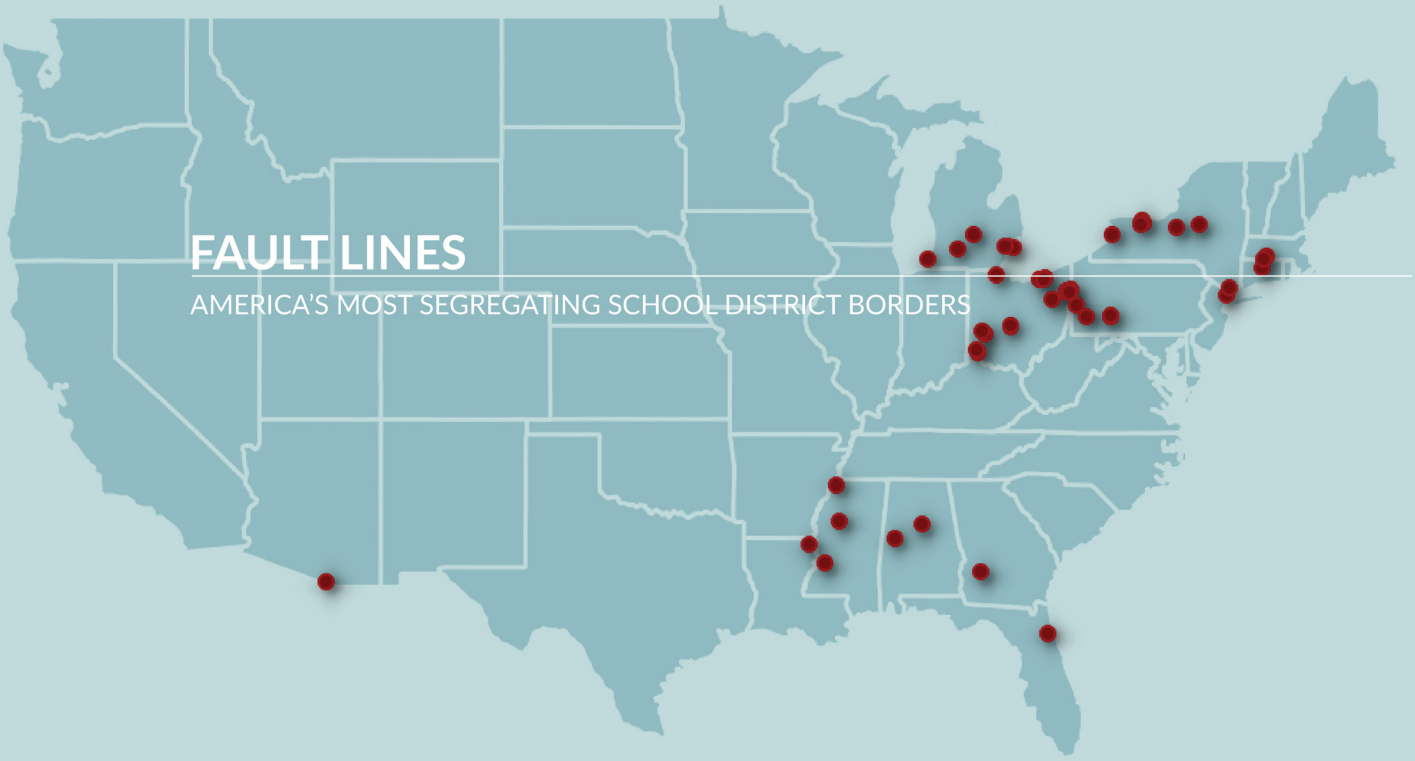


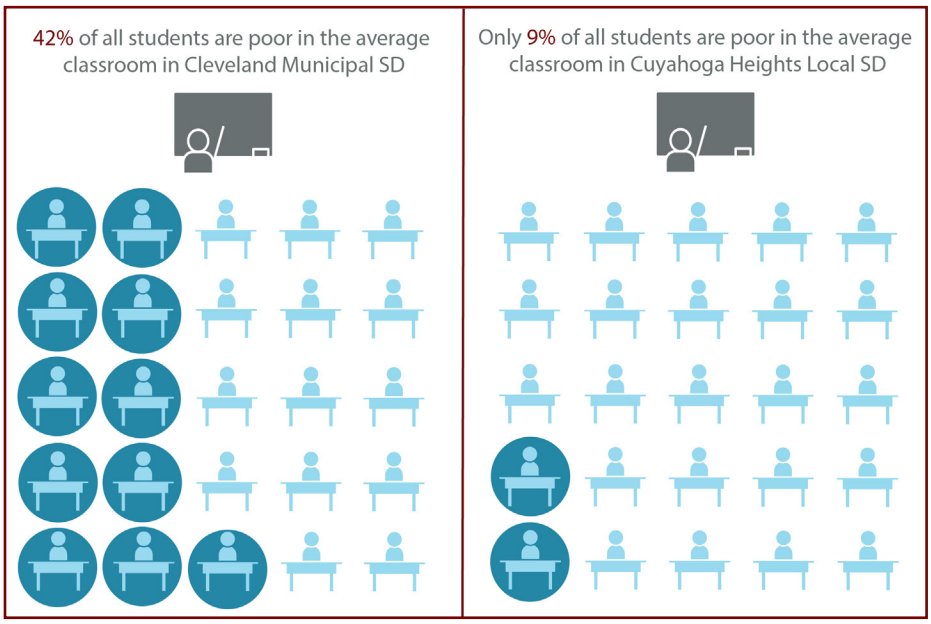
FAULT LINES

AMERICA'S MOST SEGREGATING SCHOOL DISTRICT BORDERS

Updated 2020

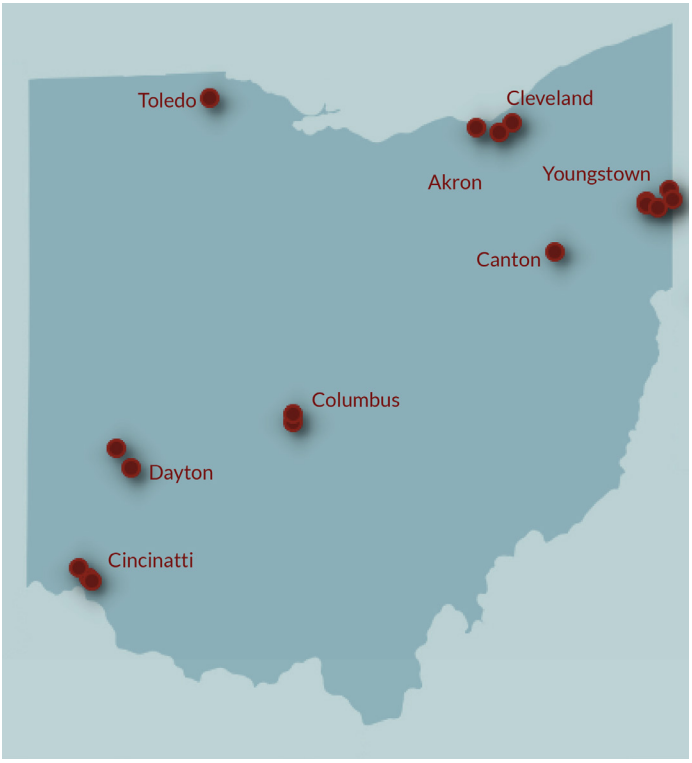
INTRODUCTION

If you looked at the city of Cleveland from above, in an aerial photograph, or from the window of a plane, you would never know where Cleveland ended and neighbors like Cuyahoga Heights or Fairview Park began. The border that encircles Cleveland is invisible and inconsequential at 30,000 feet.



To the students of Cleveland Municipal School District, though, these borders have very real consequences. A shocking 42% of school-aged children in the city live below the poverty line.[1] Meanwhile, just over the border are several better-off neighbors. In Shaker Heights and Fairview Park, that number is just one in ten. In Cuyahoga Heights, the school-aged poverty rate is just 9%—a vast thirty-four points below Cleveland's. The borders of the city school district serve to sort area students into wealthy and poor, ensuring that Cleveland schools will face the extreme challenge of educating students in very high-poverty classrooms. The city's budgets do not reflect the difficulty of this task, however. Despite Cleveland's far needier student population, Cuyahoga Heights has almost 50% more to spend per pupil—$21,020 to Cleveland's $14,202.[2] Shaker Heights, too, has far more revenue than Cleveland, at $20,481 per pupil.

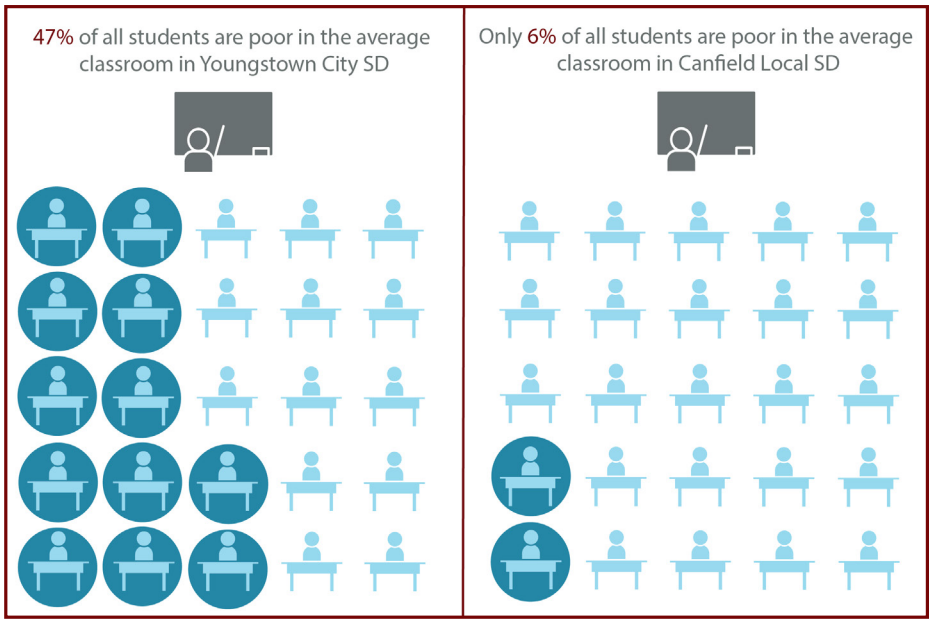
The divides between Cleveland Municipal School District and its neighbors, in terms of both poverty rates and available dollars, have a common culprit: the placement of the school district border. There is a genuine economic gulf between the city of Cleveland and its suburbs. But by drawing the district boundary at the point of that division, the state reproduces that inequality in its school systems.[3] These borders sort students into districts of haves and have-nots, with resources to match. It is no wonder, then, that when the nation's school district borders are ranked based on the degree of income segregation they create, these three borders between Cleveland and its suburbs all count among the fifty worst in the country. Not only that, but along eight of the fourteen borders between Cleveland and its neighbor districts, there are poverty-rate gaps of twenty percentage points or more. These are truly stark divides.



