

Racial Diversity, Segregation, and Montessori Charter Schools

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Abstract

Research indicates that public Montessori schools are predominantly White (Debs, 2015; Murray, 2008). While many scholars have discussed the phenomenon of school resegregation in the context of charter schools (Garcia, 2008), little research has addressed diversity in Montessori charter schools. This quantitative study describes the racial demographics of Montessori charters in the context of local school districts. Using data from the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector and the National Center for Education Statistics, the racial composition of Montessori charter schools was compared to that of local districts. The Montessori charter school student population was found to be predominantly White, with approximately one-third of schools deemed representative of their local school districts. In schools exhibiting disproportionality, White students were most likely to be overrepresented, while Hispanic students were most likely to be underrepresented. The findings of this study suggest that Montessori charters must improve their efforts to recruit diverse students.

Keywords: Montessori, charter schools, segregation, race