“School Segregation under Color-blind Jurisprudence: The Case of North Carolina”

Using detailed administrative data for the public K-12 schools of North Carolina, we measure racial segregation in the public schools of North Carolina. With data for the 2005/06 school year, we update previously published calculations that measure segregation in terms of unevenness in racial enrollment patterns both between schools and within schools. We find that classroom segregation generally increased between 2000/01 and 2005/06, continuing, albeit at a slower rate, the trend of increases we observed over the preceding six years. Segregation increased sharply in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, which introduced a new choice plan in 2002. Over the same period, racial and economic disparities in teacher quality widened in that district. Finally, we compare our basic measure to two alternative measures of segregation.