Cleveland is no anomaly, though. The state of Ohio is home to no fewer than seventeen of the country's fifty most segregating school

district boundaries. As its once-thriving industrial cities have fallen on hard times, those cities' school districts have also struggled. But the district borders that separate those school systems from their suburban neighbors have served to quarantine their misfortune, and even as the cities have seen rising poverty rates, the districts next door have weathered the economic fallout well. As a result, seven of the eight major city school districts in Ohio—Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, Canton, Dayton, Toledo, and Youngstown—are on the losing side of at least one of the country's most segregating borders.

The widest disparities in the state are between Youngstown and its neighbors, the local school districts of Canfield and Poland. In fact, these two borders rank as the second- and third-most segregating school district boundaries in America. Youngstown has seen a particularly sharp industrial decline. Once an important steel town, Youngstown began to see its fortunes turn in 1977. That year, the area's main steel producer, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, announced its closure on what came to be known as "Black Monday."[4] Over the following decade, the city lost four more mills, along with 40,000 manufacturing jobs.[5] When these plants closed, the city also saw 400 additional local businesses close and lost upwards of a third of its local property tax revenues, making it clear just how dependent Youngstown was on the steel industry. Property values have only continued to fall in the years since, leaving the city less and less able to fund its schools from local tax dollars.[6] Meanwhile, its children have become steadily needier. Today, 47% of local children live in poverty, and 100% of students enrolled in the Youngstown district are considered to be economically disadvantaged under Ohio's school funding system.[7] Meanwhile, neighboring Canfield and Poland school districts have school-aged poverty rates in the single digits, at six and seven percent, respectively. These forty-one-point gaps are steeper than almost any other in the country.

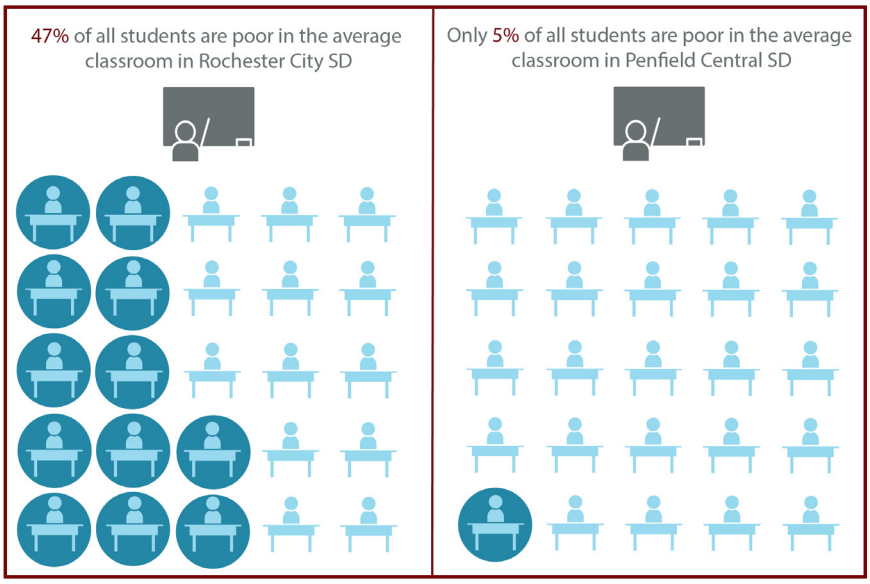


Ohio's divides are especially severe, but the state is far from the only place where school district borders isolate poor students from their better-off peers. This report identifies the country's fifty most segregating school district boundaries. It also tells the stories of a few of the districts that are separated by the nation's widest poverty-rate disparities.

Understanding these divides

This report measures economic segregation along a school district border by comparing the proportion of school-aged children in the districts on either side that lived below the poverty line in 2017. The federal poverty line, which was $20,420 for a family of three in 2017, is quite low.[8] It is barely over a third of the national median household income for that year ($57,652),[9] and well below the eligibility threshold for social supports like free school lunch and food stamps.[10] In Ohio, a family living at the poverty line makes just 39% of the state median household income. In other states that contain a sizeable number

of the country's most segregating school district borders, the figures are similar. In Michigan, which has six borders numbered among the nation's most segregating, the poverty line also amounts to 39% of the state median income. In New York, which is home to nine of the most segregating school district borders, a household at the poverty level makes just 33% of the state's median income. There is no doubt that these families are struggling to make ends meet.



That is why it is so significant that there are school district borders creating such wide poverty gaps. The single most segregating school district border in the country divides New York's Rochester City School District, which has a poverty rate of 47%, from Penfield, whose poverty rate is just 5%. Nearly half of Rochester's school-aged children come from homes where the income level is, at best, 33% of their state's median level. Children in families below the poverty line will face challenges that compound their learning needs in the classroom. Food insecurity, poor healthcare options, and unstable housing are just some of the challenges that these children from impoverished families bring to school. It is a steep challenge, to say the least, for the Rochester City Schools to serve such a large proportion of these high-need students. But Penfield, just next door, has a student poverty rate that mirrors the tony ski town of Aspen, Colorado.

Penfield is not the only neighbor whose border with Rochester City School District marks a large divide. In fact, five of the eight borders that Rochester shares with its neighboring districts are numbered among the most segregating in the country. While it is no small thing for Rochester to serve so many children in poverty, it is something else entirely to do it surrounded by so many more well-off communities. The area has the capacity to do better by its neediest children—but is isolating them instead.

FINDINGS

National Findings

Every school district border in the country marks a divide to some degree. The average boundary separates two districts whose child poverty rates differ by six percentage points and whose median household income levels vary by close to $8,700. These differences are notable, but not terribly steep. This report identifies the borders that mark the starkest gaps in student poverty rates.[1] When borders are ranked by the degree of economic segregation that they create, the widest divides are a vast forty-one points, between districts where nearly half of students live below the poverty line and neighbors with poverty rates in the single digits. Along the nation's fifty most segregating borders, the average poverty rate difference is thirty-three points, or more than five times the national mean. (See Appendix A for a list of

The 50 Most Segregating School District Borders
School Year 2016-17, U.S. Census

the Top 50 Most Segregating School Districts.)The communities served by these school districts live in entirely different economic realities; their median household incomes differ by over $43,000 per year.[11] And though this ranking is based on poverty-rate differences, the districts on either side of these borders are also divided by race. While the average school district border separates districts whose nonwhite enrollments differ by eight percentage points, these segregating borders mark an astonishing fifty-five-point racial divide.[12]

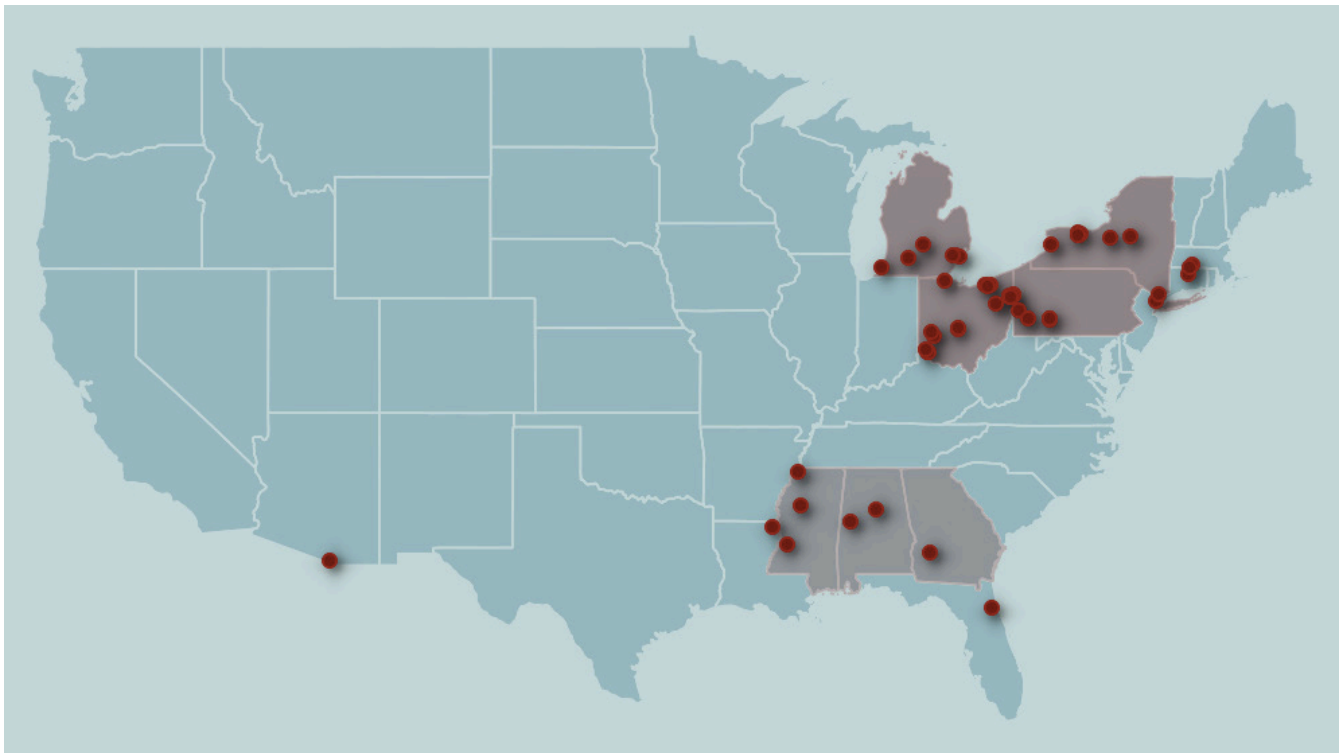
1 This report comprises an analysis of the borders defining all the school districts in the United States, with the following exclusions: districts without geographic area; districts in U.S. territories; districts with no in-state geographic neighbors; districts with extremely low enrollments or student densities; districts whose geography and composition suggest a high level of funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and states for which a high proportion of the total student population was removed from the dataset under the other exclusions. Additionally, school district borders were only analyzed if neighboring districts served the same student-age populations. For example, borders between elementary districts and secondary districts were not analyzed. See Appendix C: Data and Methodology for more information about exclusions.

It has been three years since EdBuild last measured the poverty divides across all school district borders. In that time, much of the country emerged from the Great Recession, and the national student poverty rate declined a bit, by three percentage points.[1] But that's not true in many parts of the country, where cities have been emptying out over time as their economies have bottomed-out. America is dotted with these left-behind neighborhoods—places where industry has left, property values have declined, and poverty levels still steadily climb. In those districts, poverty rates have stayed nearly the same since our last look at the data.

Meanwhile, just over the line from those struggling school districts, neighborhoods on the whole are improving with the national upswing. This means that the school district border is, itself, working to concentrate poverty in those communities' classrooms. If it were drawn differently—shifted in any number of ways, but especially widened, to encompass more economically diverse neighborhoods—the segregation would be less, and students would benefit.

