

Racial and ethnic distribution of elementary and secondary students

February 2000

Changes in the racial-ethnic composition of students may alter the degree of heterogeneity of language and culture in the Nation's schools. Although variety in student backgrounds and interests can enhance the learning environment, it can also create new or increased challenges for the schools. Knowledge of the shifting racial-ethnic distribution of public elementary and secondary students can give schools the foresight to plan for these challenges.

- Thirty-six percent of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools were considered part of a minority group in 1996, an increase of 12 percentage points from 1976. This increase was largely due to the growth in the percentage of Hispanic students.
- Since 1970, black students have accounted for approximately one out of every three students who lived in central cities and attended public schools. In 1996, 10 percent of the students who lived in a metropolitan area outside of a central city and who attended public schools were black, up from 6 percent in 1970.
- In 1996, approximately one out of every four students who lived in a central city and who attended public schools was Hispanic, up from approximately 1 out of every 10 students in 1972.
- The percentage of black and Hispanic students enrolled in private schools increased between 1972 and 1996, rising from 5 percent each for both black and Hispanic students in 1972 to 9 percent for black students and 8 percent for Hispanic students in 1996.

Percentage of students in grades 1-12 who were black or Hispanic, by control of school and place of residence: 1970-96

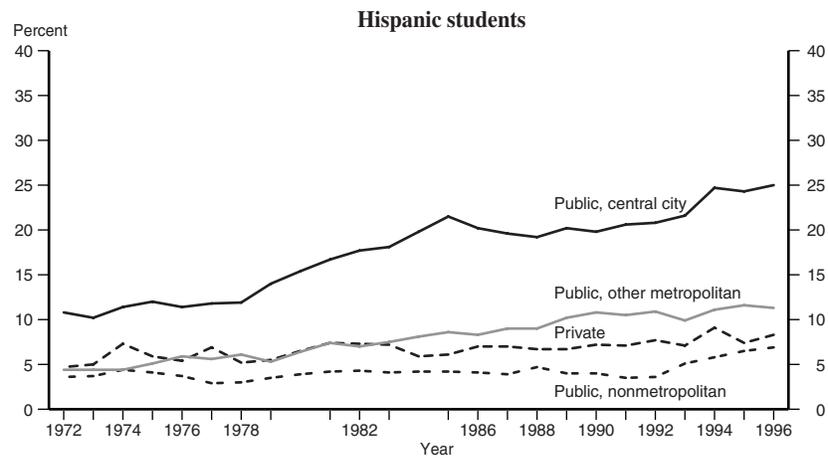
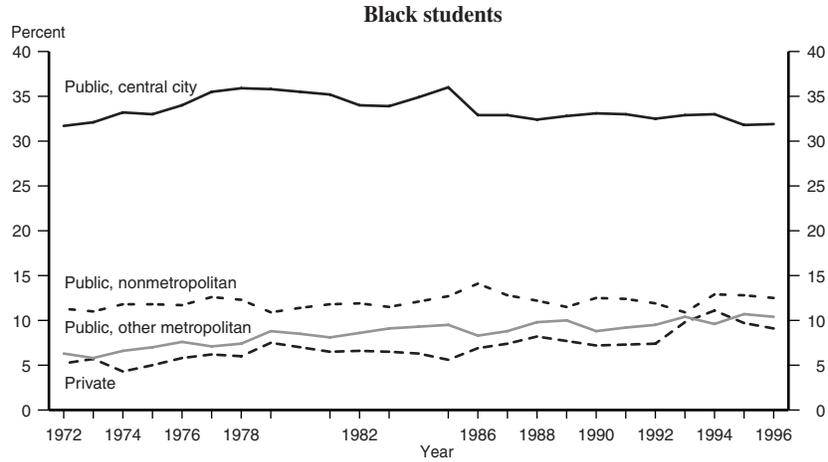
Year	Black					Hispanic				
	Total	Public schools			Private schools	Total	Public schools			Private schools
		Central city	Other metropolitan	Non-metropolitan			Central city	Other metropolitan	Non-metropolitan	
1970	14.8	32.5	6.2	12.0	4.7	—	—	—	—	—
1972	14.9	31.7	6.3	11.3	5.2	5.8	10.8	4.4	3.6	4.7
1974	15.4	33.2	6.6	11.8	4.3	6.2	11.4	4.4	4.4	7.3
1976	16.0	34.0	7.6	11.7	5.8	6.6	11.4	5.9	3.7	5.4
1978	16.1	35.9	7.4	12.3	6.0	6.4	11.9	6.1	3.0	5.2
1979	16.1	35.8	8.8	10.9	7.5	6.8	14.0	5.3	3.5	5.5
1982	16.2	34.0	8.6	11.9	6.6	8.7	17.7	7.0	4.3	7.3
1985	17.0	36.0	9.5	12.7	5.6	10.1	21.5	8.6	4.2	6.1
1986	16.7	32.9	8.3	14.1	6.9	10.6	20.2	8.3	4.1	7.0
1988	16.8	32.4	9.8	12.2	8.2	10.8	19.2	9.0	4.7	6.7
1990	16.5	33.1	8.8	12.5	7.2	11.6	19.8	10.8	4.0	7.2
1991	16.7	33.0	9.2	12.4	7.3	11.7	20.6	10.5	3.5	7.1
1992	16.7	32.5	9.5	11.9	7.4	11.9	20.8	10.9	3.6	7.7
1993	16.7	32.9	10.4	10.9	9.8	11.9	21.6	9.9	5.1	7.1
1994	16.8	33.0	9.6	12.9	11.1	13.4	24.7	11.1	5.8	9.1
1995	17.1	31.8	10.7	12.8	9.7	14.0	24.3	11.6	6.5	7.4
1996	17.0	31.9	10.4	12.5	9.1	14.3	25.0	11.3	6.9	8.3

— Not available.

NOTE: The Current Population Survey (CPS) definition of metropolitan areas in the United States was changed in 1985. For data through 1984, metropolitan areas were defined on the basis of the 1970 census. A small number of students were both black and Hispanic (less than 1 percent). In 1994, the survey instrument for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, "Level of Enrollment Below College for Persons 3 to 24 Years Old, by Control of School, Metropolitan Status, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin," various years; and October Current Population Surveys.

**Percentage of students in grades 1–12 who were black or Hispanic,
by control of school and place of residence: 1972–96**



NOTE: Control of school was not available in 1980. Residence of students was not available in 1984. The Current Population Survey (CPS) definition of metropolitan areas in the United States was changed in 1985. A small number of students (less than 1 percent) were both black and Hispanic. In 1994, the survey instrument for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports, Series P-20*, "Level of Enrollment Below College for Persons 3 to 24 Years Old, by Control of School: Metropolitan Status, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin," various years; and October Current Population Surveys.

This indicator is one of 60 from *The Condition of Education 1999*. It is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission. Suggested citation: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 1999*, NCES 2000-005, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. To obtain a copy of the full volume of *The Condition of Education 1999*, contact ED Pubs at (877) 433-7827 (e-mail: edpubs@inet.ed.gov). The full indicator and all supplemental tables pertaining to this indicator may be viewed at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2000005>.