Using Specialized Lotteries to Increase Diversity in Schools
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Using Specialized Lotteries to Increase Diversity in Schools

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Brooklyn Prospect Charter School, N.Y.

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Fellow,  
The Century Foundation

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Using Specialized Lotteries to Increase Diversity in Schools

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THE CENTURY FOUNDATION
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Racial Isolation

1 IN 3 WHITE STUDENTS ATTENDS A SCHOOL WHERE MORE THAN 90% OF STUDENTS ARE ALSO WHITE

1 IN 3 BLACK STUDENTS ATTENDS A SCHOOL WITH MORE THAN 90% NON-WHITE CLASSMATES

1 IN 3 LATINO STUDENTS ATTENDS A SCHOOL WITH MORE THAN 90% NON-WHITE CLASSMATES

Growth of Economic Segregation over Time

From 1990 to 2010...

Segregation *between* school districts

- 20% INCREASE

Segregation *within* school districts

- 10% INCREASE

Segregation *within the 100 largest* school districts

- 30% INCREASE

Strategies for Integration

NUMBER OF IDENTIFIED DISTRICTS AND CHARTERS WITH SOCIOECONOMIC INTEGRATION POLICIES, 1996–PRESENT

Source: Authors' research.
Attendance Zone Boundaries

EDEN PRAIRIE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Free and Reduced Lunch in Proposed Configuration of Public Elementary Schools, 2011

Legend

- Scale: 800 Students
- 500 Students
- Free or Reduced
- No Reduction

Attendance Boundaries:
- Cedar Ridge
- Eden Lake
- Forest Hills
- Prairie View
- New School

Data Source: Eden Prairie Schools, NCompass, IRP
Choice-Based Integration

**MAGNET SCHOOLS**
- Burlington School District, VT
- Duval County Public School District, FL
- East Baton Rouge Parish School System, LA

**DISTRICT-WIDE EQUITABLE CHOICE**
- Cambridge Public School District, MA
- Jefferson County Public Schools, KY
- Champaign Community School District Number 4, IL

**CHARTER SCHOOLS**
- Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academy, RI
- High Tech High, CA
- Brooklyn Prospect Charter School, NY

**TRANSFER POLICIES**
- Hartford Public Schools, CT
- Minneapolis Public Schools, MN
- Omaha Public School District, NE
Free Market vs. Diversity-Conscious School Choice

RESULTS OF FREE-MARKET SCHOOL CHOICE IN NEW YORK CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT 1

Free Lunch Dissimilarity Index by Year NYC CSD1 Schools

Excludes NEST, a city-wide school in CSD1  *Substantial data missing this year
Designing a Weighted Lottery

• Which schools?
• What are the diversity goals?
• Which student demographic or risk factors?
• What is the weighting mechanism?
Policy Limitations: Consideration of Race

- **PICS Case:** *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*, 551 U.S. 701 (2007)
Policy Limitations: State Charter School Laws

State Charter School Laws

State law is silent on admissions preferences

State law expressly permits weighted lotteries

State law may be interpreted to permit weighted lotteries for educationally disadvantaged students

State law may be interpreted to prohibit and/or significantly limit weighted lotteries for educationally disadvantaged students

For Federal Guidance, See:

Key Elements for Successful Weighted Lotteries

- Consider the landscape
- Diversity goals before mechanism
- Flexible and adaptable over time
- Couple with recruitment
A little about us…

- K-12
- College preparatory
- Public charter school
- Where excellent teachers prepare a diverse student body to have a positive impact on society, and a lifelong passion for learning

Curiosity : Respect : Persistence : Passion
Brooklyn Prospect Today

2 Charters, 3 Campuses, 4 Schools, 1000+ Students

Elementary       Middle       High

Brooklyn, New York
2015-16 BPCS School Demographics

Race/Ethnicity
- White 36%
- Hispanic 34%
- Black 14%
- Multi-Racial 8%
- Asian/Pacific Islander 6%
- Other 1%
- Native American 0%
- Amer Indian/Alaskan 0%

Free-Reduced Lunch
- Free-Reduced Lunch 45%
- Full 55%

Special Education
- Special Education 17%
- General Education 83%

English Language Learners
- ELL 2%
- Not ELL 98%
How do we create an intentionally diverse school?

- STRONG ACADEMIC PROGRAM
- STRATEGIC FACILITY PLACEMENT
- AGILE ADMISSION STRATEGIES
STRONG ACADEMIC PROGRAM

IB Driven Curriculum

Talented & Diverse Faculty
STRONG ACADEMIC PROGRAM
= Student Achievement

STATE TEST RESULTS - 2015

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>ELA</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
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% Proficient

- NYC Public
- NYC District 15
- Brooklyn Prospect
STRATEGIC FACILITY PLACEMENT

Diverse Districts

District 13

District 15
As our applicant pool grows…

SINCE 2009, THE # OF STUDENTS ON THE WAITLIST HAS INCREASED MORE THAN 25X
AGILE ADMISSIONS STRATEGIES

Our Goal: To admit a fully integrated student body with...

- No ethnic/racial majority
- An even socio-economic split
- ELL & SPED population comparable to the district
AGILE ADMISSIONS STRATEGIES

New York State Charter School Act

Requires:
✓ Admission by random lottery

Permits:
✓ Single sex*
✓ “At Risk” students (eg: English language learners free/reduced lunch, Special Education)
✓ Children of employees

* As described in the charter or consistent with federal law
AGILE ADMISSIONS STRATEGIES

Some strategies we use:

Year 1: Understand your applicant pool
✓ No student demographic preferences
✓ Publicize community-wide

Year 2: Create customized strategies
✓ Weighted lottery
✓ Targeted recruitment

Year 3+: Remain Agile
✓ Tighten targeted recruitment
✓ Build relationships with local feeders
Our percentage of weighted seats made available through our lottery can vary by school and by year.
AGILE ADMISSIONS STRATEGIES

BPCS Elementary School Comparative Enrollment Data

ES FRL Enrollment (total number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Full</th>
<th>FRL</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2013-2014</td>
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<td>2015-2016</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>31</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
INTENTIONALLY INTEGRATED BY DESIGN

What have we learned?

✓ Creating a diverse student body is difficult

✓ Maintaining a racial and economic balance requires deliberate actions

✓ Using a weighted lottery is only the start to creating a successfully integrated school
INTENTIONALLY INTEGRATED BY DESIGN

What are the challenges?

✓ An unbalanced admissions year = echo effect

✓ A diverse student population needs a well-designed academic program

✓ Preferences can give opportunity for “gaming the system”
Brooklyn Prospect Charter School

"a serious shift in the charter school movement"

"Integrating charter schools is long overdue"

"Brooklyn School Achieves Diversity in the Classroom"

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Slate  USA TODAY  dna info  Inside schools
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Required Reading from Education Week:

Spotlight on Charter School Research
This Spotlight examines research on student achievement, student enrollment patterns, and scalability issues in charter schools.

The Charter School Movement
In this e-book on the charter school movement’s first 25 years, Education Week details charter schools’ impact on: public education, school choice initiatives, student achievement, accountability systems, special education students, English-language learners, and equity and integration.
Read now.