The Inequality Belts

There are pairs of neighboring school districts all over the country with broad differences in school district poverty rates. But when these are viewed on a map, a clear pattern takes shape: one of two belts. In the northeastern part of the country, almost every district pair exists in the former industrial region commonly referred to as "the Rust Belt." In the Deep South, a similar pattern emerges, with many starkly segregated pairs falling within the "the Black Belt." Both of these areas have faced economic disruption as our economies have shifted over time. In the first and second Great Migrations, many African-Americans left the dark, fertile land for which the Black Belt was originally (and ironically) named in the hopes of finding independence and prosperity elsewhere. These waves of Black families emptied many parts of the south and built a new industrial economy in the Northeast and Midwest.



The Inequality Belts

1 This and all statistics on changes in the poverty rate reflect the difference between Census-reported poverty rates for 2014 and 2017. As of this writing, 2017 is the most recent year for which complete data is available, including data regarding both student poverty data and school system finances.

STATES WITH THE FIFTY MOST SEGREGATING BORDERS

State	District Name	Student Poverty Rate	Percent Nonwhite	Segregating Neighbors (US Rank)
Ohio	Youngstown City SD	47%	86%	Canfield Local SD (2) Poland Local SD (3) Hubbard Exempted Village SD (15) Lowellville Local SD (18) Austintown Local SD (33)
	Cleveland Municipal SD	42%	84%	Cuyahoga Heights Local SD (14) Fairview Park City SD (36) Shaker Heights SD (50)
	Cincinnati City SD	38%	76%	Madeira City SD (16) Indian Hill Exempted Village SD (21)
	Canton City SD	44%	56%	Louisville City SD (22)
	Dayton City SD	37%	75%	Beavercreek City SD (29)
	Lockland Local SD	39%	60%	Wyoming City SD (30)
	Northridge Local SD	42%	33%	Vandalia-Butler City SD (32)
	Columbus City SD	35%	77%	Upper Arlington City SD (38) Grandview Heights City SD (47)
	Toledo City SD	35%	64%	Perrysburg Exempted Village SD (45)
New York	Rochester City SD	47%	90%	Penfield Central SD (1) Brighton Central SD (6) West Irondequoit SD (7) Rush-Henrietta Central SD (19) Gates-Chili Central SD (28)
	Utica City SD	41%	69%	New Hartford Central SD (12)
	Syracuse City SD	39%	78%	Westhill Central SD (17)
	Lackawanna City SD	40%	36%	Frontier Central SD (34)
	East Ramapo Central SD	37%	95%	Clarkstown Central SD (48)
Michigan	Detroit City SD	45%	98%	Grosse Pointe Public Schools (5) Southfield Public SD (35) Ferndale Public Schools (37)
	Benton Harbor Area Schools	45%	98%	St. Joseph Public Schools (8)
	Lansing Public SD	35%	75%	DeWitt Public Schools (26)
	Battle Creek Public Schools	38%	65%	Gull Lake Community Schools (44)
Pennsylvania	Clairton City SD	40%	80%	West Jefferson Hills SD (9)
	Greater Johnstown SD	42%	50%	Conemaugh Township Area SD (20) Westmont Hilltop SD (27) Richland SD (41)
	Aliquippa SD	39%	82%	Hopewell Area SD (42)
Mississippi	Claiborne County SD	55%	100%	Hinds County SD (4)
	Tunica County SD	47%	98%	DeSoto County SD (10)
	Leflore County SD	57%	99%	Carroll County SD (13)
Massachusetts	Springfield SD	38%	88%	Hampden-Wilbraham SD (24) Longmeadow SD (43)
Alabama	Greene County SD	48%	100%	Tuscaloosa County SD (31)
	Birmingham City SD	35%	99%	Vestavia Hills City SD (39)
Arizona	Nogales Unified District	45%	99%	Sahuarita Unified District (11)
Florida	Putnam County SD	40%	47%	St. Johns County SD (23)
New Jersey	Paterson City SD	36%	95%	Fair Lawn Borough SD (25)
Connecticut	Hartford SD	35%	89%	South Windsor SD (40)
Louisiana	East Carroll Parish SD	59%	100%	West Carroll Parish SD (46)
Georgia	Terrell County SD	44%	95%	Lee County SD (49)

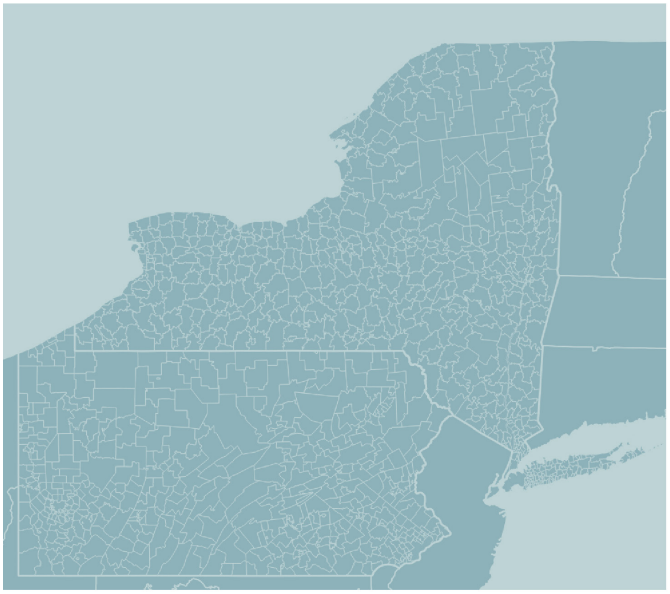
A century later, seven of the fifty most segregating school district borders in the country are found in the Deep South, clustered around some of the rural communities that these families left behind. Today, these areas' industrial-scale farms are highly mechanized and require few workers.[13] In these communities, repeated attempts to reinvigorate the economy through non-agricultural business and industry have largely failed.

What we find in this analysis is that
the problem is not necessarily that local economies change;
it is that the school district borders do not.

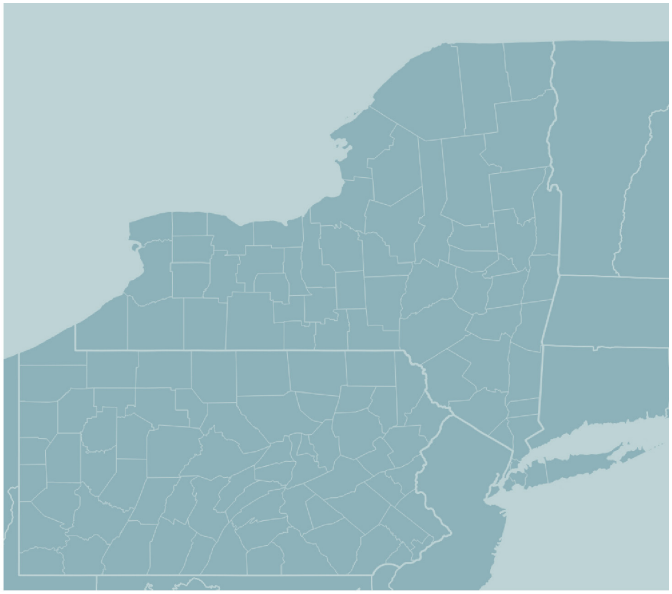
Meanwhile, the industrial corridor that received so much of this migration is now home to a preponderance of highly segregating school district borders. These divides are clustered around cities that were left behind when the economy turned once more, this time affecting factory employees and other industrial workers. In fact, thirty-seven of the country's worst borders are concentrated in only four states in this region: Ohio (host to seventeen of nation's the most segregating borders), New York (nine of these borders), Michigan (six), and Pennsylvania (five). (See Appendix B for a full count by state.)

It is widely acknowledged that the regions highlighted in this report have seen decades of persistent poverty. What is not as well known is that the need is not uniform. In many places, the families next door to particularly struggling school systems are doing just fine. What we find in this analysis is that the problem is not necessarily that local economies change; instead, it is that the school district borders do not.

The majority of states in which the most segregating borders are located are those with many extraordinarily small school districts.Consider Pennsylvania, which has 501 school districts—quite a high number, by national standards. Pennsylvania is one of several states in the Northeast to draw most of its school districts at the municipal level: Almost every town and city has its own district. New York, with its 682 school districts, is similarly organized. In these and several other states in this region, school districts have been set at the municipal level for many years, and the system is rarely questioned. That doesn't mean it is the best arrangement for students, however. It makes school districts vulnerable; when a



School Districts in NY & PA
School year 2016-17, U.S. Census



Counties in NY & PA
School year 2016-17, U.S. Census

town falls upon hard times, its school district inevitably faces great challenges. Student poverty rates are bound to rise, increasing resource needs just as local tax dollars become scarce. Meanwhile, the town's next-door neighbors could be thriving micro-economies, and the children in the struggling district would not benefit at all. For them, the district border is effectively a wall, one that separates them from both school resources and their fellow students. It is no wonder, then, that New York and Pennsylvania are home to so many of the country's most segregating borders. New York contains fifty-two school district borders that mark a poverty divide of at least twenty percentage points. Pennsylvania has sixty-two such borders. In fact, these lines separate districts serving a stunning 29% of Pennsylvania students.

States with tiny, arbitrary borders have consistently produced the most economic and racial segregation that EdBuild has found across our many analyses through the years. If, for instance, these states were to have only as many school systems as they have counties (sixty-two for New York, or sixty-seven for Pennsylvania), the districts would likely be far more inclusive, with much less interdistrict segregation. Meanwhile, those districts would be larger, but not unmanageably so; they would have roughly as many students on average as those in nearby Maryland. The states need not go that far, of course. There is a broad range of possibilities between sixty districts and 600. But this thought experiment suggested by our findings demonstrates that in the states with the greatest number of highly segregating borders, school districts are far more divided than necessary. As a result, when towns face economic difficulties (like the many that afflicted the Rust Belt's former manufacturing hubs), their students are deeply affected by hyperlocal hardships. If those same communities were transplanted into a state with broader district boundaries, they would simply be high-need corners of wider districts. Their schools could continue to have ample local resources and socioeconomically diverse classrooms. It is these borders that turn economic downturns into educational destiny.

States with the most Top 50 borders				Select states with no Top 50 borders		
State	School districts	Enrollment		State	School districts	Enrollment
Michigan	543	1,327,204		North Carolina	118	1,457,357
New York*	681	1,608,157		South Carolina	85	747,868
Ohio	613	1,590,877		Tennessee	157	988,633
Pennsylvania	501	1,576,334		Virginia	137	1,286,711
*New York excludes New York City School District						

In short, economic troubles in a community need not mean concentrated poverty in its school system, and they certainly do not create automatic disparities between the district and its neighbors. When school district borders cordon students into very high-poverty districts on one side of an arbitrary line, they thereby preserve unnaturally low-poverty districts on the other side, causing massive gaps in opportunity. The school districts in these regions are drawn in such a way as to create maximum division between students of different economic classes—and a shift in those lines could make all the difference. Yet very few states have even considered redrawing their borders at any point in the last several decades, even as economic inequality has been skyrocketing in the Rust Belt, and has been persistent in the Deep South.

