigation should be considered against charter schools that intentionally served only one racial or ethnic group.
3. Fair housing should be addressed including a focus on auditing discrimination in housing markets.
4. New schools should be built that are not opened in racially isolated areas.
5. Transfer programs should be used to promote racially integrated schools.
6. Parents should ask school boards to address noncompliance and violations of desegregation plans.
7. Interested citizens should support judicial appointees who are willing to address the history of segregation.

In addition to racial integration in K-12, Chambers, Boger, and Tobin³² suggest a change in the admissions process for colleges such that college admissions deliberately advantage qualified high school students who have come from a high school that has demonstrated a racially inclusive student body and that the student applicants have personally demonstrated the ability to compete in a diverse educational setting.³² This will both improve K-12 diversity but also college admissions diversity.

Examples of Successful Baltimore Organizations

- **KIPP Baltimore**'s mission is to "create and operate public schools in Baltimore City that lead students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and a diversity of skill levels to attend and succeed in four-year colleges."
www.kippbaltimore.org/pub/Mission-/-Vision
- **Building STEPS (Science Technology and Education Partnerships Inc.)** is a nonprofit that helps support minority high school students to attend college and to become science and technology professionals.
www.buildingsteps.org
- **Higher Achievement** is an organization that provides public school students with varying levels of support both inside and outside the school to improve academic achievement. They focus on four social justice pillars including voice, freedom, justice, and solidarity.
www.higherachievement.org/our-program
- **Middle Grades Partnership** has created nine public-private school partnerships that provide "exceptional programming that halts summer learning loss, balances enrichment with skill development and brings communities together to address silos of race, class and opportunity."
www.middlegradespartnership.org

"We need to make substantive transformation that is not rooted in looking at children and communities as deficits.. We need to transform our policies and ultimately see the value and worth of all young people."

Lisa N. Williams

Who we are

Established in 2000, the UHI serves as an interface between Johns Hopkins University and the Baltimore community in which it resides. Together with its university and community partners, the UHI explores ways that the research, teaching, and clinical expertise of the University can be better harnessed for the benefit of the residents of Baltimore.

Our Mission

To serve as a catalyst that brings together the resources of Johns Hopkins Institutions with the City of Baltimore, to improve the community's health and well-being, and in so doing serve as a model of community-university collaboration regionally and nationally.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions from the Community-University Coordinating Council and community planning meeting participants in helping to shape the symposium.

Author:

Alicia Vooris, MSPH
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health



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