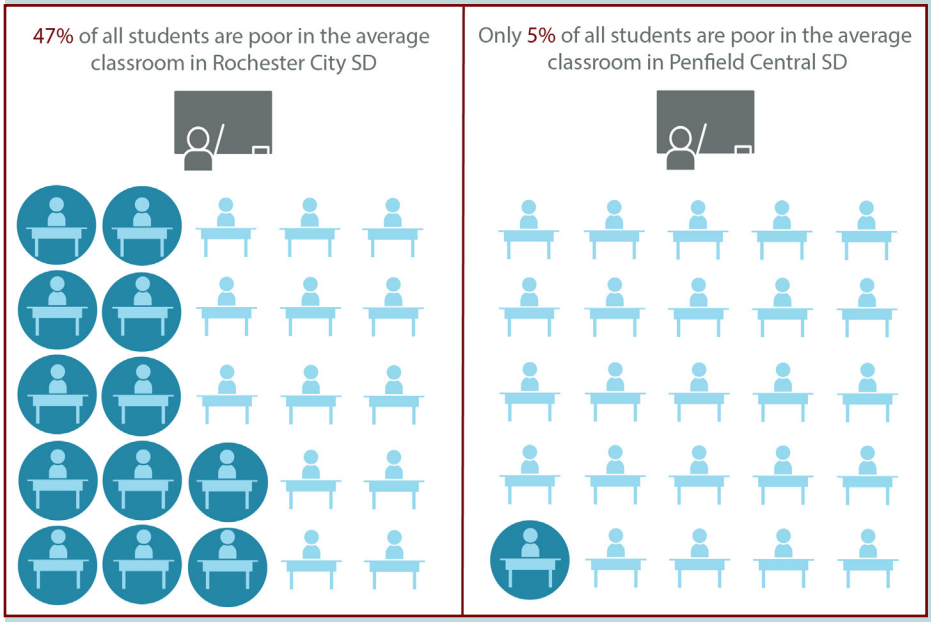
School district borders aren't ordained by a higher power – they're fully controlled by the state legislature. But the governments of the states that contain these highly segregating borders have abdicated their responsibilities to their children. As these lines curtail any chance at an equal education for the students behind them, their legislatures have done nothing to correct them.

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT | PENFIELD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

The most tragic school district divide is between Rochester City School District, where 47% of children live in poverty, and Penfield Central School District, with a 5% poverty rate, and five of Rochester's eight borders are among the most segregating boundaries in the nation. Almost a century ago (in 1929), a countywide school district for the area was proposed.[14] Such a district would have proven more stable in both finances and student demographics, but it was roundly rejected by all of Rochester's suburbs, including Penfield. Instead, the district's borders continue to match the city limits. As a result, as the city has seen a decline in fortunes, so have the district's students.

Rochester's economic isolation comes out of its history. In the 1950s and 60s, Rochester saw an influx of black residents seeking manufacturing jobs.[15] At the time, Rochester was home to three big industrial employers: Kodak, Bausch & Lomb, and Xerox.[16] But the newcomers did not see full benefits from the city's mid-century prosperity. Major companies were not eager to hire nonwhites, and longstanding redlining kept black residents hemmed into poorer sections of the city.[17]

Meanwhile, white city residents began to leave for the suburbs.[18] Penfield saw rapid growth as a result, and it took steps to preserve its new affluence. In 1969, the suburb adopted a policy of a type that would come to be known as "exclusionary zoning": it limited new development almost entirely to single-family houses and set minimum sizes for homes and yards.[19] Town officials also took more informal steps, refusing to support the construction of low- and moderate-cost housing even where it was permitted. Together, these actions increased the cost of Penfield's housing beyond the means of lower-income families.



The divide between Rochester and Penfield only widened over time. The city was so dependent on its local industrial titans that it was effectively devastated as they left. First, Xerox's headquarters decamped to Connecticut in 1969.[20] The population dwindled decade by decade, from over 330,000 in 1950 to 220,000 by 2000.[21] The slide culminated when Kodak went bankrupt in 2012, and Bausch & Lomb moved to New Jersey in 2013.[22]

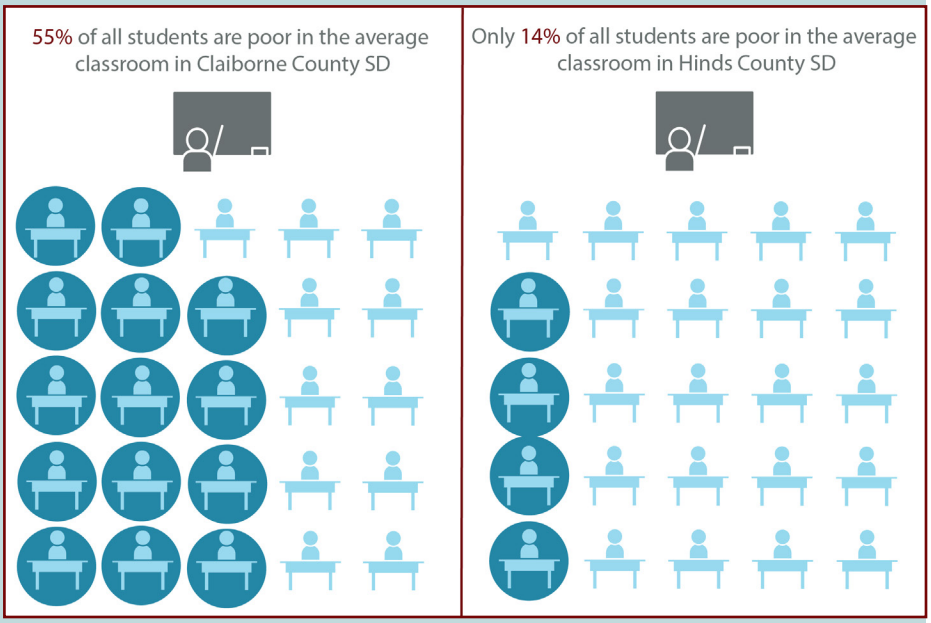
Along the way, the poor nonwhite Rochester residents left behind tried to fight the policies that kept them hemmed in to a declining city. In 1972, they filed the case that came to be known as Warth v. Seldin, arguing that Penfield's exclusionary zoning ordinances violated their constitutional rights.[23] The case made its way to the Supreme Court, which ruled in 1975 for Penfield and its pricy housing stock. The decision said that even if the suburb's policies made it effectively closed to low-income families, the harm was too indirect to be actionable. The ruling showed the way for every community that wants to keep its home prices up and poorer residents out.

The border between the municipalities of Rochester and Penfield operates exactly the same as the border between their school districts. Our school finance system, with its heavy reliance on local property taxes, gives every wealthy community an incentive to do what Penfield did. First, turn down proposals for a wider, more inclusive school district and then, keep the walls up, property values high, local dollars in, and needy kids out.

CLAIBORNE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT | HINDS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

There is a 41-point difference between the poverty rates of Claiborne County School District in Mississippi, where 55% of children live below the poverty line, and neighboring Hinds County, where 14% do. This dramatic gap makes the border between these districts the fourth-most segregating in the country, and Claiborne County is, in its own right, one of the highest-poverty districts in the nation. In fact, the district's median household income of $24,601 hovers just above the federal poverty line.

Claiborne schools need more resources than the average district in order to properly support their very high-need students. But the district's ability to raise revenue has been hampered—not just by low local property values, but also by decisions that have been made by both the state and federal governments without sufficient regard for the local community.



The first of these decisions dates back to the early 1950s, when the United States Army Corps of Engineers launched an effort to dam and redirect the Mississippi River[24]. The plan did not properly consider how the dam would flood portions of Mississippi, destroying timber and devaluing the land. Six hundred and fifty-seven of the acres affected by this project are in Claiborne County School District. The flooding of this land takes a sizeable portion out of the district's property tax base. This makes it harder for the district to serve its high-need students.

A second, larger bite was taken out of Claiborne County's tax base by the state of Mississippi. The county is home to Mississippi's only nuclear power plant, which was built in 1985[25]. Any community might be wary of the risks of hosting a nuclear plant, but there is usually an offsetting benefit: the tax revenue that the plant provides. But just one year after the plant opened, the state passed a new law that exempted nuclear plants from local property taxes. This law stripped any benefit of the plant from Claiborne County School District, robbing its schools of important tax revenue. Meanwhile, other kinds of power plants continue to generate property tax revenue for their districts—districts whose populations are, on the whole, less needy than Claiborne's. A lawsuit filed by Claiborne County in 1986, when the law was passed, was ultimately settled for a mere $2,000,000. A newer lawsuit filed in 2009 was ultimately dismissed, and there is no further recourse through the courts. Ultimately, the community continues to bear the risk of a local nuclear plant without reaping any benefit for its schools.

Meanwhile, Claiborne County kids learn in a district that is poorly outfitted to serve them. One government record notes that the district's only middle school has classroom fixtures dating to 1941[26]. In Hinds County, by contrast, voters recently approved a $59.9 million bond issue to make improvements at each of the district's nine schools, including new gyms, batting cages, and ball fields; two performing arts facilities; and an expanded tech classroom[27]. Students' experiences in the two districts are only getting more divergent.

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

It would be easy to see the system of divisive borders as a fait accompli, and the divides they create as inevitable. School district borders, however, are not facts of nature. They are drawn by people, often in service of clear financial interests.

In nearly every state, the school funding system is built on top of a foundation of local property tax receipts. What a district can raise locally does a great deal to determine what funding is ultimately available to its schools—and the borders of the district dictate what it can raise locally. That is because the border defines two things: not only the community served by a school district, but also the territory that falls within its tax base. When the border outlines an area with high property values, that school system will almost certainly benefit from high local tax receipts. This serves the interests of better-off communities, who have every financial incentive to draw and maintain borders that keep local dollars in.

School district borders are not facts of nature.
They are drawn by people, often in service of clear financial interests.

Those same borders, though, can also work to keep needy kids out. High-value properties tend to be bought and occupied by high-income families, who then send their kids to the schools supported by their ample property taxes. This, too, is aligned with the financial interests of the better-off communities. Low-income students have resource-intensive needs. When they are kept on the far side of the border, the well-off can raise and spend local tax dollars only for those that meet the narrowest possible definition of "neighborhood kids."

The incentives of this school finance approach produce a system that concentrates poverty in some districts—often property-poor districts—leaving other districts with rich tax bases and very low levels of student poverty. Often, these districts are side by side, separated by nothing but an invisible border. The effects, though, are clear for all to see. Students in high-poverty classrooms face significant challenges. Research has repeatedly shown that economic segregation is a major driver of achievement gaps; when schools serve predominately poor populations, their students have lower achievement scores and progress more slowly.[28] It is clear that any student, including one from a low-income household, would be better off in an economically mixed school. But schools can only be as integrated as their district compositions allow; as school system poverty rates climb, it becomes all but impossible to integrate schools and classrooms within the district.

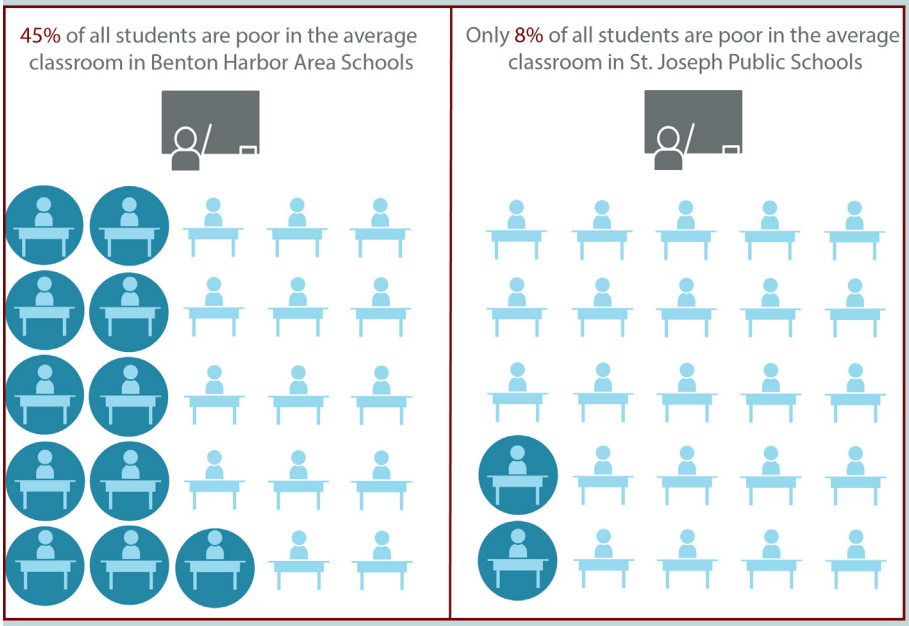
Moreover, once students are cordoned into richer and poorer school districts, the problem becomes self-perpetuating. High-wealth areas can generate more resources for their schools. Parents see these well-funded schools as a reason to move to a school district—but when an area's schools turn it into an in-demand neighborhood, home values rise. Only families that can afford these high housing costs can move to the district. As a result, the tax base increases in value, generating even more local funding for local schools. As the cycle continues, the student population is made up more and more of students from high-income households. These well-off students are the ones that benefit from healthy school budgets. Meanwhile, poorly funded districtsare not seen as desirable; home prices drop or stay low, and the students in those districts are those whose families cannot afford the high housing costs in other school systems. Over time, poverty becomes yet more concentrated in property poor school districts.

Recent research bears out that this is, in fact, what happens—and that, moreover, while neighborhood segregation was once the driving factor behind school segregation, today, the reverse is true. Between 1990 and 2010, income segregation rose in America's major metropolitan areas only among households with children.[29] As income inequality widened over time, better-off families used their extra dollars to move to certain school districts, leaving lower-income children behind in school systems with ever-rising poverty levels. This vicious cycle further disadvantaged students who need more resources, not fewer, in order to succeed.

BENTON HARBOR AREA SCHOOLS | ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The eighth-most segregating school district border in the nation separates Benton Harbor Area Schools in Michigan, where the child poverty rate is 45%, from St. Joseph Public Schools, where it is 37 points lower. There is a similar gap in the two districts' household income levels and median property values, which are less than half in Benton Harbor than what they are in St. Joseph.

In the early twentieth century Benton Harbor's local industrial behemoth, the Whirlpool company, drew black and European migrants seeking factory work.[30] Meanwhile, Benton Harbor's existing white population began to leave for St. Joseph, among other suburbs. By 1980, Benton Harbor was predominantly black and poor and saw increasing community challenges over the course of the 1980s.[31] The border cordoned off Benton Harbor's troubles, though, and St. Joseph persisted as a nearly all-white town whose beaches and antique stores made it a vacation destination.[32]



Whirlpool still looms large in Benton Harbor, but not as a middle-class employer. The company moved its factories in 2010.[33] Its corporate operations are still nearby, but the company recruits globally for executives rather than hiring locally. Whirlpool makes a show of investing in the city, but does not do much for its schools; a consulting report once actually advised the business community not to make a marquee issue out of improving Benton Harbor schools for fear that highlighting their struggles could harm recruitment efforts.[34] Instead, through various nonprofit arms, the company has been buying and developing city land, taking advantage of government programs that are meant to spur investment.

One such project is Harbor Shores, a lakefront development including a golf course, an inn, a marina, and high-priced houses. The construction spans parts of Benton Harbor, St. Joseph, and nearby Benton Township.[35] It is powered by various state tax breaks and reimbursements that are intended to aid development in distressed areas.[36] Portions of the development were set for St. Joseph, but construction projects in the more affluent town would not have been eligible for any state financial assistance. To qualify, St. Joseph transferred some of its land into Benton Harbor. Once the project is over, though, the land—and the high-priced housing built on it—will revert to St. Joseph.[37]

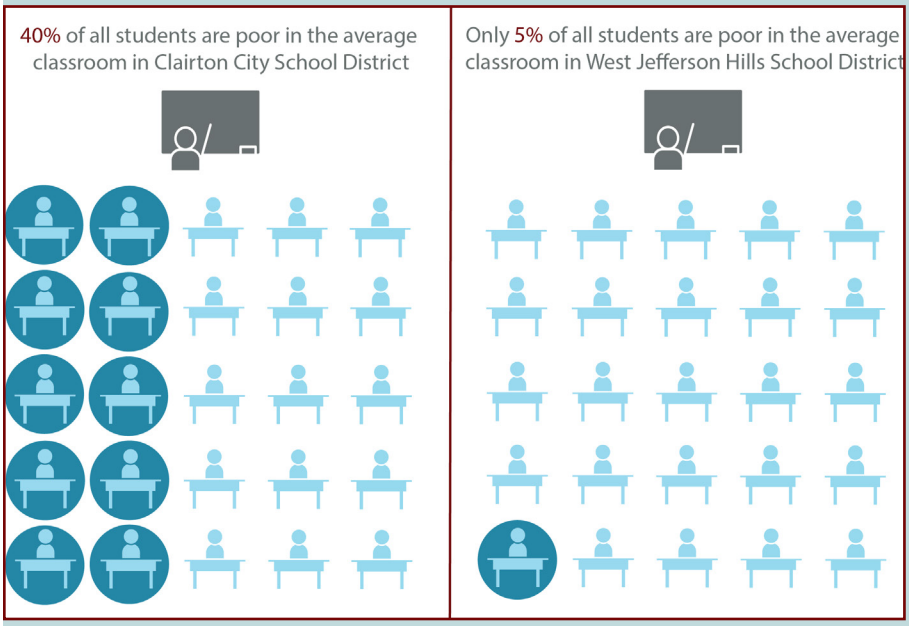
This manipulation of the municipal border is a clear example of a wealthier community getting to have it both ways. St. Joseph grew through white flight from Benton Harbor. Its school district border separates its families and its property from Benton Harbor schools, keeping its home values high and student poverty rates low. Yet when it was in St. Joseph's interest, a border could be moved—and by doing so, St. Joseph actually profited from the poverty of Benton Harbor. Meanwhile, the schools of Benton Harbor are not going to benefit from half-million-dollar houses that will soon be on the other side of a redrawn border. Instead, while the adults in the community haggle over tax breaks, Benton Harbor's kids attend school in a district that is $18 million in debt.[38]

CLAIRTON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT | WEST JEFFERSON HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT

The ninth-greatest economic divide in the country is between Clairton City School District in Pennsylvania, where 40% of school-aged children live in poverty, and West Jefferson Hills, where 5% do. Clairton is in what was once Pennsylvania steel country.[39] In other post-industrial towns, the story is largely about what happens when the main employer closes up shop. More important for Clairton, though, is what can happen when a company stays, and plays an outsized role in the town's financial picture.

Clairton Coke Works is the city's primary remaining industrial employer and provides about a third of local tax dollars.[40] In exchange, though, the town is paying a high price. The plant produces sulfur dioxide, and this has given Clairton particularly terrible air quality.[41] The average elementary student in Clairton lives just one mile from the Coke Works, leading to a child asthma rate of 18.4%, a troubling 80% higher than the 10.2% rate for Pennsylvania overall.[42] Clairton residents sued the Coke Works' owner, U.S. Steel, in 2017, arguing that pollution from the factory was diminishing local quality of life.[43] Proving their point, a fire crippled the plant's air pollution controls on Christmas Eve, 2018, leading to even-worse levels of air contaminants.[44] This crisis did not serve as the wake-up call that one would hope; there was a second, similar fire the following June.[45]

Despite the dangers posed by Coke Works, Clairton does not want to see the plant close. After the December fire, union groups came to meetings about the incident to advocate against idling the plant.[46] In an interview, Clairton Mayor Rich Lattanzi articulated the challenge, saying, "Do you realize what would happen to the city of Clairton and to the city's school district if we closed that mill down?... We'd be like a ghost town."[47] U.S. Steel has taken advantage of Clairton's dependence to leverage lower taxes. In 2013, it appealed the assessment of its properties and briefly managed to reduce the value of the coke plant from $13.6 million to just $2.4 million.[48] After Clairton School District and other affected school districts sued, U.S. Steel settled at $8.1 million.[49]



The reliance on local property taxes for schools creates a bitter irony for school districts like Clairton, where the plant pollutes the air even as its dollars keep the district afloat. Clairton needs those local dollars; the district's state funding is not even sufficient to bring Clairton's per-pupil spending up to parity with West Jefferson Hills. Meanwhile, Clairton bears greater costs given the needs of its student population. It goes the extra mile with school-based health services like asthma care and vision and dental screenings, and employs special staff, like a social services coordinator and homeless liaison.[50]

West Jefferson Hills, though, has not had to make those kinds of hard choices about how to use limited funds. As a long-desirable school district, it is seeing rising enrollments, and new homes are being built in the town.[51] Residents have approved seven straight years of tax increases for schools.[52] On the strength of those revenues, the district opened a new high school this fall, complete with an eight-lane pool, two gyms, and a Broadway-caliber theater.[53] Meanwhile, West Jefferson Hills has kept its doors closed to Clairton. In 2011, the smaller, poorer district was struggling with state aid cuts and reached out to West Jefferson Hills, along with other neighbors, seeking a possible school system consolidation.[54] They were turned down, and the divide between Clairton and its neighbors persists.

THE PATH FORWARD

Two aspects of America's school system work to create the divides highlighted in this report: first, the locally-based school funding system incentivizes powerful communities to maintain school districts that cordon wealth from poverty, keeping property tax dollars in and needy students out. Second, our network of school district borders—especially those in states that draw their districts narrowly, and particularly when borders are drawn along municipal lines—serves to entrench economic segregation, reproducing in schools the disparities that exist between neighboring communities. Neither of these elements is a necessary feature of American education, however. In a handful of states, other approaches offer a way forward.

Consider, for instance, the state of Vermont, which until recently had narrow, town-level school districts, just like Pennsylvania and New York. It has embarked on a campaign of district consolidation, which has created somewhat broader school systems.[55] More importantly, though, is what Vermont lacks: a school funding system rooted in local property taxes. The state's schools are supported out of a state property tax, and the property values in an individual district have no impact on the funding raised for that district.[56] It is perhaps no wonder, then, that none of the country's most segregating school district borders appear in Vermont. In fact, there are only two district boundaries in the state that mark a divide of 20 percentage points or more. Vermont is proof that states can take a different policy approach. They can move away from the locally rooted funding system in favor of one that is both more equitable and less liable to create or reinforce economic segregation.

Vermont before and after redistricting

In a similar vein, consider North Carolina, an economically diverse state that might be expected to contain some steeply segregating school district borders. But North Carolina has few of the kind of microdistricts whose borders divide students in other states. Instead, its borders are mostly drawn more broadly, at the county level. This means that a wealthy town like Oak Ridge does not have the ability to keep rich local tax dollars just for its relatively few students; its revenues are shared with the broader community of Guilford County. Economic inequality is a reality on the ground: Oak Ridge's median home is worth $338,000, more than double the county's overall figure of $160,000, and Oak Ridge's school-aged poverty rate is just 2%, well below Guilford County's rate of 18% poverty. Guilford's central city of Greensboro has an even higher rate: over one in four of its children live in poverty. But those economic facts do not dictate opportunity for Guilford students, who may share and share alike in all the county's wealth. With inclusive school district borders like these, it is not surprising that North Carolina is completely absent from the list of the country's most segregating school district borders. States like North Carolina show that there is nothing inevitable about the deep divides we see elsewhere in the country, and that another choice about how to draw school district boundaries can do a great deal to shrink those gaps.

District lines should not be the limit of students' opportunities. It is the state, not the local school district, that bears the constitutional responsibility for providing public schooling. But states fail to meet that responsibility when they choose to draw and maintain districts so narrow that children are divided into haves and have-nots, and to fund schools using a local-property-tax-based system that entrenches those divides. Better pathways are open to them, and states have an obligation to take advantage of them. The educational outlook for the children trapped behind arbitrary borders—just a few feet away from much better opportunity—is not dependent on local economics. Rather, their future is dependent on political bravery.

APPENDIX A: 50 MOST SEGREGATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

					High Poverty District				Low Poverty District			
US Rank	State	High Poverty District	Low Poverty District	Percentage Point Difference in Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate	Percent Nonwhite	Enrollment	Median Household Income	Poverty Rate	Percent Nonwhite	Enrollment	Median Household Income
1	New York	Rochester City SD	Penfield Central SD	41	47%	90%	29,436	$32,347	5%	16%	4,581	$80,926
2	Ohio	Youngstown City SD	Canfield Local SD	41	47%	86%	5,088	$26,892	6%	9%	2,662	$75,234
3	Ohio	Youngstown City SD	Poland Local SD	41	47%	86%	5,088	$26,892	7%	8%	1,925	$75,943
4	Mississippi	Claiborne County SD	Hinds County SD	41	55%	100%	1,487	$24,601	14%	86%	6,004	$57,868
5	Michigan	Detroit City SD	Grosse Pointe Public Schools	40	45%	98%	45,455	$27,829	6%	25%	7,931	$98,063
6	New York	Rochester City SD	Brighton Central SD	39	47%	90%	29,436	$32,347	8%	30%	3,628	$76,205
7	New York	Rochester City SD	West Irondequoit Central SD	37	47%	90%	29,436	$32,347	10%	28%	3,597	$63,626
8	Michigan	Benton Harbor Area Schools	St. Joseph Public Schools	37	45%	98%	2,254	$30,108	8%	21%	3,004	$66,111
9	Pennsylvania	Clairton City SD	West Jefferson Hills SD	35	40%	80%	807	$31,112	5%	7%	2,880	$75,694
10	Mississippi	Tunica County SD	DeSoto County SD	35	47%	98%	2,095	$32,052	12%	48%	33,537	$62,595
11	Arizona	Nogales Unified District	Sahuarita Unified District	34	45%	99%	5,749	$28,408	10%	60%	6,133	$64,909
12	New York	Utica City SD	New Hartford Central SD	34	41%	69%	10,311	$33,873	7%	15%	2,572	$72,532
13	Mississippi	Leflore County SD	Carroll County SD	34	57%	99%	2,392	$23,536	23%	61%	1,032	$43,068
14	Ohio	Cleveland Municipal SD	Cuyahoga Heights Local SD	34	42%	84%	39,017	$27,932	9%	8%	763	$70,625
15	Ohio	Youngstown City SD	Hubbard Exempted Village SD	34	47%	86%	5,088	$26,892	14%	9%	1,964	$48,178
16	Ohio	Cincinnati City SD	Madeira City SD	33	38%	76%	33,710	$37,547	5%	11%	1,475	$97,944
17	New York	Syracuse City SD	Westhill Central SD	33	39%	78%	21,015	$34,716	6%	13%	1,781	$75,777
18	Ohio	Youngstown City SD	Lowellville Local SD	33	47%	86%	5,088	$26,892	14%	12%	538	$53,625
19	New York	Rochester City SD	Rush-Henrietta Central SD	33	47%	90%	29,436	$32,347	14%	37%	5,433	$62,059
20	Pennsylvania	Greater Johnstown SD	Conemaugh Township Area SD	33	42%	50%	2,968	$28,614	10%	2%	967	$45,787

APPENDIX A: 50 MOST SEGREGATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

					High Poverty District				Low Poverty District			
US Rank	State	High Poverty District	Low Poverty District	Percentage Point Difference in Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate	Percent Nonwhite	Enrollment	Median Household Income	Poverty Rate	Percent Nonwhite	Enrollment	Median Household Income
21	Ohio	Cincinnati City SD	Indian Hill Exempted Village SD	33	38%	76%	33,710	$37,547	5%	21%	1,996	$123,207
22	Ohio	Canton City SD	Louisville City SD	32	44%	56%	8,770	$30,257	12%	4%	2,858	$59,819
23	Florida	Putnam County SD	St. Johns County SD	32	40%	47%	11,255	$33,619	8%	23%	38,550	$73,640
24	Massachusetts	Springfield SD	Hampden-Wilbraham SD	32	38%	88%	25,858	$37,118	6%	14%	3,139	$97,656
25	New Jersey	Paterson City SD	Fair Lawn Borough SD	32	36%	95%	28,899	$36,106	4%	36%	4,943	$109,747
26	Michigan	Lansing Public SD	DeWitt Public Schools	32	35%	75%	10,999	$39,369	3%	15%	3,169	$87,440
27	Pennsylvania	Greater Johnstown SD	Westmont Hilltop SD	32	42%	50%	2,968	$28,614	10%	9%	1,307	$66,520
28	New York	Rochester City SD	Gates-Chili Central SD	32	47%	90%	29,436	$32,347	15%	41%	4,229	$61,056
29	Ohio	Dayton City SD	Beavercreek City SD	32	37%	75%	13,298	$29,674	4%	17%	7,751	$89,690
30	Ohio	Lockland Local SD	Wyoming City SD	32	39%	60%	496	$32,700	7%	23%	1,922	$118,947
31	Alabama	Greene County SD	Tuscaloosa County SD	32	48%	100%	1,154	$20,954	16%	39%	18,430	$57,880
32	Ohio	Northridge Local SD	Vandalia-Butler City SD	32	42%	33%	1,603	$31,712	10%	19%	2,945	$61,165
33	Ohio	Youngstown City SD	Austintown Local SD	32	47%	86%	5,088	$26,892	16%	24%	4,867	$45,358
34	New York	Lackawanna City SD	Frontier Central SD	32	40%	36%	2,003	$35,482	8%	10%	4,907	$63,193
35	Michigan	Detroit City SD	Southfield Public SD	32	45%	98%	45,455	$27,829	14%	97%	6,290	$53,920
36	Ohio	Cleveland Municipal SD	Fairview Park City SD	32	42%	84%	39,017	$27,932	11%	15%	1,809	$54,994
37	Michigan	Detroit City SD	Ferndale Public Schools	31	45%	98%	45,455	$27,829	14%	74%	3,127	$61,254
38	Ohio	Columbus City SD	Upper Arlington City SD	31	35%	77%	50,331	$41,959	4%	16%	5,935	$109,813
39	Alabama	Birmingham City SD	Vestavia Hills City SD	31	35%	99%	24,070	$33,770	4%	20%	7,150	$98,653
40	Connecticut	Hartford SD	South Windsor SD	31	35%	89%	20,309	$33,841	4%	37%	4,159	$105,986

APPENDIX A: 50 MOST SEGREGATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

					High Poverty District				Low Poverty District			
US Rank	State	High Poverty District	Low Poverty District	Percentage Point Difference in Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate	Percent Nonwhite	Enrollment	Median Household Income	Poverty Rate	Percent Nonwhite	Enrollment	Median Household Income
41	Pennsylvania	Greater Johnstown SD	Richland SD	31	42%	50%	2,968	$28,614	11%	8%	1,580	$56,537
42	Pennsylvania	Aliquippa SD	Hopewell Area SD	31	39%	82%	1,077	$31,121	8%	9%	2,056	$63,090
43	Massachusetts	Springfield SD	Longmeadow SD	31	38%	88%	25,858	$37,118	7%	20%	2,889	$112,831
44	Michigan	Battle Creek Public Schools	Gull Lake Community Schools	31	38%	65%	4,118	$32,839	7%	15%	3,155	$70,762
45	Ohio	Toledo City SD	Perrysburg Exempted Village SD	31	35%	64%	22,862	$33,598	4%	15%	4,985	$88,560
46	Louisiana	East Carroll Parish SD	West Carroll Parish SD	31	59%	100%	1,049	$20,795	28%	22%	2,101	$37,304
47	Ohio	Columbus City SD	Grandview Heights City SD	31	35%	77%	50,331	$41,959	4%	9%	1,084	$99,548
48	New York	East Ramapo Central SD (Spring Valley)	Clarkstown Central SD	31	37%	95%	9,010	$62,066	6%	36%	8,156	$122,521
49	Georgia	Terrell County SD	Lee County SD	31	44%	95%	1,419	$32,219	13%	30%	6,447	$65,018
50	Ohio	Cleveland Municipal SD	Shaker Heights City SD	31	42%	84%	39,017	$27,932	12%	60%	5,105	$74,976

APPENDIX B: NUMBER OF BORDERS CREATING DIFFERENT DEGREES OF SEGREGATION

State	Borders	Largest Percentage Point Difference in Student Poverty Rate	Borders, 10 percentage point difference	Borders, 15 percentage point difference	Borders, 20 percentage point difference	Borders, 25 percentage point difference	Borders, 30 percentage point difference	Borders, 40 percentage point difference
Ohio	1,658	41	335	166	92	52	23	2
New York	1,565	41	274	109	52	28	14	1
Mississippi	325	41	117	56	23	10	3	1
Michigan	1,270	40	240	108	57	21	7	1
Pennsylvania	1,357	35	264	122	62	33	8	
Arizona	151	34	52	18	5	1	1	
New Jersey	754	32	129	69	35	10	3	
Alabama	311	32	103	56	18	9	2	
Massachusetts	479	32	102	47	20	8	3	
Florida	141	32	34	19	6	2	1	
Oklahoma	810	31	172	65	21	5	2	
Indiana	762	31	131	50	14	3	1	
Georgia	433	31	103	44	19	6	1	
Connecticut	272	31	56	31	22	11	1	
Louisiana	152	31	46	14	4	1	1	
Illinois	1,591	30	322	121	37	6	1	
Virginia	269	30	58	24	12	3	1	
Arkansas	630	29	182	65	17	5		
Texas	2,002	28	491	172	53	12		
California	968	28	235	74	24	4		
Missouri	969	28	183	58	23	7		
Wisconsin	951	28	91	29	14	6		
Oregon	275	27	24	9	4	1		

APPENDIX B: NUMBER OF BORDERS CREATING DIFFERENT DEGREES OF SEGREGATION

State	Borders	Largest Percentage Point Difference in Student Poverty Rate	Borders, 10 percentage point difference	Borders, 15 percentage point difference	Borders, 20 percentage point difference	Borders, 25 percentage point difference	Borders, 30 percentage point difference	Borders, 40 percentage point difference
Kentucky	378	26	85	24	9	2		
New Mexico	43	26	10	5	2	1		
Tennessee	302	25	50	10	4	2		
South Carolina	207	24	54	18	5			
Rhode Island	45	24	14	8	3			
Iowa	874	23	53	9	2			
Vermont	113	23	15	2	2			
Washington	363	22	60	19	1			
Maryland	31	22	6	3	2			
Minnesota	730	21	47	10	2			
North Dakota	34	21	4	4	1			
North Carolina	253	20	45	15	3			
Nebraska	376	20	45	7	1			
Colorado	176	19	27	3				
Kansas	453	18	40	8				
Maine	217	18	29	2				
West Virginia	124	18	21	5				
New Hampshire	106	16	11	1				
South Dakota	130	14	5					
Idaho	138	12	5					
Utah	56	12	5					
Delaware	25	11	3					
Montana	59	11	3					

APPENDIX C: DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Purpose:

The purpose of this data product is to compare student poverty rates between neighboring school districts in order to identify the most segregating school districts in the country.

Data Sources:

To create the school district border dataset, EdBuild used the following data sources:

- School district geography: geography for school district borders for the 2017-18 school year comes from the US Census Bureau, Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates Program (EDGE), Composite School District Boundaries File.
- School district revenues: revenues from federal, state, and local sources for the 2016-17 school year come from the Census, Annual Survey of School System Finances (F33).

  The following subtractions were made from total state and local revenues for each school district:

  1. Because it can contribute to large fluctuations in district revenues from year to year, we exclude revenue for capital from the calculation of state revenues.
  2. Similarly, we exclude money generated from the sale of property from local revenues, because it too can contribute to large fluctuations in revenues.
  3. In just under 2,000 districts, revenues received by local school districts include monies that are passed through to charter schools that are not a part of the local school district but are instead operated by charter local education agencies (charter LEAs). This artificially inflates the revenues in these local school districts, because they include money for students educated outside of the district who are not counted in enrollment totals. To address this, we subtract from state and local revenues a proportional share (based on the percent of each districts' revenues that come from local, state, and federal sources) of the total amount of money sent to outside charter LEAs—an expenditure category included in the F33 survey.
  4. In Arkansas, large portions of districts' revenues that should be considered local are categorized as state revenues. The value of this misattribution for each district is described in the F33 documentation as C24, Census state, NCES local revenue. Before analysis, the value of C24 is subtracted from state revenues and added to local revenues for the state of Arkansas.
  5. In Texas, many districts report exorbitantly high per-pupil revenues. This is in part because of the policy and procedures for recapturing and redistributing local revenues raised by property-wealthy districts in the state. In the F33 survey, recapture is reported as expenditure code L12. Because these monies are included in the state revenue for other, receiving districts, we subtract a districts' L12 expenditures from their local revenues for the state of Texas.

- School district enrollments and racial composition: school district enrollment characteristics for the 2016-17 school year come from the US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD).
- School district school-age poverty rates: school district-level data on poverty rates among relevant school-age children in 2017 come from the Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE).
- School district community indicators: school district-level data on median household income for the 2016-17 school year come from the US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates (EDGE).
- Native American reservations: American Indian Areas/Alaska Native Areas/Hawaiian Home Lands

APPENDIX C: DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Methodology:

To begin, EdBuild conducted a spatial analysis of all unified, secondary, and elementary districts in the nation. This process identified all pairs of school district neighbors that share a land border (districts whose shared border exists entirely along a large body of water were not considered to be neighbors). Pairs were then excluded from this neighbor list if their shared boundary was less than 500 feet or if the districts are in different states.

Each neighbor pair was identified by their shared school district border and joined to the above described data from the SAIPE, CCD, and ACS. To determine how segregating each border is, EdBuild calculated the difference in school-age poverty rates for the two school districts sharing each boundary. After making the exclusions outlined below, this measure was used to rank the degree of segregation associated with each border.

School District Exclusions:

EdBuild employed several exclusion criteria in compiling our borders dataset. Our analysis includes only districts that meet our standard requirements for a geography-based analysis. Therefore, any district that does not have geography and is not included in the Composite School District Boundaries File was excluded. EdBuild also excluded any districts from the US territories. Further, because EdBuild only identifies within-state school district neighbors, Hawaii and the District of Columbia were excluded as they each have only one school district.

There are three types of school districts: unified, elementary, and secondary. EdBuild followed the assigned types in the Composite School District Boundaries File with one exception. For districts where 8th grade was the highest reported grade level, EdBuild classified these districts as elementary districts even if they were defined as unified by the Census. The analysis was confined to type-similar school district pairs—that is, unified to unified, secondary to secondary, and elementary to elementary—to avoid comparing resources across districts of different types which may have very different structures and needs.

We additionally excluded school districts that intersect with at least one-quarter square mile of Native American Reservations where the student population is at least 25-percent Native American. This is because federal dollars are a much larger proportion of revenue for Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools and the federal dollars are not always intended to supplement funds from BIA.

Since the SAIPE student poverty rates are estimates, they are not always reliable for school districts with very small student age populations. Therefore, EdBuild removed districts where the student population is less than 200.

Finally, EdBuild removed districts with a student density of less than or equal to one student per square mile. These exclusions were made since these districts may have reason to resource differently than their more populous neighbors, and they have unique geographic constraints due to the extremely low student density.

Following the above exclusions, Alaska, Nevada, and Wyoming were excluded from the analysis because over two-thirds of these states' student populations were removed from the dataset.

This resulted in a dataset that contains 10,226 districts and 23,328 pairs of district neighbors.

APPENDIX C: DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Analysis:

For each school district pair in our dataset, EdBuild calculated the difference in student poverty rate. We then categorized district pairs into two groups:

1. The top 50 most segregating borders in the country, ranked by the largest absolute difference in student poverty rate.
2. The most highly segregating borders in the country: the 671 borders where there is at least a 20-percentage-point gap in student poverty rate.

For the state analysis, EdBuild calculated the following:

- Borders in the dataset: the number of border pairs in each state after all of EdBuild's exclusions.
- Borders in the 50 most segregating list: the number of border pairs in each state that are in the top 50 most segregating borders in the country.
- Borders with > 20 percentage point poverty difference: the number of border pairs in each state that are highly segregating.
- Average percentage point poverty difference: the average percentage point difference in student poverty rate between any two border pairs in the state.
- Largest percentage point poverty difference: the largest percentage point difference in student poverty rate between any two border pairs in the state.
- Most segregating border: the border pair with the largest percentage point difference in student poverty rate in the state.
- Borders with > 10 percentage point poverty difference: the number of border pairs in each state with at least a 10 percentage point difference in student poverty rate.
- Borders with > 15 percentage point poverty difference: the number of border pairs in each state with at least a 15 percentage point difference in student poverty rate.
- Borders with > 25 percentage point poverty difference: the number of border pairs in each state with at least a 25 percentage point difference in student poverty rate.
- Borders with > 30 percentage point poverty difference: the number of border pairs in each state with at least a 30 percentage point difference in student poverty rate.
- Borders with > 40 percentage point poverty difference: the number of border pairs in each state with at least a 40 percentage point difference in student poverty rate.

ENDNOTES

1 This and all other school district-level data on poverty rates among relevant school-age children in 2017 mentioned in this report are drawn from: United States Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, "School district, school-age poverty" [data file], 2019, https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2017/demo/saipe/2017-school-districts.html.

2 This and all other data on school district poverty rates for the 2016-17 school year mentioned in this report are drawn from: United States Census, "Annual Survey of School System Finances (F33)" [data file], 2019, https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/school-finances.html.

3 All data regarding the placement of school district boundaries in the 2017-18 school year are drawn from: United States Census, Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates Program (EDGE), "Composite School District Boundaries File" [data file], 2019, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Geographic/DistrictBoundaries.

4 S. High, "Deindustrializing Youngstown: Memories of Resistance and Loss following 'Black Monday', 1977-1997," *History Workshop Journal*, no. 54 (Autumn 2002): 100-121.

5 R. Bruno, *Steelworker Alley* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

6 D. Yost, *Youngstown City School District, Mahoning County, Single Audit for the Year Ended June 30, 2017,* (Auditor of the State of Ohio: May 2018), http://www.ohioauditor.gov/auditsearch/Reports/2018/Youngstown_CSD_17-Mahoning.pdf; *DeRolph v. State of Ohio*, 78 Ohio St.3d 193 (1997).

7 Ohio Department of Education, *Youngstown City School District, Review Conducted March 19-23, 2018*, (Ohio Department of Education: March 2018), https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/District-and-School-Continuous-Improvement/Academic-Distress-Commission/Youngstown-City-Schools-Academic-Recovery-Plan/YOUNGSTOWN-District-Review-Report-6-8-18.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US.

8 United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office for the Assistant Secretary of Planning and Evaluation, "U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines Used to Determine Financial Eligibility for Certain Federal Programs," 2017, https://aspe.hhs.gov/2017-poverty-guidelines.

9 This and all national and state-level data on median household incomes are drawn from: United States Census Bureau, "Selected economic characteristics, 2013-2017 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates" [data file], 2019, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/.

10 Congressional Research Service, "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): A Primer on Eligibility and Benefits," 2018, https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/20180411_R42505_202751806b27332231c005186f8adbc99e94df77.pdf; "School Meal Eligibility and Reimbursements," Food Research and Action Center, accessed January 9, 2020, https://frac.org/school-meal-eligibility-reimbursements.

11 This and all other school district-level data on median household incomes in the 2016-17 school year, as well as data regarding school district median property values and municipal-level data regarding poverty rates, are drawn from: 2013-2017 American Community Survey, 5-Year Data as accessed through Steven Manson, Jonathan Schroeder, David Van Riper, and Steven Ruggles. IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 14.0 [Database]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS. 2019. http://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V14.0.

12 This and all other data on school district enrollments and racial composition for the 2016-17 school year are drawn from: United States Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "2016- 2017 Local Education Agency (School District) Universe Survey" [data file], 2019, https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/.

13 Allen Tullos, "The Black Belt," Southern Spaces, April 19, 2004, https://southernspaces.org/2004/black-belt/; Eduardo Porter, "The Hard Truths of Trying to 'Save' the Rural Economy," The New York Times, December 14, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/12/14/opinion/rural-america-trump-decline.html.

14 C.D. Reynolds, "The Motives for Exclusionary Zoning," *Social Science Research Network*, September 2019, http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3449772.

15 T.S. Goethe, "The Evolution of Rochester," *Reporter Magazine*, Rochester Institute of Technology, May 8, 2017, https://reporter.rit.edu/features/evolution-rochester.

16 M. Daneman, "Bausch + Lomb moving headquarters to N.J., cutting jobs, *USA Today*, July 30, 2018,https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2013/07/30/bausch-lomb-valeant-takeover/2599413/.

17 "July '64: The City," *Independent Lens*, PBS, 2017, https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/july64/city.html; J. Murphy, "1930s relining maps show discrimination," *Democrat & Chronicle*, October 20, 2016, https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2016/10/20/rochester-ny-redlining-map/92456536/.

ENDNOTES

18 C.D. Reynolds, “The Motives for Exclusionary Zoning,” *Social Science Research Network*, September 2019, http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3449772.

19 *Warth v. Seldin*, 422 U.S. 490, 95 S. Ct. 2197 (1975).

20 T. Clausen, “Xerox HQ to remain in Connecticut.” *Democrat & Chronicle*, December 16, 2016, https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/money/business/2016/12/16/xerox-hq-remain-norwalk-connecticut/95528556/.

21 A.G. Hevesi, Population Trends in New York State’s Cities. (Office of the New York State Comptroller, Division of Local Government Services & Economic Development: December 2004), https://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/research/pop_trends.pdf.

22 T. Clausen, “Xerox HQ to remain in Connecticut.” Democrat & Chronicle, December 16, 2016, https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/money/business/2016/12/16/xerox-hq-remain-norwalk-connecticut/95528556/.

23 Warth v. Seldin, 422 U.S. 490, 95 S. Ct. 2197 (1975).

24 “Lawsuit Alleges Mississippi River Controls Stole 8,000 acres, Harming School Districts,” The Natchez Democrat, February 11, 2019, https://www.natchezdemocrat.com/2019/02/11/lawsuit-alleges-mississippi-river-controls-stole-8000-acres-harming-school-districts/.

25 P.J. Reilly, “Mississippi Taxing Nuclear Power and Accusations of Racism,” Forbes, May 14, 2017, https://www.forbes.com/sites/peterjreilly/2017/05/14/mississippi-taxing-nuclear-power-and-accusations-of-racism/#5b2590a34919.

26 K. Blount, “Port Gibson High School (Old),” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2016), https://www.nps.gov/nr/feature/places/pdfs/16000285.pdf.

27 G.G. Ferguson to Board of Trustees, June 14, 2018, https://www.hinds.k12.ms.us/cms/lib/MS01001020/Centricity/Domain/33/HCSD%20planning%20update_6-14-2018.pdf; WJTV.com, “Hinds County Voters Overwhelmingly Approve School Bond,” last modified August 14, 2017, https://www.wjtv.com/news/hinds-county-voters-overwhelmingly-approve-school-bond/.

28 S.F. Reardon, D. Kalogrides, and K. Shores, "The Geography of Racial/Ethnic Test Score Gaps," *American Journal of Sociology* 124, no. 4 (January 2019): 1164-1221; S.J. Caldas and C. Bankston III, “Effects of school population socioeconomic status on individual academic achievement,” *The Journal of Educational Research* 90, no. 5 (1997), 269-277; G.J. Palardy, “Differential school effects among low, middle, and high social class composition schools: a multiple group, multilevel latent growth curve analysis,” *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* 19, no. 1 (2008): 21-49. 29 A. Owens, A. “Inequality in children’s contexts: Income segregation of households with and without children,” *American Sociological Review* 81, no. 3 (2016), 549-574.

30 L. Seamster, “Race, Power and Economic Extraction in Benton Harbor, MI” (PhD diss., Duke University, 2016), accessed December 12, 2019, https://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/handle/10161/12853

31 J. Mahler, “Now that the Factories Are Closed, It’s Tee Time in Benton Harbor, Mich., *The New York Times Magazine,* December 15, 2011, accessed December 12, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/18/magazine/benton-harbor.html

32 A. Kotlowitz, *The Other Side of the River: A Story of Two Towns a Death, and America’s Dilemma* (Anchor, 1998), chap. 1, *New York Times*, accessed December 12, 2019, https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/k/kotlowitz-river.html

33 L. Seamster, “Race, Power and Economic Extraction in Benton Harbor, MI” (PhD diss., Duke University, 2016), accessed December 12, 2019, https://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/handle/10161/12853

34 G. A. Erickcek and B. R. Watts, "Quality of Life and Diversity in the Benton Harbor Metropolitan Area: Findings and Suggestions in Attracting Professional Workers," Report prepared for Cornerstone Alliance, Benton Harbor, Michigan (March 2003), accessed December 12, 2019, https://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1092&context=reportsmagazine/benton-harbor.html

35 L. Seamster, “Race, Power and Economic Extraction in Benton Harbor, MI” (PhD diss., Duke University, 2016), accessed December 12, 2019, https://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/handle/10161/12853

36 J. Mahler, “Now that the Factories Are Closed, It’s Tee Time in Benton Harbor, Mich., *The New York Times Magazine,* December 15, 2011, accessed December 12, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/18/magazine/benton-harbor.html

37 "Development Cooperation Agreement Among Benton Harbor, St. Joseph and Harbor Shores Community Redevelopment, Inc." 2005; L. Seamster, “Race, Power and Economic Extraction in Benton Harbor, MI” (PhD diss., Duke University, 2016), accessed December 12, 2019, https://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/handle/10161/12853

ENDNOTES

38 I. Samra, "Benton Harbor Area Schools' debt, low enrollment may lead to major change", *WNDU*, February 28, 2019, accessed December 12, 2019, https://www.wndu.com/content/news/State-officials-address-Benton-Harbor-Area-Schools--506531501.html

39 Karen Diegmueller, "Hard Times," *Education Week,* November 24, 1993, https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/1993/11/24/12clair.h13.html

40 "Pittsburgh Struggles for Clean Air As Nearby Town's Pollution Worsens," *NPR,* January 1, 2019, https://www.npr.org/2019/01/01/681197037/pittsburgh-struggles-for-clean-air-as-nearby-towns-pollution-worsens

41 Reid Frazier, "'Razorblades and feathers in my throat,': A fire at a US Steel plant near Pittsburgh made a major polluter even worse," *PA Post,* April 15, 2019, https://papost.org/2019/04/15/razorblades-and-feathers-in-my-throat-a-fire-at-a-u-s-steel-plant-near-pittsburgh-made-a-major-polluter-even-worse/

42 "Asthma in Children," Breathe Project, last accessed December 17, 2019, https://breatheproject.org/asthma-on-the-rise/

43 Jamie Martines, "Settlement over bad air in Clairton calls for U.S. Steel to cough up $2 million," *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review,* December 11, 2019, https://triblive.com/local/pittsburgh-allegheny/settlement-over-bad-air-in-clairton-calls-for-u-s-steel-to-cough-up-2-million/

44 Dan Vergano, "People Are Getting Sick From A US Steel Factory That Is 'Grossly Violating' Health Standrads, Experts Say," *Buzzfeed News,* April 6, 2019, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/danvergano/us-steel-pollution-asthma-clairton-pennsylvania

45 Reid Frazier, "After another fire, Allegheny County issues emergency order for US Steel's Clairton plant," *WITF*, June 17, 2019, https://www.witf.org/2019/06/17/us_steels_clairton_plant_pollution_controls_knocked_out_again_by_another_fire/

46 Dan Vergano, "People Are Getting Sick From A US Steel Factory That Is 'Grossly Violating' Health Standrads, Experts Say," *Buzzfeed News,* April 6, 2019, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/danvergano/us-steel-pollution-asthma-clairton-pennsylvania

47 "Pittsburgh Struggles for Clean Air As Nearby Town's Pollution Worsens," *NPR,* January 1, 2019, https://www.npr. org/2019/01/01/681197037/pittsburgh-struggles-for-clean-air-as-nearby-towns-pollution-worsens

48 Robert Zullo, "U.S. Steel's lower taxes causing budget headaches for local governments and school districts," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette,* November 30, 2013, https://www.post-gazette.com/local/east/2013/11/30/U-S-Steel-s-lower-taxes-causing-budget-headaches/stories/201311300091

49 Robert Zullo, "U.S. Steel's lower taxes causing budget headaches for local governments and school districts," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette,* November 30, 2013, https://www.post-gazette.com/local/east/2013/11/30/U-S-Steel-s-lower-taxes-causing-budget-headaches/stories/201311300091

50 "Student Handbook 2019-2020," Clairton City School District, last accessed January 31, 2020, https://www.ccsdbears.org/docs/district/student%20handbook%202019-2020.pdf?id=728; "The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act," Clairton City School District, last accessed January 31, 2020, https://www.ccsdbears.org/Content2/mckinney-vento.

51 Stephanie Hacke, "Deer Park residents against proposed Jefferson Hills development," *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review,* November 19, 2019, https://triblive.com/local/south-hills/deer-park-residents-against-proposed-jefferson-hills-development/

52 Stephanie Hacke, "West Jefferson Hills residents to see 7th straight tax increase," *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review,* June 27, 2019, https://triblive.com/local/south-hills/west-jefferson-hills-school-district-residents-to-see-seventh-straight-tax-increase/

53 Kristina Serafini, "Video: Take a look inside the new Thomas Jefferson High School," *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review,* August 27, 2019, https://triblive.com/local/south-hills/video-take-a-look-inside-the-new-thomas-jefferson-high-school/

54 Michael DiVittorio, "West Mifflin Area declines talks with Clairton," *Pittsburgh Tribune Review*, June 2, 2011, https://archive.triblive.com/news/west-mifflin-area-declines-talks-with-clairton/

55 "Act 46: State Board of Education's Final Report of Decisions and Order," State of Vermont Agency of Education, accessed January 9, 2020, https://education.vermont.gov/vermont-schools/school-governance/act-46-state-board-final-plan.

56 EdBuild, *Making Change: Favorable Conditions for Education Finance Reform,* (Jersey City, NJ: EdBuild, June 2017), https://edbuild.org/content/making-change.